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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 80 Number 27

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

NOVEMBER 5, 2025

'Dying with Christ – Living with Hope' event planned

Learn about New York State Assisted Suicide Bill (PAS) and Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) on Saturday, November 29 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake.

Discussions feature theological and health-care professionals giving perspectives on suffering, grief, dying and our Christian duty to care.

Dying with Christ – Living with Hope is a Christian Medical and Dental Association of Canada program. Videos are followed by small group discussions.

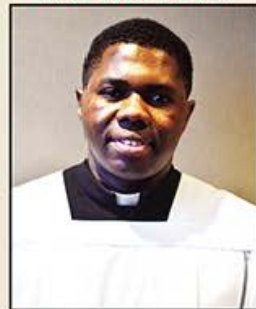
FULL STORY, PAGE 6

SHARING WARMTH FOR COLD DAYS



The Malone Council # 308 of the Knights of Columbus recently donated 24 winter coats to the Malone office of Catholic Charities as a part of the "Coats for Kids" program. Pictured from the left are William LaPage, Catholic Charities operations manager, and Grand Knight David Petrelli.

CELEBRATING VOCATIONS



In this, the NCC's annual Vocations Edition, meet Ladouceur Flarissaint, the newest seminarian for the Diocese of Ogdensburg, learn about how the Sisters of St. Joseph live their community's charism and their vocation in part through social justice and learn about the current and upcoming deacon formation classes.

Pope: 'Church does not tolerate antisemitism'

Catholic News Agency

Pope Leo XIV on Wednesday strongly condemned antisemitism during his general audience in St. Peter's Square marking the 60th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, the Second Vatican Council document on the Church's relations with other religions.

The pope underlined that since the publication of *Nostra Aetate*, "all of my predecessors have condemned antisemitism with clear words."

"And so I too confirm that the Church does not tolerate antisemitism and fights against it, on the basis of the Gospel itself," Leo said on Oct. 29.

The pope expressed thanks for

what has been achieved in the past 60 years of Jewish-Catholic dialogue while acknowledging the challenges that have arisen along the way. "We cannot deny that there have been misunderstandings, difficulties, and conflicts in this period, but these have never prevented the dialogue from continuing," he said.

"Even today, we must not allow political circumstances and the injustices of some to divert us from friendship, especially since we have achieved so much so far."

Pope Leo was joined by Jewish rabbis, Muslim imams, Buddhist monks, and other religious leaders for the general audience. He called on them to act together

to alleviate human suffering, care for the planet, and restore hope.

"More than ever, our world needs our unity, our friendship, and our collaboration," he said. "Each one of our religions can contribute to alleviating human suffering and taking care of our common home, our planet Earth."

Those present included representatives of Hinduism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, and Taoism, along with Christian leaders. Many had participated the previous evening in a peace ceremony at the Colosseum organized by the Community of Sant'Egidio, which brought together about 300 representa-

tives of world religions and cultures.

Pope Leo also prayed for those affected by Hurricane Melissa, which hit Jamaica on Tuesday as the strongest Category 5 storms on record to hit the Caribbean island before sweeping across Cuba.

"Thousands of people have been displaced, while homes, infrastructure, and several hospitals have been damaged," he said. "I assure everyone of my closeness, praying for those who have lost their lives, for those who are fleeing, and for those populations who, awaiting the storm's developments, are experiencing hours of anxiety and concern."

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It can be hard sometimes

"Sometimes, it's hard to see Jesus," I told a relatively new friend.

It was Friday morning (newspaper deadline is Friday afternoon). I didn't have the tiniest shred of an idea for this space. I mentioned to my new friend that the column has a significant impact on the flow of my day.

She asked about my column. "It tends to be about my crazy life and where I find Jesus in it," I said. "It's hard. Sometimes it's hard to see Jesus."

I think we all have those periods in life, times when

the world feels like it's crashing down around us, times we feel super distracted by the demands of busy lives or times we just go on auto pilot and feel like we're just going through the motions - times when it becomes easy to feel distant from the Lord and/or difficult to see him working in our lives and in our world.

It's hard to minister to others when feeling like that.

Almost immediately after telling my friend about it being sometimes hard to see Jesus, it occurred

to me: I have a hard time filling a half-page column when I'm in those hard-to-see-Jesus times of life. I can't imagine what it's like to struggle to see Jesus when you're a priest, in consecrated life, a deacon - when you're someone expected to reflect Jesus and share Jesus all day every day (I know we're all called to that, but, let's be honest, a lot of us expect even more from our clergy and consecrated men and women than we're capable of giving ourselves).

I feel like the normal struggles of faith could feel like an even heavier cross for those constantly expected to be Jesus to others.

So, in this annual edition in which we celebrate vocations, I thank those who carry that cross so all of us can benefit from your service to our Lord. And I thank all the holy married couples (we have an edition devoted to them in February) and single men and women who also pour out Christ to those around them with completely different struggles and who help pray for and help foster and develop those vocations to the priesthood, consecrated life or the diaconate.

Thankfully, our Lord gives us all the graces we need to serve him as he calls us.

Even if it's hard to see it.



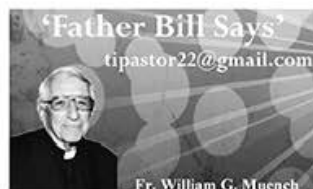
Darcy L. Fargo

Remembering the saints

My favorite Catholic Holy Day each year is All Saints Day. Our Catholic Church canonizes many persons each year as saints. One of the first things that Pope Leo XIV did after he became the Pope was to celebrate a Mass of canonization for several people as saints. However, you and I know that there are many saints with God in Heavenly glory but not canonized by the Church. On All Saints Day, I remember many of these as my saints. With the Lord's help and love they found me, and they became my saints.

So, today, with you, I would like to remember many of my saints - firstly, my mother and many of my family. When I was young, they did so much for me. They guided me, leading to my vocation as a priest. They truly supported me. They were my saints.

On All Saints Day, I also, remember and celebrate the many priests who have been part of my life and who are now with the



Lord. They guided me; they showed me the way, especially in my formation, to becoming a good priest. Let me mention one from my years at Wadhams Hall: There was a public speaking course each year taught by Father Bailey - a course that did so much to make good preachers of all of us, seminarians. I consider him one of my saints. He did so much to help me become a good preacher. And there were many other priests in my life, including my friends and those I worked with. They supported me along the way. They were all my saints.

As a priest, I was a pastor in many parishes. In those places there were so many great people - holy and involved parishioners. I also remember so many

wonderful families. I was truly impressed, and they helped me be a good pastor. They brought spirit and holiness to the parish and to me, and I remember them well. They were also my saints.

I have discovered over the years many terrific Catholic writers and leaders, and I believe they were saints, although they were not canonized. Let me mention one - Thomas Merton. As you remember, he was a convert to Catholicism, and he entered the Trappist Religious order and became a priest. He was a prolific writer. I discovered him as a high school student. I am certain that he was a profound influence on my decision to become a priest. He is one of my saints.

Let me mention another - as a young priest - I discovered Catherine de Heuck Doherty - she founded a community that she named Madonna House. I was blessed to be able to spend several summers at Madonna House in my

younger years. My spirituality was profoundly influenced by Catherine and by her community. I know that she is a saint now with the Lord.

Oh, yes - let me remind you of one more of my saints. When I was in high school, a public high school, there was weekly afternoon period when we walked to a nearby Catholic Church for a religion class. I still remember a religious sister - I must admit I do not remember her name - who put me in touch with many great spiritual writers, like Thomas Merton. I have lost track of this sister, but I still remember that she had a profound influence on my decision to enter the seminary and become a priest. She is still one of my saints.

So, thank you, God! In your concern for me, you have filled my life with many saints. They have not been canonized by the Church, but I remember them often, especially on All Saints Day.

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 gifts, we are called to:*

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 those gifts gratefully,
 Cultivate
 those gifts responsibly,
 Share
 those gifts in justice and love,

*And return them with increase
 to the Lord*

**Stewardship Weekend
 November 8 & 9**

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



Pictured with Bishop Terry LaValley and Director of Deacon Formation Deacon Lee Trudeau are the candidates for ordination as Permanent Deacon in August 2027, (front row, from left) Lucien Leroux, Daniel Haycock, Russell Backus, (back row, from left) Jason Scull, Jack Lucia, Michael Salaun, Bishop LaValley, Deacon Trudeau and David Hunt.

Seven men are currently in deacon formation

Next deacon class to begin in September 2026

By Deacon Kevin Mastellon
 Contributing Writer

The bishops decided a man should be at least 35 years old when he is ordained a permanent deacon on the Catholic Church.

That makes sense. Since a permanent deacon can be married when he is ordained, he has obligations to his wife and children that need to be considered when aspiring to a clerical vocation too.

There is no objection to a man starting formation for the diaconate earlier, but he cannot be ordained until

he is at least 35.

Most of the recent candidates have been in their late 40s, 50s and 60s when they are invited to formation. The Diocese of Ogdensburg will accept older candidates. The final decision is made by the individual, his wife, his pastor, the deacon formation team and the bishop.

Prayer is a vital component regardless of age. An inquirer prays, "Is God calling me to this service at this point in my life?"

If the answer is "yes," the process begins.

Seven men heard the

call and are currently in formation. Their average age is 61. God willing, these men will be ordained in August 2027.

They are Russell Backus of Canton, Daniel Haycock of Clayton, David Hunt of Malone, Lucien Leroux of Fort Covington, Jack Lucia of Clayton, Michael Salaun of Brownville, and Jason Scull of Lake Placid.

Deacon Lee Trudeau (North Bangor), Permanent Deacon Formation director, is interviewing men for the next cohort that will begin classes at Wadhams Hall in September 2026. Men who have expressed an interest in the diaconate are invited to the Called By Name dinners later this month.

Working and advocating for Gospel justice

Seven themes of Catholic Social Justice teaching

1 – Life and Dignity of the Human Person – The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching.

2 – Call to Family, Community, and Participation – The person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society – in economics and politics, in law and policy – directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. Marriage and the family are the central social institutions that must be supported.

3 – Rights and Responsibilities – Human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities – to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

4 – Option for the Poor and Vulnerable – A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

5 – The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers – The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation.

6 – Solidarity – We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers and sisters keepers, wherever they may be.

7 – Care for God's Creation – We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation.

Source: USCCB

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

"We advocate for Gospel justice and for the care of our dear neighbors and creation."

That's how Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, a Sister of St. Joseph, described the community's Sisters of St. Joseph Social Justice Committee and the work that committee has been doing for over 15 years.

The committee is one of the many ways the sisters live out their vocations and their community's charism.

"Gospel justice is based on the principles of the six Catholic social justice teachings," Sister Bethany said. "Of course, Pope Francis added the seventh social justice teaching – care for our common home. It's all based on and rooted in the Gospels. The challenge to justice has never changed, even though the situations in which we are called to work for that justice have changed over the years."



Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, a Sister of St. Joseph, discusses single-use plastics with teens at the 2024 Diocesan Youth Rally. Faith & Ecology education is one facet of the Sisters of St. Joseph Social Justice Committee's work.

Sister Bethany said the committee's work has two major components.

"Love has two feet," she said. "One is expressed in care for the neighbor – direct care, helping in ways like feeding the hungry. The second foot is looking at what's causing the concerns and the situations that are creating this need and advocating for change. As an example: you're sitting down by a riverbank or body of water, lounging in your Adirondack chair, and you see there's something in the water. You get up, and you move closer to the edge of the water, and you look, and it's a baby! You go down into the water, and you go get the baby. You make sure the baby is ok and dry and safe, and you call 911. That's the immediate response of love, the direct care – taking care of the baby. Then, you're looking around, and you realize there are more babies floating down the river. That's when you say, 'where are these babies coming from?' We need to figure this out and make sure we don't have more babies floating down the river. That's the justice question. As Catholics, we're very good at that immediate response,

that direct care. I think we could spend more time asking what structures are creating the need and advocating for change. That's social justice and advocacy."

How we vote as Catholics is included in that advocacy.

"When we look at social justice, it's not viewed through a political lens," said Sister Bethany. "We view it through the lens of the Gospel and Gospel justice, based on the seven Catholic social justice teachings. Personally, I support the candidate I think is best living out the Gospel and the call for justice, and I don't care about their political party. I look at how they respond to the cries of the poor and the cries of the earth – and the two are the same."

Sister Bethany said the Sisters of St. Joseph Social Justice Committee's areas of focus are determined by the community.

"As community, the Sisters of St. Joseph gather every four years and we set the direction based on what we see as needs, the concerns we see as a community," she said. "That gives direction to the committee, which is made up of sisters, lay as-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

What is a Foster Grandparent?

Foster Grandparents are role models, mentors, and friends to children with exceptional needs. The program provides a way for volunteers age 55 and over to stay active by serving children and youth in their communities. They are placed in a classroom setting with a child or children who are in need of emotional support, development of basic learning skills, friendship, companionship, encouragement, individual attention, and unhurried help. The program currently has 40 volunteers and serves more than 100 kids per year.

The Foster Grandparent Program is hosted by the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Ogdensburg and supported by AmeriCorps Seniors, a federally funded agency responsible for building volunteer based programs for over 50 years and counting.



Sometimes when you get to be my age, you wake up and say what good am I and along came the Foster Grandparent Program that keeps me going!

Want more info about how to get started?

Contact Melissa Howard,
Volunteer Coordinator

PHONE:
(518)359-7688

EMAIL:
mhoward@cathcharities.org

80 Park Street, Suite 2
PO Box 701
Tupper Lake, NY 12986



Am I Qualified to be a Foster Grandparent?

All you need to join is the ability to give the kind of comfort and love that sets a child on the path toward a successful future. If you're 55 or older and want to share your experience and compassion, you have what it takes to be a Foster Grandparent.

You'll also receive a small bi-weekly, non-taxable stipend that cannot be held against any current benefits you may already have as well as paid mileage for your travel. Additionally, you receive paid holidays, vacations, sick and personal leave.



Seminarian's journey: 'Desire and God's plan'

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

Far from his home in Haiti, seminarian Ladouceur Flarissaint, currently serving in a pastoral year in the Catholic Community of St. Peter, St. Mary and St. Hedwig in Lowville, Glenfield and Houseville, says God has been leading him on a journey that doesn't look now as he initially thought it would.

"I cannot talk about coming to Ogdensburg without talking about my journey," he said. I was in Iowa at a seminary belonging to the Society of the Divine Word, a religious order. They educate young men from around the world - there were about 22 nationalities at the seminary."

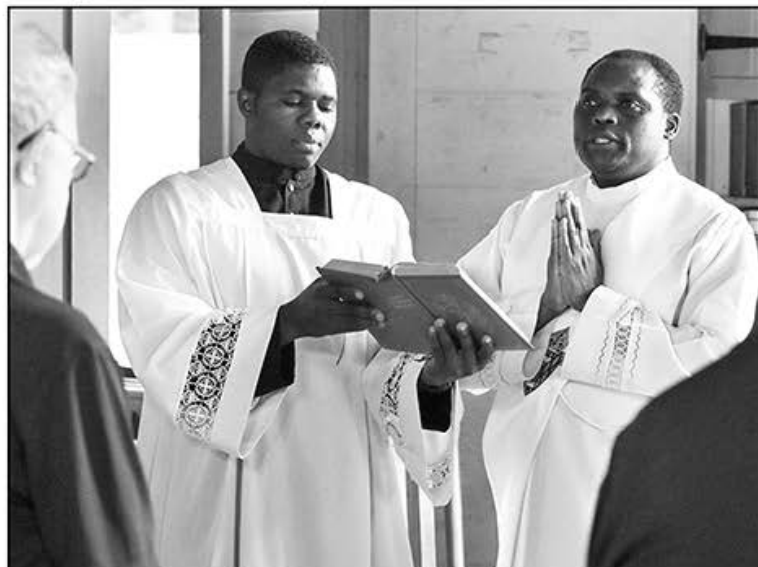
Flarissaint said he arrived in the United States during the pandemic in 2020 and immediately began coursework in English as a Second Language. After studying English for over a year, he began working on a bachelor's degree in philosophy with a minor in interculturality, a degree he completed prior to his arrival in the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

While he enjoyed his time with the Society of the Divine Word, Flarissaint said he increasingly felt God calling him in a different direction.

"I felt more intrigued by the lifestyle of a diocesan priest," he said. "I began to try to see if I could find a diocese in the U.S. Contacting friends and talking to my spiritual director and formators, I was able to talk to a seminarian, Michelet Boncoeur, now a deacon here. He put me in contact with (Vicar for Clergy and director of Seminarians) Father Chris Carrara."

Flarissaint had to obtain permission from the Society of the Divine Word before he could apply to study as a seminarian for the Diocese of Ogdensburg. He was granted permission, applied and was accepted.

"So far, I can say the Holy Spirit worked that way to get me here," he said. "I think the community here needed me. I



Seminarian Ladouceur Flarissaint, left, serves at a Mass celebrated at the Camp Gugenheim Lodge during the annual gathering of seminarians.

sing every morning for Mass. Some Saturdays and Sundays, there was no music in church. Whenever there is no music, I step in, pick a couple songs and sing with the people. The people here are happy to have me with them, and I'm happy to be with them. It's a nice community - people are so welcoming and friendly."

Flarissaint said it was his family's faith and example that set him on that journey that eventually led to our diocese.

"I'm the fourth of eight children - six boys and two girls," he said. "I grew up in a Catholic family and received education in Catholic school. I learned the value of hard work and deepened my faith, and I began to discern my vocation to the priesthood. Growing up, I was surrounded by family, friends and good community. At around age 11, I was inspired while serving alongside the priest as an altar server."

Flarissaint said his mother was a strong witness to the faith.

"My mom always encourages us to pray and to sit together saying the rosary and praying the Our Father," he said. "She wanted us to pray."

Flarissaint's path to the semi-

nary wasn't linear, though.

"I developed a deep love of learning," he said. "After high school, I spent countless hours reading and discovering the world through books. That led me to attend journalism school. I later worked at a radio station in a parish and educated listeners about the Catholic faith. We did question and answer sessions with a priest. All those experiences gave me more time to discern whether I was called to become a priest or not, whether to enter a seminary or continue a career in journalism."

He was later introduced to the Society of the Divine Word, and his experience with the community convinced him to pursue God's call.

Flarissaint said his time in Lowville, Glenfield and Houseville has fostered his vocation.

"I am here with Father Sony (Pulickal, pastor), and he's a very humble man, and I learn a lot from him," he said. "I'm ready to learn more and more from him. Really seeing the diocesan priestly lifestyle, I feel it's there I want to be. I'm taking this as a year of discernment and learning."

While he said he sometimes misses his family and home in Haiti, Flarissaint said he's bless-

ed to be in the North Country.

"Since I've been here a while, I get used to being away from family," he said. "Even for priests from here, everyone would like to be with their families, but that's not always possible. Sometimes, like when I see I'm the only dark-skinned person, I wonder if this is where God wants me to be. But then I think it's for all of us to see his wonder, see his creation, see people who are different. And I don't see much difficulty. People are good to me, and I'm trying my best to be good to them."

He also said the North Country feels very similar to his first home in the United States, Iowa.

"Just driving around places is still the same," Flarissaint said. "There are corn fields all around Iowa, and there are corn fields all around Lowville. Both places have a lot of corn and cows."

When he's not experiencing the North Country, serving at a Mass or reading, Flarissaint said he enjoys kicking around a football - a soccer ball in the U.S. He'd love to have more opportunities to participate in the sport.

"Here, I don't really get a chance," he said. "So I've been dedicating myself to reading."

Flarissaint offered the following advice to individuals discerning their vocations.

"Based on my own experience with discerning the priesthood, I can say that if a man is thinking about this vocation, he needs to take time to listen deeply to God in prayer and be honest with himself about his desires, fears and motivations," he said. "I understand that the priesthood is not about being perfect, but about being willing to serve with love and sacrifice, following the example of Christ. If you feel called by God to serve the Church as a priest, talk to a trusted priest or spiritual director who can guide you. Do not rush, because discernment takes time, and it is all your desires and God's plan."

Gospel justice

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

sociates and others. The committee looks at the broader concerns, and we try to determine what actions we can do."

Human trafficking has been one of the committee's causes in recent years.

"We work a lot on education," Sister Bethany said. "We've been getting people together to learn about trafficking and learn how to prevent it. The hope is that they'll be inspired by these discussions and create opportunities for similar discussions in their communities."

Faith and ecology also fall under the social justice committee's umbrella.

"We've been working on water," Sister Bethany said. "That's something the sisters asked us to work on several years ago. And we do a lot of work on single-use plastics. They get into the water, and it affects the water and all the species in the water and drinking the water - so they affect everything. We've been working with the schools and religious education programs to collect plastics that are typically not recyclable to make into railings and decking. Last year, Augustinian Academy students collected over 1,000 pounds of plastics, and they're getting a bench as a result. They've already collected 500 pounds more towards another bench."

The Faith and Ecology groups have also been working to promote ecology at schools through the Green Apple Award program, a program that highlights the work being done by students to care for God's creation.

The Sisters of St. Joseph also committed to a Laudato Si Action Plan, a plan to address seven areas within that encyclical of

Pope Francis, to be completed within seven years.

Ecology and social justice are intertwined, Sister Bethany noted.

"Care for creation, racism and immigration are all related," she said. "That's something we've been working on along with sisters from around the country and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. Meetings we've had at both the state and federal level include talk of the interconnectedness between those things. If you look at human trafficking, for example, refugees and immigrants, many displaced because of the effects of climate change, are among the most vulnerable."

Along with that leadership conference, the local Sisters of St. Joseph, joined by members of the lay associates and faith and ecology committees, participated in Bread for the World's "Offerings of Letters," a campaign to write letters to legislative representatives about issues related to hunger.

The Sisters of St. Joseph Social Justice Committee has also been working to establish relationships with local state and federal representatives.

"We want to have established relationships with them, so we can encourage them to protect individuals and the earth," said Sister Bethany. "And we want to affirm them when they are doing that."

One of the Sisters of St. Joseph Social Justice Committee's key jobs, though, is discernment.

"Trying to decide what little things we can do to address such huge needs can be very challenging," said Sister Bethany. "We can't do everything, but we need to do something. There's a lot of discernment involved in that. We just want to do what God is asking us to do."

Dying with Christ - Living with Hope conference will be Nov. 29 in Saranac Lake

Respect Life Office

When we make a commitment to die with Christ, we can truly live with hope. Learn about New York State Physician Assisted Suicide Bill (PAS) and Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) on Saturday, November 29 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake.

Discussions feature theological and healthcare professionals giving perspectives on suffering, grief, dying and our Christian duty to care.

Dying with Christ - Living with Hope is a Christian Medical and Dental Association of Canada program. Videos are followed by small group discussions. The Question-and-answer panel will feature Jessica Rodgers, coalition director of the Patients' Rights Action Fund, Dale Barr, RN., Dr. Maura Fehlner, PHD and Mr. John Miner, Respect Life director.

Rodgers defends people with disabilities, elderly and poor from the threat of Physician Assisted Suicide. She is knowledgeable about Canada's MAID and the NYS bill as well as how PAS has progressed through 11 states. NYS has the only bill that includes these dangerous features: no wait period, no residency requirement and allows tele-health.

Barr has been a registered nurse for 40 years, working 24 years in long-term care and

the past 16 years at Carefor Hospice Cornwall, Ontario Canada. Dale has experienced how MAID has impacted the lives on Canadians in the ten years since its implementation and how safeguards and restrictions have been removed to expand accessibility to more people. Today, one in 20 deaths in Canada are from MAID.

Those serving as small group leaders are Steve Tartaglia, Diocese of Ogdensburg Family Life director, Angelo and Suzanne Pietropaoli, Diocese of Ogdensburg

Natural Family Planning directors, Deacon John and Dr. Fehlner, Barr, and John and Colleen Miner, Respect Life directors.

Following the conference, attendees are invited to attend 4:30 Mass at St. Bernard's Church. Pre-registration is requested at <https://www.rcdony.org/livingwithhope>. A \$10 donation covers lunch and supplies. Walk-ins are welcome and asked to arrive at 9:30 a.m. Please contact The Respect Life office with any questions at atcmin-er@rcdony.org



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Dying With Christ
Living With Hope

Saturday, November 29th (10-4)

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Registration: (\$10 donation requested)
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CALLED TO SERVE

When funds are available

I truly hope this column is outdated before you read it. A compromise to end the stalemate that has caused the federal government to stop would be welcome news. My gut says that is unlikely, but I can hope.

Not-for-profit social agencies, state and local departments, and church sponsored ministries are all preparing for the inevitable requests for food, water, diapers and wipes, and all those necessities that will be wanting when the shutdown extends beyond November 1.

And heating assistance. The utility computes how much electricity and/gas we used in a house or an apartment each month. Depending on the individual's earnings, the state provides Home Energy Assistance to some qualified households through a program administered by the counties.

Here's the rub. New York State gets its funding from the federal government. The HEAP manual published online says, "Program dates for each HEAP

component are based on funding availability."

That's government speak that translates during a shutdown as "we ain't got any money."

The same dilemma faces SNAP users. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is a federal program that provides monthly benefits to

low-income households to help them purchase food.

Clients are nervous. SNAP cards are pre-loaded at the beginning of the month with whatever the household is entitled to spend. By the end of October, the cards are empty. Folks use their cards when replenished to fill the cupboard for November.

If the shutdown continues, the SNAP cards will not be replenished. The trickle-down effect will be on food markets since they will not see the purchase volume seen in the past.

If your parish operates a soup line, expect an increase in numbers. It might be slow at first, but it is bound

to increase.

If your parish operates a helpline for families in distress, you can count on the numbers picking up.

Parishes can plan for an increase in the need for disposable diapers and wipes. We rarely see a mother wash diapers these days, unless she is Amish or traditional.

There will be new demands for counseling and handholding.

Whatever your politics, the shutdown will cause disruptions and no little angst. It is time for all of us involved in ministries offered by our parishes to pray for our involvement and for those we serve and will serve.

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

To Report Abuse

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

If you have a complaint of suspected sexual abuse or related misconduct by the bishops, contact the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service at 800-276-1562 or www.ReportBishopAbuse.org



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

Bishop's Public Schedule

Nov. 5 – 9:30 a.m. – Mass with the Students at Augustinian Academy in Carthage followed by Classroom Visits
Nov. 6 – 11 a.m. – Development Board of Advisors Meeting at Bishop's Residence
Nov. 10-13 – United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Plenary Assembly in Baltimore, Maryland

Rest in Peace

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

Nov. 5 – Most Rev. David E. Bacon, 1874; Rev. Tryphone Van de Walle, 1948; Rev. Bernard Wyzykowski, 1969; Rev. John Michael Wyzykowski, 1969
Nov. 7 – Rev. Dennis Nolan, 1911; Rev. William Ouellette, O.M.I., 1936; Msgr. William H. Brennan, 1986; Deacon Peter J. Lawless, 2020
Nov. 8 – Rev. Patrick McGilligan, 1828
Nov. 10 – Msgr. Francis M. Kenny, 1952; Msgr. Raphael A. Hoffman, 1968
Nov. 11 – Rev. Edward O. Hervieux, 1947; Msgr. Bernard E. Christman, 2012

Protecting God's Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled Protecting God's Children training sessions. This required training addresses child abuse, the methods and means by which abusers commit abuse, and the five steps to prevent abuse from occurring and stop it from continuing. Pre-registration is encouraged at www.virtus.org. Upcoming sessions:
Nov. 7 – 6 p.m. – Immaculate Heart Central School, Watertown

Environmental Stewardship

Ultimate in travel

Not many noteworthy changes have occurred in transportation over the past century. In recent years, however, a new form of travel has crept into our culture. It creates strong feelings among people on the road. Drivers are encountering more relatively fast moving bikes that seem to move themselves. These sporty devices occasionally stir feelings of anger from motorists who encounter them as they weave between the shoulder, a sidewalk and the edge of a lane of traffic.

E-bikes are becoming more popular, especially among young people who want to travel around a community without using much leg power. Drivers often become frustrated with them as they encroach onto a roadway from the shoulder as their small size makes them hard to see. They can also appear out of nowhere as they often blend into the scenery.

From an ecological viewpoint, e-bikes and e-scooters are considered the most efficient means of travel around a town or village. In fact, one study found that an e-bike that is charged from a source of renewable energy, such as solar or wind has a slightly lower carbon footprint than a regular bicycle. When comparing the amount of CO2 emitted for growing and transporting the food utilized by an individual pedaling a bike, it is often higher than what is released to the air from the energy production to charge the e-bike's battery.

If we all used an e-bike for commuting, doing errands or going to Mass, we could reduce the amount of harmful gases expelled to the atmosphere and lower use of fossil fuels.

So, next time an individual on an e-bike or e-scooter cuts in front of you as you step out of a store, smile at the person rather than becoming angry. Don't forget that as followers of Jesus, we are a compassionate and forgiving people. Also, they are doing a favor for our planet in helping to improve the quality of the air that we breathe.

North Country Catholic has Green option

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changes

FACES OF FAITH



North Country Cursillo held a Men's Weekend, the first since COVID, Oct. 9-12 at the Adirondack House of Prayer in Ellenburg. Pictured are, new Cursillistas Joe Hosler, John Hanosek, Jay Carter, Wally Poupore and Glenn Christian, along with team members Michael Neaton, David Petrelli, Father Al Hauser, and Ken Racette.



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin discusses "Finishing the Race to Grace" at a gathering of the Commissioned Lay Ministers Association of the Jefferson-Lewis Deanery on Oct. 23 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church in Watertown.



The Malone Council #308 of the Knights of Columbus recently held a chicken and biscuit dinner to benefit the October Women's Healing Retreat at Wadham's Hall. Pictured are some of the members and volunteers who prepared and served the meal. The event raised over \$1100 for the retreat.



St. Mary's Youth Group in Constableville enjoyed pizza and Halloween pumpkin carving on Friday evening, Oct 24. Deacon Mike Lieber organized the event along with his wife Jean. (Above) Beck Wilton gives his pumpkin a missing bottom tooth to match his own smile. (Below) Daisy Mae, Olivia and Nyah work to empty their pumpkins for carving.



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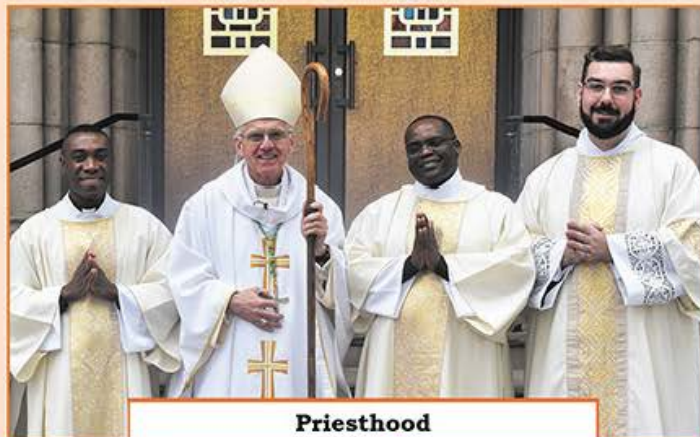
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National Vocation Awareness Week November 2-8, 2025



Priesthood



Love is patient, love is kind.

Renewal of Marriage Vows

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



**Vocation Office
Diocese of
Ogdensburg**



Consecrated Religious Life

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Man pleads guilty to killing priest in Nebraska rectory

A man accused of fatally stabbing a Nebraska Catholic priest has pleaded guilty to the murder of Father Stephen Gutsell and other charges. Gutsell, 65, died after deputies found him stabbed in December 2023. Gutsell had been serving as the parish priest at St. John the Baptist Parish in Fort Calhoun, Nebraska. Deputies charged Kierre L. Williams in the attack that took place in the rectory next to the church. Williams filed a notice in December 2024 that he would argue he is not responsible for the murder by reason of insanity and filed a "not guilty" plea in February 2024. Williams changed his plea to "guilty" of murder, burglary, and weapons charges on Oct. 21. "We are glad that Mr. Williams chose to hold himself accountable and not put Father Gutsell's family, relatives, friends, or this community through a trial," Scott Vander Schaaf, a county prosecutor, said in a statement. Prosecutors decided early in the case that they would not pursue the death penalty. Williams faces life in prison without parole. Sentencing is set for Nov. 12.

New York, California pour money into Planned Parenthood

New York and California are pouring taxpayer dollars into Planned Parenthood, joining several other states in counteracting the federal defunding of the abortion giant. California Gov. Gavin Newsom pledged \$140 million to Planned Parenthood locations in California on Oct. 24. On the same day, New York Gov. Kathy Hochul committed \$35 million in funding to Planned Parenthood locations in New York. Both states are known for their abortion shield laws, which protect abortionists who mail abortion pills into states where they are illegal. Several women are suing California and New York abortionists after being poisoned by or coerced into taking the abortion pill by the fathers of their children. New York and California join several other states that have made similar moves in light of the yearlong federal defunding of Planned Parenthood. Colorado, Massachusetts, and Washington have all taken similar steps to replace lost federal funding for Planned Parenthood over the past few months.

St. Paul Center kicks off 'largest Bible study in America'

The St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology is launching a new Bible study program to help Catholics prepare for the Advent and Christmas seasons. The Bible study, titled "Bible Across America," is set to begin Nov. 5 and aims to gather Catholics "around God's Word to prayerfully study Scripture, grow in discipleship, and build one another up in the Lord," the organization announced. The course represents the latest addition to the St. Paul Center, whose offerings include online courses, academic books on Scripture and theology, and in-person events for clergy and laity across the country. Based in Steubenville, Ohio, the St. Paul Center is an independent, nonprofit research and educational institution dedicated, according to its website, to promoting "life-transforming Scripture study from the heart of the Church" and through its programming seeks "to raise up a new generation of priests who are fluent in the Bible and laypeople who are biblically literate."

Bishops plead with lawmakers to end shutdown, protect SNAP

By Tyler Arnold
Catholic News Agency

Catholic bishops in the United States are urging federal lawmakers to find a solution that opens the government and saves the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

"The U.S. bishops are deeply alarmed that essential programs that support the common good, such as SNAP, may be interrupted," Archbishop Timothy Broglio, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), said in a statement on Oct. 28.

The government shutdown reached its 29th day on Oct. 29 as lawmakers negotiated over extending taxpayer subsidies that lower health insurance costs under the Affordable Care Act and providing funding for a wall on the southern border, food assistance, and military pay. Most of the 2.9 million civilian federal workers are not receiving paychecks, and benefits for SNAP recipients will cease on Nov. 1 unless some action is taken to provide funding.

"This would be catastrophic for families and individuals who rely on SNAP to put food on the table and places the burdens of this shutdown most heavily on the poor and vulnerable of our nation, who are the least able to move forward," Broglio said. "This consequence is unjust and unacceptable."

About 42 million Americans receive SNAP benefits, and some Catholic charitable organizations have expressed concern that any halt to the program would be difficult to remedy with simply private charity.

"The U.S. bishops have consistently advocated for public policies that support those in need," Broglio said. "I urgently plead with lawmakers and the administration to work in a bipartisan way to ensure that these lifesaving programs are funded and to pass a government funding bill to end the government shutdown as quickly as possible."

Archbishop William Lori of the Archdiocese of Baltimore — the first American diocese — also issued a statement on Tuesday, reminding the people of Maryland that archdiocesan ministries "remain open and active, providing care and support across central and western Maryland."

"I encourage anyone in need to reach out to these ministries without hesita-

Catholic Charities seeks to help fill gaps

Catholic News Agency

Catholic Charities USA has launched an emergency fundraising effort to support those about to lose access to federal food assistance in the coming days.

Due to the ongoing government shutdown, funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will lapse on Nov. 1, meaning millions of Americans will no longer have access to food assistance.

"For low-income families and individuals who rely on SNAP and WIC to put food on their tables, this could be a catastrophic moment," Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) President and CEO Kerry Alys Robinson said in an Oct. 30 press release announcing the emergency effort. "The Catholic Charities network stands ready to come to the aid of our vulnerable brothers and sisters during this time of dire need."

Contributions made to CCUSA's designated donation portal will go directly toward helping "provide meals for those most at risk." The group will use the donated funds to buy and ship food to its agencies across the country that have food pantries, soup kitchens, and food delivery programs, the release stated.

No one should face this hardship alone," the archbishop said.

Lori said shutdowns "have far-reaching consequences," especially for "the most vulnerable among us — families living paycheck to paycheck, parents worried about feeding their children, and seniors already balancing the cost of medications and groceries."

"When vital government services are interrupted or delayed, the result is more than an inconvenience — it can mean hunger, anxiety, and hardship for our brothers and sisters in need," the archbishop said.

As of Wednesday, 25 states sued President Donald Trump's administration over the possible halt to SNAP benefits.

Secret euthanasia house draws ire in Canada

By Terry O'Neill
The B.C. Catholic

The furtive establishment of a stand-alone, private euthanasia house in Victoria, the capital city of the Canadian province of British Columbia, has sparked criticism from pro-lifers and exposed yet another way in which medical assistance in dying (MAID) is spreading throughout America's neighbor to the North.

A Toronto-based nonprofit called MAiDHouse opened the euthanasia facility at an undisclosed location in the provincial capital in February. It launched a Toronto MAID house in 2021.

Euthanasia opponents are troubled by the under-the-radar expansion of MAID facilities, especially since the unidentified houses may be in residential neighborhoods.

The MAID houses appear to have the full backing of the federal government. Not only has the Canada Revenue Agency granted MAiDHouse, also known as Assisted-Dying Resource Centres Canada, full charity status, but Health Canada lists it as one of 10 national "resources."

"I can't figure out how an organization that kills people can be a charity," said Alex Schadenberg, executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition. "Every time you think Canada's MAID pandemic can't get worse, you learn that it's reached a new low."

Schadenberg said MAiDHouse portrays its

facilities as comforting and friendly, "but it's actually pretty insane if you think about it because they exist solely to kill people."

MAiDHouse did not respond to repeated B.C. Catholic requests for comment about the Victoria facility's location, whether it received permits or zoning approval from the city, or whether nearby residents are aware of its operation.

According to information published by MAiDHouse, "those eligible for MAID, along with their supporters, come to MAiDHouse only on the day of their provision. Individuals meeting a potential MAiD provider for an assessment attend only on the day of that meeting and may rebook the space for their provision if found eligible. Anyone considering booking MAiDHouse is also welcome to schedule a tour of the space in advance."

The B.C. Catholic reached out to the city of Victoria for comment but received no reply. An online search did not show any Victoria business licenses for 2025 in the name of MAiDHouse, Assisted-Dying Resource Centres Canada, or any employees or board members.

The secrecy and the silence are disconcerting, said Christian McCay, spokesman for Choose Life Victoria.

"I am deeply disturbed that MAiDHouse has been quietly operating a stand-alone euthanasia house in Victoria," McCay said in an emailed statement. "Finding out

that it has been here for half a year without the public being told is in itself deeply wrong, to say the least."

He noted that Victoria has long been seen as the euthanasia capital of the world, and MAiDHouse's operating "only makes it worse."

A spokesperson for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria referred questions about MAiDHouse's existence in the city to Bishop Gary Gordon's 2022 pastoral letter on MAID.

In that letter, Gordon wrote: "The ideology of euthanasia [MAID] is understandable on many levels in contemporary society, as the experience of loss and abandonment is a powerful force of fear and anxiety."

He said Catholics cannot judge the level of such fear and anguish in a person who chooses euthanasia.

"However," Gordon continued, "we can say unequivocally to the faithful Catholic people of God that choosing euthanasia [MAID] is never a choice that is the will of the Creator, as revealed in the sacred texts of divine revelation, the Word of God, and the constant teaching of the Catholic and apostolic faith."

In that letter, Gordon pointed to the parable of the good Samaritan as a model for Christian response to suffering.

He noted that the Samaritan "did not offer to alleviate the suffering of the nearly-dead robbed person with euthanasia." The commandment is clear, he said: "Thou shalt not kill." Our faith contin-

ues to clearly and unequivocally reject euthanasia and assisted suicide as a response to pain and suffering of body, mind, and soul."

At the same time, Gordon acknowledged the fear and anguish that can drive a person toward MAID.

"But leaving a person abandoned by the side of the road of existence when robbed of health and strength is never the choice of a good neighbor or a just and caring civil society. Choosing euthanasia is never a choice that is the will of the Creator," he emphasized.

Victoria pro-life advocate Marie Peeters-Ney, a member of Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, was saddened by the news of MAiDHouse's arrival in her community, but she called it predictable.

"Once you start killing, there's like a feeding frenzy, and it just gets bigger and bigger," said Peeters-Ney, whose husband, prominent pro-life child and family psychiatrist Dr. Philip Ney, died in January.

She said Canadians need to clear their heads of the "virtual reality" that allows them to condemn killing when it comes to the death penalty or genocide, while ignoring realities like MAiDHouse. "We are paying people to kill our loved ones."

Vancouver podcast-

er Kelsi Sheren, a critic of Canada's MAID regime, devoted a recent episode of her show to MAiDHouse, saying its business model "thrives on nothing but despair."

Sheren, a Canadian Forces combat veteran, said MAiDHouse operators are morally bankrupt and are "predators at best" who practice "death care," not health care.

McCay, who was elected leader of the Christian Heritage Party of B.C. on Oct. 18, called for the provincial government to provide better care for the sick and the dying, including MAID-free public hospices.

"True quality palliative care and medical care is being denied," he said. "Instead, patients are being coerced, abandoned, and pressured to see death as their only option. That is not dignity, that is despair."


According to the most recent Health Canada report, B.C. recorded 2,759 MAID deaths in 2023, 18% of Canada's 15,343 total. The report also stated that, at 37.8%, private residences were the most frequent location for MAID deaths, followed by hospitals at 32.7%.

This story was first published by The B.C. Catholic and has been adapted by CNA.

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CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

FIRST FRIDAY

Champlain — St. Mary's to have Mass, Exposition and Benediction every first Friday of the month.

Date: Nov. 7

Schedule: 9 a.m. Mass followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. 11 a.m. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

HARVEST DINNER

Morrisonville — St. Alexander to have a Turkey Harvest Dinner.

Date: Nov. 9

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

Place: Take-out only. Pick up or Curb side deliver at St. Alexander Church

Cost: \$15

Features: Also available at the door will be Raffle tickets, Basket Raffle and Bake Shop

Contact: For Home delivery within 10 miles call 518-561-5039

SOAKING PRAYERS SESSIONS

Plattsburgh — Soaking prayer Sessions to be held the first Monday of each month.

Date: Dec. 1

Time: 1 p.m. to 3 and 6 p.m. to 8

Place: Newman Center

Features: Praise and worship followed by soaking prayer. Led by Eve McGill, Living Waters Ministry. All are welcome.

Contact: evemcgill@charter.net 518-645-2648

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

HOLY HOUR AND DIVINE MERCY

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

Date: Nov. 2

Time: Following 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

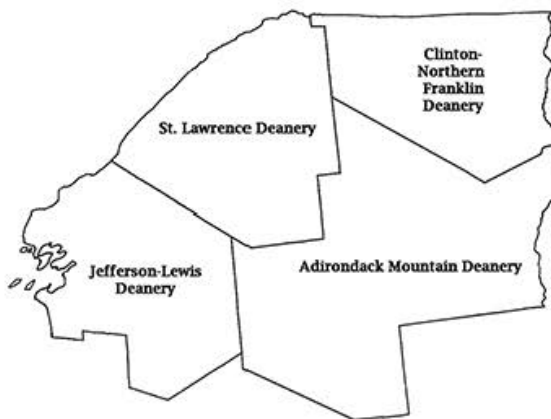
Contact: 315-348-6260

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

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

Date: Dec. 14

Time: 8 a.m. to noon



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.

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

Place: St. James Community Room

Cost: Adults, \$10; Seniors, \$8; Children under 10, \$5; Family of 4, \$30

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

Contact: For more information call 315-493-3224

RAFFLE

Constableville — Raffle to be held for youth and Faith Formation activities.

Date: Drawing Dec. 21

Time: 10 a.m.

Place: St. Mary's after Mass

Cost: Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20

Features: First-place winner will receive a Virtual Reality Headset, the second-place winner will receive a 50" smart television and the third-place winner will receive a ten-inch tablet.

Contact: They can be purchased after the 10am Mass, from various St. Mary's parents, by calling the Parish office at 315-348-6104 or by going online to <https://catholicparishesofslc.weebly.com/church-offering--raffles.html>

ST. LAWRENCE

FALL BAZAAR

Massena — St. Peter's Parish to

have their Annual Fall Bazaar.

Date: Nov. 8

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

Place: St. Mary's Social Hall

Features: Free admission, cost for food, raffles and fun.

Contact: For more information call 315-769-2469

PATRIOTIC ROSARY

Ogdensburg — To commemorate Veterans Day, the Legion of Mary will be praying the Patriotic Rosary.

Date: Nov. 9

Time: Noon

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: We cordially invite all our parishioners AND fellow Catholics throughout the diocese to join us in praying for all our Veterans--- active, retired, and deceased--- as well as for the needs of our country.

MONTHLY BRUNCH

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

Date: Nov. 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; Take-outs available

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

RAFFLE

Potsdam — The Potsdam Knights of Columbus Council 340 will be having a raffle.

Date: Dec. 17

Time: 7 p.m. (winners need not be present)

Cost: \$5 a ticket or 5 for \$20

Features: First Prize, Cutco Knife; Second Prize, Syracuse Mets Family Fun Pack; Third Prize, Stay and Play at the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino; Thirty or more additional prizes.

Contact: For more information contact Grand Knight Michael Lahendro at mlanhendro@hotmail.com or joecatholictebo@gmail.com

TRIVIA NIGHT

Ogdensburg — The Vocations Committee for the Catholic Churches of Ogdensburg, Heuvelton and Lisbon is planning a Trivia Night.

Date: Jan. 2

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

Place: Martin Fieldhouse

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

Contact: More rules and registration at www.ogdensburgcatholics.net/trivia or email vocation-sarenotttrivial@rcdony.org

ROSARY WITH DEVOTIONS

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

Date: Dec. 6

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: Dec. 6

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.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

ULTREYA

Plattsburgh — North Country Cursillo will hold its next Ultreya.

Date: Nov. 7

Time: 6 p.m. to 8

Place: St. John XXIII Newman Center

Features: Ultreya meetings are open to all Cursillistas and guests interested in learning more about the Cursillo Movement.

Contact: Please RSVP to Marika Donders, Post Cursillo Coordinator at mdonders@rcdony.org. Also, email Marika if you are a Cursillista in our diocese and are not receiving emails about our events in order to be added to our North Country Cursillo mailing list. Please include when and where you made your Cursillo weekend.

LIVING WITH HOPE

Saranac Lake — The Respect Life Office will be have a discussion to learn more about NYS Physician Assisted Suicide Bill and Canada's MAID.

Date: Nov. 29

Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Place: St. Bernard's Church

Cost: \$10 donation requested

Features: The theme will be "Dying with Christ, Living with Hope". When we make a commitment to die with Christ, we can truly live with hope. Discussions feature theologians and healthcare professionals giving perspectives on suffering, grief, dying and our Christian duty to care. **Contact:** Registration: <https://www.rcdony.org/livingwithhope> Questions contact Colleen Miner at cminer@rcdony.org

Exhibit examines Pope Leo XIV's ancestry

By Tessa Gervasini
Catholic News Agency

A Boston exhibit is inviting guests to explore Pope Leo XIV's family tree in depth, spanning 14 generations of history tracing the pontiff's connections to noblemen, freedom fighters, enslaved men and women, and even modern-day pop culture stars.

American Ancestors, a national center for family history, heritage, and culture, created the "The Ancestry of Pope Leo XIV: An American Story" exhibit for people to discover the first American pontiff's lineage by reading stories, searching records, and exploring his family tree.

The exhibit presents information compiled by expert genealogists to highlight the pope's history, because "the diversity of his ancestry is as layered as the history of America itself," Ryan Woods, CEO of American Ancestors, told CNA.

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Tracing 14 generations

Shortly after the first American pontiff was announced, historian and genealogist Jari Honora publicly noted that the pope surprisingly had Black and Louisiana Creole ancestry. The finding inspired a number of other researchers to dig into the pope's family tree.

Following the announcement, American Ancestors wanted "to research the full ancestry of Pope Leo XIV," Woods explained. Henry Louis Gates Jr., host of the ancestry television show "Finding Your Roots" on PBS, helped lead the charge alongside other genealogists from American Ancestors and the Cuban Genealogical Club of Miami.

"Over just a few days, we were able to bring his lineage back 14 generations," Woods said. Once the research was complete, The New York Times published it in June as an interactive report.

Archivists from the Archdiocese of New Orleans had created a Louisiana family tree after discovering that Pope Leo's mother had ties to New Orleans. Following the publication of Gates' findings they realized the research did not include Catholic records from New Orleans, which had left out some additional stories.

The archdiocese found archives dating to the early 1720s with the help of "sacramental records of baptisms, marriages, funerals, and burials," Sarah Waits, research archivist for the archdiocese, told CNA.

"The Catholic aspect of his family and ... the records that [the archdiocese] has in the archives are absolutely fundamental for any genealogy research," said Waits, who worked directly on the New Orleans family tree. "We realized that we had a treasure trove right in our own archive related to his family."

The archdiocese shared its family tree to add to Gates' research and expand the family tree with the additional records. Gates later presented the completed research to Pope Leo at a private audience at the Vatican in July.

American Ancestors decided to open the experience to the public through the new exhibit that opened Oct. 4. It has already drawn a number of "curious and interested" people.

"To have a world leader show the relative complexity and richness of American families and its history was something we thought was really important, both for the study of genealogy [and] history itself," Woods said.

Surprising finds
The in-depth research revealed a number of surprising connections that the exhibit details.

Through one ancestor named Louis Boucher de Grandpre, the pope is related to numerous Canadian-derived distant cousins including former Canadian prime ministers Pierre

Trudeau and Justin Trudeau, Hillary Clinton, actress Angelina Jolie, and singers Justin Bieber and Madonna.

A number of Louis' other descendants ended up settling in New Orleans. Through this connection, "the family in New Orleans was identified within the Black Creole community," Waits said.

Then going back a few more generations there were "records of enslaved ancestors, even into the 1820s and 1830s," Waits said. "So ... not that many generations ago, the Holy Father had enslaved ancestors."

The researchers identified four white ancestors who owned slaves in the U.S. They suspect there were probably others in Cuba, which was a slaveholding society. They also discovered that eight of Pope Leo's Black ancestors are known to have enslaved at least 40 other people of color.

The farthest back the overall research spanned was to Spain in the 1500s on Pope Leo's mother's side. Four of his 11th-great-grandfathers are listed as "hidalgos," or minor untitled nobility. One of their grandchildren was even a captain of land and sea in the Royal Armada who spent years fighting Dutch privateers trying to take over Portugal's colonial holdings in America.

The research even revealed how the pope got his surname, Prevost. At least five generations of his father's ancestors were born in Sicily, including the pope's grandfather, Salvatore Giovanni Gaetano Riggiano Alito, who

is believed to have immigrated to the U.S. in 1905. Salvatore was on his way to becoming a priest but was unable to take his vows and chose to marry instead.

The family tree showed that two of Salvatore's children were not his wife's sons but rather the children of a French woman named Suzanne Louise Marie Fontaine. Salvatore and Suzanne had two sons — Jean, the pope's uncle, and Louis, the pope's father. They were given their grandmother's maiden name, Prevost, which led to the pontiff's French last name.

An exhibit with a mission

Pope Leo's history is diverse, with "stories of enslavers and enslaved people, immigrants from France, Spain, and Haiti," Woods said. He explained the hope is that sharing Pope Leo's rich history will inspire people to look into their own lineage.

"Recent surveying in the United States has shown that more than 70% of Americans believe knowing your family history is important, but only about 10% have actually actively researched their family history," Woods said. "So people can see this global human story and begin to see the possibility of what they can find in their own family history."



SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

Temples of God

We celebrate today the dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome.

Look at the reading from Ezekiel. In his vision, Ezekiel saw water flowing from the temple and giving life everywhere the water touched. Wherever the water flows, everything shall live. Hearing those words, think back about our teaching on baptism. The flowing water of baptism gives life, supernatural life, to the one being baptized. When Christ was crucified, his side was pierced and water flowed from his side. The spiritual writers tell us that this flowing symbolizes God's love being spread over all of humanity.

Look at Paul's language in the second reading: "You are God's building built on the strong foundation, Jesus Christ himself." Then, he uses those words that are both beautiful and true: "You are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you... the temple of God, which you are, is holy."

All this culminates in the stunning story told in the Gospel of Jesus' flipping the tables and established procedures. His reason: the temple was a house of prayer, a sacred place, not a place for commerce. Then, he refers to his own body as a temple, a sacred place.

We respect the church building because the building is God's place. We also respect one another because we are made in the image of God and are living temples of the Holy Spirit, God's presence in our world. We respect the dead because they were worthy of our respect while on earth. Now, they are worthy of

our respect as they rest in peace.

It may seem strange to celebrate the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica, a church in Rome. Just as the Holy Father, the Pope, is the leader of Catholicism throughout the world. So, too, his cathedral building, St. John Lateran, is the lead church building of all Catholic church buildings throughout the world.

Catholic churches, Catholic parishes have always been known for their buildings. Appropriately, we treasure our church buildings because they represent the roots of our faith, visible expressions that play out in our church buildings; our buildings are our homes that have become part of us over time. So, over time, we reverence our buildings because they are God's home as well as the home for us, sons and daughters of God.

As people we celebrate birthdays and anniversaries because they are milestones in our lives. So, too, our church buildings form milestones in our lives.

When we lose respect for our God, then we lose respect for our church buildings such that, at best, they become historical museums or just interesting places. If we lose respect for God, as has happened in the lives of so many today, then we lose respect for his home and just don't bother going.

But what about human respect. Over the years human respect has diminished. If we do not esteem one another because we are temples of the Holy Spirit, then mutual respect disappears.



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

November 9

Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome

READINGS

Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12

1 Corinthians 3:9-11, 16-17

John 2:13-22

We have seen that loss in human respect as we witness the casual use of abortion, the increase in physical abuse especially in the family, the break-

down of family life when members have lost respect for the dignity and worth of each member of the family, the increase in crimes against humanity committed by individuals and by subgroups of people.

Likewise, reverence and respect for the dead have waned. Our decreased participation in funerals and the rites for the dead signal a decreased respect for the dead.

So, today, yes, we celebrate the anniversary of the dedication of a particular building. At the same time, this day should remind all of us about the sacredness of our buildings and the sacredness of our beings that are temples of the Holy Spirit.

Our buildings, our lives, our beloved dead all share the same cornerstone - our Savior, Jesus Christ.

A Century of Service and Devotion

The Catholic communities of St. Peter, St. Mary, and St. Hedwig would like to extend our deepest gratitude and congratulations to the St. Theresa's Guild on their 100th Anniversary. For a century, these remarkable women have selflessly served our parishes with unwavering dedication, compassion, and faith. Their care and commitment have been a cornerstone of our community — always dependable, always present, and always giving.

We honor their legacy and thank them for the countless ways they have enriched our spiritual lives and supported our parish families.

With heartfelt appreciation — thank you, St. Theresa's Guild.



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Wearing white in the Philippines

Until the Feast of Christ the King on November 23, Filipino Catholics will attend Mass every Sunday dressed in white, following the invitation from the Philippine Episcopal Conference to wear white clothes and display white ribbons in their homes, churches and public spaces as a symbol of the renewal of the nation, which suffers from the phenomenon of corruption and has been struck by recent disasters.

"It is a symbolic gesture intended to make the faithful aware that each of us is called to do our part in the fight against corruption, starting from the moral and spiritual levels, and



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

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

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to contribute to good governance in society. It is also a sign of heart, conversion and prayer to the Lord," explains Father Estaban Lo, Rector of the Minor Basilica of St. Lorenzo Ruiz in Manila and National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the Philippines, in an interview with *Fides*.

"We extend the invitation to the faithful and have placed white ribbons in front of the church. White reminds

us of the baptismal garment, the responsibility of all baptized people," he notes.

The circular, which was distributed in all churches and signed by the president of the Episcopal Conference, Cardinal Pablo Virgilio David, states that wearing white clothing and ribbons "symbolizes the people's appeal for transparency, responsibility, and good governance."

The gesture, the text

continues, also expresses "a humble prayer that our country, in the mercy of God, may be purified and renewed and spared from further disasters."

"May our white garments be the symbol of the purity we seek for our country and our hearts. May this time of prayer and penance lead us to hope, healing, and the restoration of our common life in truth and justice," the Philippine bishops write in their appeal.

The letter calls on all Catholics to unite "in a common act of penance and prayer" after the country was recently struck by natural disasters such as typhoons, volcanic eruptions, fires

and earthquakes, which have plunged numerous communities into absolute distress.

The letter also recalls the national call to prayer and public repentance, signed on October 6, which exhorts the faithful to pray daily, recite the rosary, perform acts of penance and participate in the Eucharist, imploring God's mercy and the healing of the country.

Article from FIDES missionary news service of the Pontifical Mission Societies. Please remember the Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Ogdensburg INC. when writing or changing your will.

OBITUARIES

Chateaugay – Sally Ann (O'Donnell) Douglas, 90; Grave-side Services Nov. 8, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church.

Colton – Donald F. Bonno, 93; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 31, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Harrisville – Karen Sue (Trombley) Baillargeon, 72; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 7, 2025 at St. Francis of Solanus Church; burial in St. Francis Cemetery.

Morrisonville – Charles J. Normandin, 87; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 3, 2025 at St. Alexander's Church; burial in St. James Cemetery, Cadyville.

Redford – Anna B. (Hurd) Bell, 92; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 4, 2025 at Church of the Assumption; burial in parish cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Gus A. Becker, Jr., 93; Funeral Services Nov. 7, 2025

at Fox & Murray Funeral Home.

Ogdensburg – Catherine M. (Boothe) Touron Denny, 101; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 31, 2025 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Brian J. Felitto, 82; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 1, 2025 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Ogdensburg – Loretta (Martin) Hazelton, 84; Graveside Services Oct. 29, 2025 at Ogdensburg Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Norma J. (Williams) Loverly, 78; Funeral Services Oct. 30, 2025 at Fox & Murray Funeral Home; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Ogdensburg – Leonard A. Montroy, 87; Mass of Christian Burial Oct. 31, 2025 at St. Mary's Cathedral; burial in Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

Ogdensburg – Nancy E. Reese, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 3, 2025 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Old Forge – Joyce (Salmon) Loson, 88; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 7, 2025 at St. Bartholomew's Church.

Port Henry – Stephanie (Wojewodzic) Hanchett, 74; Mass of

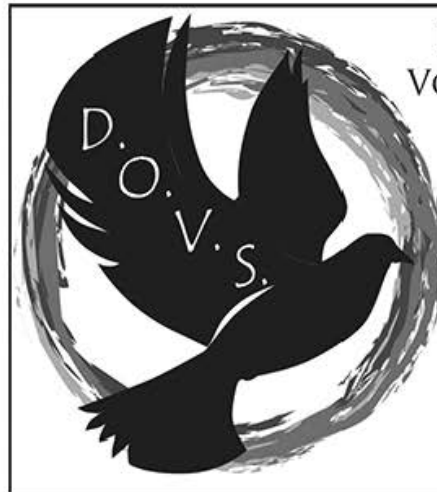
Christian Burial Oct. 29, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Watertown – Joyce (Schultz) Gawronski, 86; Mass of Christian Burial Nov. 5, 2025 at Holy Family Church; burial in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Chicago.

Watertown – James Leon Van Dusen, 81; Mass of Christian Burial

Nov. 3, 2025 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

West Chazy – Kenneth James Bond, 85; Funeral Services Nov. 5, 2025 at the R.W. Walker Funeral Home.



DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG VOCATIONS SOCIETY (D.O.V.S.)

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

"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you"

John 15:16

Pope calls for renewal of Catholic education

By Hannah Brockhaus
Catholic News Agency

Amid contemporary challenges to schools and universities — hyper-digitalization, social insecurity, and the crisis of relationships — a Catholic education should courageously teach the whole human person, Pope Leo XIV writes in a new apostolic letter.

In "Drawing New Maps of Hope," Leo reflects on the role of a Catholic education 60 years after the Oct. 28, 1965, proclamation of Gravissimum Educationis, the Second Vatican Council's declaration on Christian education.

"The Church celebrates a fruitful educational history but also faces the imperative to update its proposals in

light of the signs of the times," the pope writes in the letter, published in Italian on Oct. 28.

"We are aware of the difficulties: hyper-digitalization can fragment attention; the crisis of relationships can wound the psyche; social insecurity and inequalities can extinguish desire," he says. "Yet, it is precisely here that Catholic education can be a beacon: not a nostalgic refuge but a laboratory of discernment, pedagogical innovation, and prophetic witness."

In the eight-page document, the pontiff identifies three priorities for the educational community: cultivation of an interior life through space for silence, discernment, and dialogue with one's conscience and with God; formation

in a wise use of technology and artificial intelligence that puts the human person first; and education in language that is peace-building, nonviolent, and open to others.

He also notes the importance of making Catholic education financially accessible.

"Where access to education remains a privilege, the Church must push open doors and invent new paths, because 'losing the poor' is equivalent to losing the school itself," he writes.

Pope Leo in his letter draws attention to the digital environment and its impact on education, underlining that "technologies must serve the person, not replace them. They must enrich the learning process, not impoverish relation-

ships and communities."

"A Catholic university and school without vision risks soulless efficiency, the standardization of knowledge, which then becomes spiritual impoverishment," he says.

He urges schools to avoid "technophobia" while strengthening teachers' training in the digital sphere and promoting service-learning and responsible citizenship.

"No algorithm can replace what makes education human: poetry, irony, love, art, imagination, the joy of discovery, and even education in error as an opportunity for growth. The decisive point is not technology but the use we make of it," the pope writes.

The pontiff's docu-

ment also provides a vision of Christian education that "embraces the whole person: spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and physical. ... [Education] measures [its value] on the basis of dignity, justice, and the ability to serve the common good."

He opposes this Catholic vision to a "purely mercantilistic approach" that measures education in terms of functionality and practical utility, he writes.

Leo said forming the whole person means avoiding compartmentalization, because "when faith is true, it is not an added 'subject' but a breath that oxygenates every other subject. Thus, Catholic education becomes leaven in the human community."

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If the answer to any of those questions is yes, contact:



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