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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 79 Number 39

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

FEBRUARY 5, 2025

CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



(Left) Second grade students at Immaculate Heart Central in Watertown create bee puppets as part of the school's Art Extravaganza, part of its Catholic Schools Week celebration. (Right) Students at Seton Catholic in Plattsburgh attended opening Mass for Catholic Schools Week on Jan. 27. Read more about Catholic Schools Week on pages 3 and 4.

JUBILEE CALENDAR



Bishop Terry R. LaValley has released a calendar of events celebrating Jubilee 2025, the Holy Year of Hope. As part of the Jubilee, Bishop LaValley plans to celebrate Mass in long-term care facilities – nursing homes – around the diocese, bringing Jesus and his message of hope to those who are ill or injured, and those who care for them.

STORY ON PAGE 4, CALENDAR ON PAGE 5

Pope: Listen to God in all circumstances

By Kristina Millare
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis told pilgrims attending his Jan. 29 general audience in the Vatican's Paul VI Hall to imitate St. Joseph — the man who knew how to listen to God in all circumstances of life.

Reflecting on the Gospel of St. Matthew, which retells the account of Jesus Christ's childhood from "the perspective of Joseph," the Holy Father said people can learn from the righteous man who was always attentive to the will of God.

"Thus, following the word of God, Joseph acts thoughtfully: He does not let himself be overcome by instinctive feelings and

fear of accepting Mary with him but prefers to be guided by divine wisdom," the pope said.

"This wisdom enables him not to make mistakes and to make himself open and docile to the voice of the Lord, which resounds in him through the channel of the dream," he continued.

During the Wednesday audience, the pope invited his listeners to ask the Lord for the grace "to listen more than we speak" and "to dream God's dreams" just like St. Joseph when faced with difficult decisions.

Though St. Joseph's love was "harshly put to the test" after discovering the pregnancy of Mary, the Holy Father said the

great faith of Jesus' foster father enabled him to turn his prayer into action after listening to the word of God.

"Faced with this revelation, Joseph does not ask for further proof; he trusts in God, he accepts God's dream of his life and that of his betrothed," the pope said.

"He thus enters into the grace of one who knows how to live the divine promise with faith, hope, and love," he added.

At the end of his Jan. 29 catechesis on the theme of "Jesus Christ Our Hope," the pope said all Christians are called to continually welcome the word of God into their lives "from the moment of baptism."

Energized by the great enthusiasm shown by several pilgrim groups at the Vatican on Wednesday, including American students from the Franciscan University of Steubenville, the Holy Father made an earnest request for all pilgrims to pray for peace in Palestine, Israel, and Myanmar as well as in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

"I also follow what is happening in the capital [of Congo], Kinshasa, hoping that all the violence toward the people will end soon," he said. "In light of the hope for peace and security, I invite all members of the international community to work hard to bring an end to the conflict."

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Beating 'the blahs'

I've hit what I call "the winter blahs."

It's cold enough that I don't want to spend much time outside. It gets dark early, and that makes me feel tired early. Nothing is wrong with me; I'm not depressed or struggling. I'm just blah. My motivation is a bit low, and my energy levels are lower than normal. Blah.

Noticing the "winter blahs" setting in, and knowing we have a while to go before spring, I made a conscious decision a couple weeks ago to stimulate my brain. I thought it might help with the blahs.

First, I started using an

app and YouTube videos to try (for the second time in a few years) to learn to play ukulele. I've always wanted to learn to play a string instrument, and ukulele is supposedly a good beginner instrument. It's fair to say my results have been mixed so far. I still inadvertently deaden strings, and I still struggle to get my fingers in position quickly, but I'm getting better very slowly.

At minimum, my fingers stopped hurting from pressing the strings. That feels like progress.

This week, I've tried to take on a small plumbing project - replacing a bathroom sink and faucet.

**Darcy L.
Fargo**

While I seem to have had success with the faucet, I'm still fighting the sink drain. Though I'm one more attempt away from getting help with it, I don't think I did horribly for a first-time plumber.

My strategy has helped. I feel less blah. Even when the new skills are challenging or frustrating, I find them stimulating, and I'm excited to work on them.

Sitting on the floor in front of my leaking drain, it occurred to me. I should apply this "learn new things" concept to my faith life.

I get complacent in my relationship with Jesus. I sort of go on auto pilot - go to Mass, spend time in prayer, repeat. I get the spiritual blahs.

I think I'm being called to spend a bit more time learning about our faith, be it through workshops, classes, books, videos or podcasts, or even through conversations with others. I'm called to growth.

It feels fitting that God put learning on my mind as we celebrate Catholic Schools Week. Our Catholic Schools call the students they serve to grow in their understanding of the world and grow in their understanding of and relationship with Christ, and they give the students the tool and support they need to realize that growth. Our Catholic schools are blessings to those who pass through their doors and to our diocese and our Church.

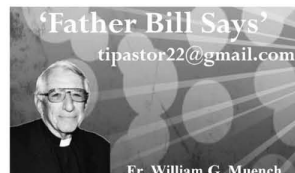
There's no blah there.

My friend, St. Thomas Aquinas

Today, I would like to write something about a friend of mine, St. Thomas Aquinas. I thought of St. Thomas today. I was assigned to celebrate the morning Mass, and I discovered that this was the Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas. He became a friend of mine during my seminary days at St. Mary's, Baltimore.

My studies in seminary theology involved a great deal of study of the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, especially his "Summa Theologica." During those days, I spent plenty of time with St. Thomas. So, we became rather good friends. Now, St. Thomas lived and wrote in the 13th Century A.D. His writings are still studied now by seminarians and theologians. I still remember much of St. Thomas' thought though I was in the seminary 69 years ago.

I truly loved St. Thomas Aquinas. I remember that he was a close companion when I took the orals for



my Sacred Theology Degree. He was a Dominican priest. There is no doubt that he was a gifted genius and a very holy man. He is always described as a very humble writer and teacher. He has brought God to the people of all times. His profound and important work is the "Summa Theologica," an all-inclusive study of theology - the teachings of the Lord Jesus and of our Catholic Church. His writings reflect his deep love of God, which is very evident in all his writings. He was very dedicated to the Lord Jesus. St. Thomas had a special love for the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. St. Thomas directs us all to find Jesus in the Eucharist, leading all to a more dedicated Christian life.

St. Thomas Aquinas' love for the Holy Eucharist inspired him to write several Eucharistic hymns. These hymns continue to be sung often in liturgical services. St. Thomas wrote the familiar hymn, "Pange Lingua Glorioso," a hymn that is sung each year during the Holy Thursday procession. The last two verses of the "Pange" are sung each time we celebrate benediction. There, it is called "Tantum Ergo." St. Thomas also wrote the "Adoro Te Devote," a deeply personal and devotional hymn to Christ present in the Blessed Eucharist.

St. Thomas was born and raised in Sicily. He later studied under St. Albert the Great at the University of Paris. He was ordained a priest in 1250 and returned to Parish to teach at the university.

Among his early writings St. Thomas wrote in defense of the mendicant orders. He wrote commentaries on Aristotle. He wrote a great deal on Bibli-

cal works. All these lead to his major work, "The Summa Theologica."

One more St. Thomas Aquinas story that demonstrates his holiness: It is said that in December 1273, that he experienced a divine revelation which so enraptured him that he abandoned the Summa. He proclaimed that he felt all of his writings were so much straw in the wind compared to the reality of the divine glory. St. Thomas died shortly after this spiritual experience. Some have written that he was broken by overload.

St. Thomas' works have been seminal to the thinking of the Church ever since. His work systematized the Church's great thoughts and teaching and his combining Greek wisdom and the truths of Christianity.

St. Thomas Aquinas was canonized by Pope John XXII in 1328.

I still consider him a companion and patron and protector whenever I write.

FOLLOW ME

Celebrating Catholic Schools

National Catholic Schools Week began Sunday, January 26. This year's theme is: Catholic Schools United in Faith and Community. As you know, on the Feast of the Holy Family, the Diocese launched the Jubilee Year of Hope. Our Catholic Schools are vital participants in our Church's Jubilee pilgrimage.

That beautiful Feast celebrated in the Christmas Season reminds us that God walks with us as members of a family of faith. This is a year where we commit to strengthening our relationships with Jesus who accompanies us through our life's journey to the dwelling place prepared for us by the Father. Our Catholic schools are treasured communities of faith where students, united in faith and community, not only encounter Jesus, but they are also invited to walk with Him on their journeys.

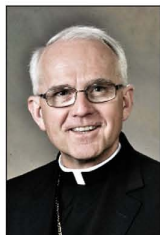
Yes, our Catholic schools are sacred places where students meet Christ. The environ-

ment and programs of every Catholic school is rooted in Christ. The ultimate message they deliver through instruction and the personal witness of teachers, administrators and staff is the good news that God so loved the world that He sent His Son to dwell among us and show us how to live in this life and become saints preparing for the next.

Students in our Catholic schools are shown the way to live in relationship with Jesus and with their neighbors - the girls and boys they meet every day, their teachers, principals, and all those they encounter in their homes and beyond. They learn of their baptismal call to be disciples in mission who follow Jesus and share His Good News with others.

Catholic Schools Week is a fitting time to express profound gratitude to our teachers, principals, and school

staff as well as parents and parishioners who support such inspiring schools here in our North Country.



Bishop Terry R. LaValley

The Diocese of Ogdensburg is truly blessed to have Sister Ellen Rose Coughlin, SSJ, as our Director of Catholic Education and Superintendent of our schools.

She and her staff provide invaluable service to our schools.

What an opportunity we have in our schools to teach and model the

virtue of hope, the virtue that keeps our eyes on our eternal destiny where we will know true happiness.

In his document, *Spe Salvi* (2007), Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that "People who have hope live differently."

In these challenging times marked by violence, poverty, lack of respect for the human person and so much that dampens our hope, I see in our Catholic schools real hints of hope where faith and love are practiced, where faith-filled people live differently,

where the joy of the Gospel permeates the hallways!

I enjoy my visits to our schools where I have the opportunity to agitate, I mean, bless the students who exude the Good News, united in faith and community. I pray that Pope Benedict's words will inspire our Catholic school communities to continue to live differently as pilgrims of hope.

Congratulations to all our Catholic school families as we celebrate National Catholic Schools Week!

Celebrate Catholic Schools 2025

a dozen reasons to choose Catholic Schools



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Catholic Schools: 'United in Faith and Community'

By Sister Ellen Rose Coughlin, SSJ
Superintendent of Schools

It is time to celebrate our Catholic Schools, their mission, distinctive characteristics, and notable achievements. Many of our schools will celebrate Catholic Schools Week the week of January 26. Others will celebrate in February and some in March. Regardless of the date, schools typically observe the week with Masses, open houses and other activities for students, families, parishioners, and community members. Through these events, schools focus on the value Catholic education provides to young people and its contributions to the Church, local communities, and the nation.

This year's theme, Catholic Schools: United in Faith and Community encompasses the core values of our Catholic Schools. We can sing the praises of our schools recognizing that they:

- share the Christian vision of faith that Christ is the foundation of Catholic education.
- recognize a person's eternal destiny and the call to be saints.
- combine our Catholic faith with academic excellence.
- provide a balanced academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture, and life,
- instill in students the values of service to others.
- partner with parents in the faith formation of their children.
- instill respect for the human person and all creation.
- emphasize moral development and self-discipline.
- prepare students to be productive citizens and future leaders.
- provide a safe and welcoming environment.

Although we can cite the accomplishments of our schools, we know that excellent schools are engaged in continuous improvement. Recognizing the value of an independent review and evaluation of our schools, our schools earned a system wide accreditation through Cognia in 2020. For more than 125 years, schools have invited Cognia

into their schools to evaluate school quality. Cognia Accreditation is respected around the world providing an independent mark of quality in over ninety countries.

The accreditation followed an extensive review of our entire system based on rigorous research-based standards and evidence-based criteria. The process included a balanced approach which combined standards of learning, leadership and resources, stakeholder feedback and student performance to measure quality programs, relationships, and results.

A system accreditation requires schools to meet continuously the Cognia policies and requirements. During the 2024-25 school year our schools will engage in a self-assessment review that demonstrates that all our diocesan schools are engaged in on-going attention to and evaluation of the learning environment that addresses areas of excellence and challenge as well as areas of needed improvement. Most importantly the process will assess the program and culture of our schools in terms of their distinctive Catholic mission as described in The National Standards and Benchmarks for Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools.

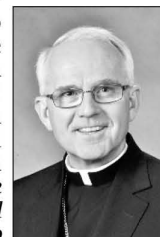
Saint John Paul II called Catholic schools "a gift to our nation." This gift is made possible through the dedication and commitment of many, including Bishop LaValley, our pastors and parishioners, teachers, staff, administrators, education council members, parents, and volunteers. At this special time of year for our Catholic schools, I extend my gratitude to everyone who makes them successful centers of learning and faith formation.

If you would like to personally experience the unique character of a Catholic school, please call the school principal in your area and arrange a visit. Please pray for our schools. These are challenging times in which to sustain Catholic schools. But, as agents of evangelization and an invaluable "gift to the nation" they are worth our efforts and sacrifices.

Day of the Sick: Hope strengthens

On February 11, the Church marks the 33rd *World Day of the Sick*. On that day, we celebrate the liturgical Memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes. In his message for the day, Pope Francis reminds us that "Hope does not disappoint" (Rom.5:5) but strengthens us in times of trial.

The Holy Father tells us that God remains close to those who are suffering. When Jesus sent the 72 disciples out on mission, He told them to proclaim to the sick: "*The Kingdom of God has come near to you*" (Lk. 10:9). In other words, Jesus asks His disciples to help the sick to



Bishop Terry
R. LaValley

see their infirmity, however painful it may be, as an opportunity to meet Christ. In such circumstances of human frailty, we can encounter the Lord who, in Jesus, shared in our human suffering. God does not abandon us and even sometimes amazes us by granting us a strength that we never expected and would never have found on our own.

During this Jubilee Year of Hope, we are all invited to be attentive to the hints of hope in our midst, strengthening our resolve to be pilgrims of hope. We are blessed to have so many of the faithful who minister to the sick in our parishes. What a powerful sign of hope! The homebound, the hospitalized and those who reside in nursing homes, all those seeking wholeness of mind, body and spirit find comfort and hope through the visits we make and the care we give.

Our Lord is especially close to loved ones whose

hearts are breaking as they care for spouses, parents, and children who suffer debilitating diseases. Sometimes we feel so helpless, even discouraged, in the face of their failing health. We pray that Jesus' words to the 72 disciples find a home in our hearts and be a cause for hope, even peace and joy, because we know Jesus is with them.

I hope to celebrate Mass in our many nursing homes in the North Country during this Jubilee Year of Hope. It is important that those who struggle with ill health hear the Good News and be nourished with the Bread from Heaven, food for the journey.

Through the maternal intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes, let's set aside some time to reflect on these hope-filled words of St. Peter: "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time. In this you rejoice, although now for a little while you may have to suffer through various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold...even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1Peter 1:3-7)*" I wonder, have I found "living" hope in Jesus? Can anyone tell?

Holy year events planned

Bishop Terry R. LaValley has released a calendar of events in our diocese celebrating the Holy Year of Hope, which began Dec. 29. The following events are part of that celebration:

Dec. 29, 2024 – 11 a.m. – Diocesan Opening Mass for Jubilee 2025 at St. Mary's Cathedral, Ogdensburg

March 16 – 9 a.m. – Jefferson-Lewis Deanery Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at St. Patrick's Church in Watertown

April 8 – 10 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the Plattsburgh Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Plattsburgh

April 16 – 10 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the United Helpers Canton Nursing Home in Canton

April 22 – 11:45 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at Elderwood of Uihlein in Lake Placid

April 25 – 2 p.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the North Country Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Massena

April 27 – 11 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg

April 29 – 10 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the Samaritan Summit Village in Watertown

May 12 – 1 p.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at Elderwood in Ticonderoga

May 13 – 10 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the Samaritan Keep Home in Watertown

May 22 – 11 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the Clinton County Nursing Home in Plattsburgh

June 3 – 11 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the Tupper Lake Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation in Tupper Lake

June 4 – 2 p.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital in Plattsburgh

June 5 – 9:30 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at The Alice Center in Malone

June 11 – 2 p.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the Massena Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Massena

July 3 – 10 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at the Meadowbrook Healthcare in Carthage

August 10 – 2 p.m. – St. Lawrence Deanery Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at St. Mary's Church in Canton

August 20 – 10:30 a.m. – Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at Meadowbrook Healthcare in Plattsburgh

August 24 – 3 p.m. – Holy Year of Hope Celebration of Music & Art at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake

October 5 – 12:30 p.m. – Adirondack Mountain Deanery Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at Colby Outlook.

October 19 – 2 p.m. – Clinton-Northern Franklin Deanery Mass Celebrating the Holy Year of Hope at St. Andre Bessette Parish in Malone

Dec. 28 – 11 a.m. – Diocesan Closing Mass for Jubilee 2025 at St. Mary's Cathedral, Ogdensburg



Priests and religious

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.



FROM WONDERING TO WONDER IN WORSHIP

With Father Bryan Stitt, Diocesan Director of Worship

ly Father. Religious are sisters, nuns, monks, brothers and friars.

I am a diocesan priest, and so were all the former pastors of St. Mary's going back 150 years.

Diocesan priests are the originals. "The community founded by Jesus Himself," it is sometimes said. We bring the Gospel and sacraments to the people of a particular area: the diocese. We make promises of prayer, obedience and celibacy. We are called to live simply but do not promise poverty.

Finally, back to the most confusing part, some priests are also religious. Religious Priests are ordained to celebrate the sacraments just like me, but they belong to a certain religious community - you have surely heard of some of them such as the Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, Benedictines and Jesuits. They all have a

founder who guided a specific vision for that community. We call that vision the community's charism. And when a charism is clear and needed, people flock to that community. Some religious communities are only men. Some are only women. Some live cloistered lives of prayer and penance. Others have active apostolates. In the male communities, some have members that are ordained priests but not all.

Besides all this, there are also consecrated virgins whose lives are dedicated to serving in a specific diocese, but who do not belong to a religious community. They are very much like the female equivalent to diocesan priests.

It all might seem confusing, but it is a rich tapestry.

The Church is rich with every different size, shape and collar!

Great question. Thanks for asking. I am afraid I need to make it more confusing before I make it more clear: some are both, but not all. We will get to that briefly.

First, religious make vows of poverty, chastity and obedience (also known as the Evangelical Counsels). Religious do many things, but their main task is to live out these vows and remind us all of heaven where there is no need of possessions, there is pure and perfect love, and no one can possibly be disobedient to the will of our Heaven-



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Environmental Stewardship

Beneath the snow

The Creator fashioned many unique settings to serve as homes for the creatures He formed. Perhaps the most vibrant domain in the North Country this time of year is the subnivean environment that exists between the surface of the ground and the blanket of snow.

Though it may appear snow accumulates uniformly, there are always pockets of open space around fallen limbs, dead leaves, rocks and pieces of debris on the soil's surface. Additionally, the movement of critters in this zone forms a labyrinth of tunnels and passageways connecting these low ceiling spaces into a network of inhabitable space.

Because of warmth that radiates from the ground and the lack of wind, the temperature hovers near freezing for most of the winter in the subnivean domain despite the bitter cold above. Additionally, there tends to be an abundance of food in such places. Bugs overwinter beneath the debris on the ground, and seeds and dried berries accumulate in the cracks and crevices on the ground.

When walking through a wooded area, or along the edge of a meadow, it is often possible to notice the tracks of numerous small critters in the snow. Mice, voles, moles and shrews periodically come up for a breath of fresh air.

While every winter is different, over the past few decades, there has been a noticeable impact to our snow pack caused by changing climate. Frequent thaws and lighter snow accumulations wreak havoc with the subnivean environment here. When looking at a winter landscape it may appear lifeless, but there is a fair amount of activity just beyond our view. The Creator is always orchestrating a rich and diverse pageant of life in this zone, and we should be aware of this hidden world around our feet as we travel over it.

Pope Francis has asked us to pray for vocations in February. Each month, the pope publishes a particular intention for our prayer. This month, February, he asks for prayers for "the ecclesial community (that it) might welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel a call to serve Christ's mission in the priesthood and religious life."

I usually slide vocations for the diaconate into any prayer for vocations.

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:

Feb. 6 — 5 p.m. — St. Mary's Church, St. Mary's Church in Canton

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; 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

tions.

A man must be at least 35 years old to be ordained a permanent deacon. Perhaps some folks do not think 35 qualifies as "young." Since I am more than twice that age, I think of 35 as young, and I am guessing Papa Francis does too.

There are 13 men in formation to become permanent deacons in our diocese.

God willing, Bishop LaValley will officially call six of them to orders this spring. The other seven men are in their aspirancy stage, meaning they aspire to be deacons but are still in their ear-

ly years of discernment and formation.

The ordination ceremony for the six is scheduled for August 9 to coincide with the Feast of St. Lawrence August 10.



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

St. Lawrence was a deacon and is the patron saint of the deacon community in the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Men prepared to serve the church as deacons are formed in what are called the four pillars.

They spend over four years preparing their human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral dimensions. That commitment is in addition to family responsibilities, a job in most cases, and participation in and service to parish and community.

Each man's vocational story is unique. One thing is consistently true. God chose him to be a deacon. The candidate did not choose the ministry.

St. Peter testifies to that in the Gospel we will hear this weekend. Jesus tells Peter to sail out to the middle of the Sea of Galilee and fish. Peter, then called Simon, does not know Jesus but follows his direction. The catch is enormous. Peter starts to believe in Jesus' gifts and power. Peter does not comprehend Jesus' Divinity, but he will.

The men and women who choose to follow Christ and serve his church as priests, deacons and in consecrated life have experienced Jesus too. We pray for their vocation.

Francis said last April, "May no one feel excluded from this calling! Each of us in our own small way, in our particular state of life, can, with the help of the Spirit, be a sower of seeds of hope and peace." Amen!

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

Bishop's Public Schedule

Feb. 9 — 8 a.m. — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

Feb. 10-13 — Catholic Leadership Institute Program in Ponte Vedra Beach in Florida

Rest in Peace

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

Feb. 5 — Msgr. Thomas E. Walsh, 1901; Msgr. F. Gordon Coseo, 1997; John J. Fallon, 2005

Feb. 6 — Msgr. Gerard Gefell, 2009

Feb. 8 — Msgr. Patrick Bernard Riley, 1981; Rev. Normand C. Coté, 2024

Feb. 9 — Rev. Claude M. F. Sallaz, O.M.I., 1873; Rev. Joseph Weldon Barry, 1945; Rev. Howard James Kennedy, 1971

Feb. 10 — Rev. Zephirin Peloquin, M.S.C., 1944; Msgr. William J. Argy, 2005

Feb. 11 — Deacon David P. Wells, 2017

**United States Bankruptcy Court
for the District of Vermont
In re Roman Catholic Diocese
of Burlington, Vermont, Case No. 24-10205-HZC**

**Claims Notice for Survivors of Sexual Abuse and Others
With Claims Against the Roman Catholic Diocese of
Burlington, Vermont**

If you were sexually abused by any person connected with the Diocese, a Catholic parish, or Catholic school within the geographic area of the Diocese, or have any claim against the Diocese, you must file a claim by **April 4, 2025**.

For more diocesan information: visit vermontcatholic.org

*For the bankruptcy docket: visit
<https://case.stretto.com/diocesefhburlington>*

*For U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Vermont
information: visit vtb.uscourts.gov*

For advice about your rights: contact an attorney

Trump administration rejoins pro-life coalition

By Tessa Gervasini
Catholic News Agency

During its first week in office, the administration of President Donald Trump announced that the United States has rejoined the Geneva Consensus Declaration, a coalition of nations united in support of pro-life and pro-women policies.

The U.S. was a founding member of the Geneva Consensus Declaration (GCD), which was established in 2020 during Trump's first term. Along with the U.S., Brazil, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia, and Uganda were among the original signatories.

According to the Institute for Women's Health (IWH), a key supporter of the GCD, the alliance was forged to "protect the health and thriving of women throughout every stage of life, assert that there is no international right to abortion, defend the family as foundational to every healthy society, and protect the sovereign right of nations to support these core values through national policy and legislation."

Today, 40 member nations are signatories of the declaration.

Valerie Huber, president of IWH and the architect of the GCD, said: "We knew that countries were standing

for these values prior to the GCD, but when countries stand together, that multiplies the impact."

"Now 40 countries have declared that when we are talking about human rights, abortion is not one of them," Huber continued.

In 2021, nine days after his inauguration, former President Joe Biden withdrew the United States from the GCD.

"The GCD, of course, poses a threat to progressive global hegemony because it's both politically effective and entirely voluntary," Huber said.

But in his second term as president, within the first 100 hours of his presidency, Trump recommitted the U.S. to the GCD, becoming the 40th nation to join the alliance.

Huber, who served in the first Trump administration as the first special representative for global women's health, initiated the GCD to make a pro-family and pro-women political declaration and nation-to-nation partnership.

In an IWH press release, Huber said: "By rejoining, President Trump sends a bold message that the United States stands with sovereign nations to defend the real health needs of women against coercive tactics by global power players."

Dictatorship forces cloistered nuns to leave monasteries

By Walter Sánchez Silva
Catholic News Agency

The Nicaraguan dictatorship has forced the Poor Clare nuns to leave their monasteries in Managua and Chinandega in an action described by a well-known researcher as a "night of terror."

According to the newspaper Mosaico CSI, the dictatorship's order was carried out on the night of Jan. 28, forcing some 30 cloistered nuns belonging to the Order of St. Clare to leave their monasteries.

An ecclesiastical source cited by the Nicaraguan

newspaper states that the dictatorship's envoys "first went to notify the sisters (in the Monastery of the Franciscan Poor Clare Sisters) in Managua and then went to Chinandega (to the Monastery of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary)."

"They were told they had to leave and they were allowed to take some of their belongings," the source added.

Martha Patricia Molina, a lawyer, researcher, and author of the report "Nicaragua: A Persecuted Church?" - which documents almost 1,000 attacks by the dictator-

ship against the Catholic Church in the country since 2018 - described what happened as a "night of terror for the nuns."

Molina noted that the dictatorship's agents "only allowed them to take a few belongings, just enough for their hands. Most of the nuns are Nicaraguan. Their whereabouts are unknown."

Molina stated that "the legal personhood of the congregation was granted to them by the National Assembly in 2004, but on May 19, 2023, it was arbitrarily canceled."

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Bishop lauds ban on sex-change interventions for minors

Bishop Robert Barron has released a statement commending President Donald Trump's recent executive order banning federal funding for "transgender" medical interventions for minors. "I welcome the president's executive order," Barron said in a statement in his capacity as chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth. "So many young people who have been victims of this ideological crusade have profound regrets over its life-altering consequences, such as infertility and lifelong dependence on costly hormone therapies that have significant side effects," Barron said. In his statement, the Minnesota bishop who is also the founder of the Catholic media apostolate Word on Fire condemned the widespread promotion of "transgender" medical interventions for minors that came into vogue under the Biden administration, calling them "unacceptable." Referencing Pope Francis' 2024 papal declaration Dignitas Infinita, Barron emphasized that "we are all called to accept the gift of our bodies created in God's image as male and female."

Pope Francis offers condolences after midair collision

Pope Francis extended his condolences after an American Airlines jet carrying 64 people collided with a U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopter near Washington, D.C.'s Ronald Reagan National Airport on Wednesday night. The pope sent a personal message to President Donald Trump on Jan. 30 as search efforts continued in and around the Potomac River where the aircraft crashed. Officials indicated on Thursday morning that they did not believe there were any survivors. "After learning of the mid-air collision near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, I express my spiritual closeness to all those affected by this tragedy," the pope said. "In commending the souls of the deceased to the loving mercy of Almighty God, I offer my deepest sympathies to the families who are now mourning the loss of a loved one. I likewise pray for those involved in the recovery efforts and invoke upon all in the nation the divine blessings of consolation and strength."

Study: Ingredients in morning-after pill can induce abortion

A study published last week found that the active ingredient used in a common morning-after "emergency contraceptive" can be used to induce a chemical abortion at least up to the ninth week of pregnancy.

The study, published in The New England Journal of Medicine Jan. 23, found that ulipristal acetate is an "effective" drug for causing an abortion. This drug is the active ingredient in the morning-after pill marketed as "ella" or "ellaOne," which is advertised as a non-abortive contraception used only to prevent pregnancy. Researchers gave 133 pregnant women from Mexico City each a dosage of 60 milligrams of ulipristal acetate to induce an abortion. The women were then given misoprostol, which expels an unborn child from the mother by inducing contractions. The study was conducted by Gynuity Health Projects and the National Autonomous University of Mexico and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Mexico City Health Secretariat.

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 from the Vatican's website. Please join us for this opportunity learn about Christian Hope in this Jubilee Year as Pilgrims of Hope.

Contact: If you would like to participate, please register at 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.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP MEETING

You are invited to our next Friendship Group Meeting, How to Experience Life-Changing Conversations.

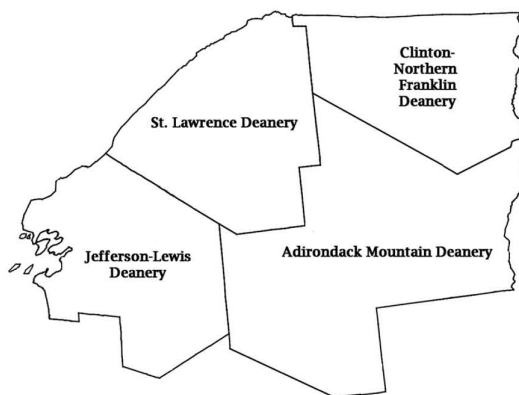
Date: Feb. 27

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Zoom

Features: Sacred conversations are rare but accessible to all of us all the time. Dr. Christopher Reed provides a divinely inspired, scientifically tested, step-by-step process for guiding interactions between "seekers" and "helpers." We are all seekers, and we can all become helpers. At this meeting, Father Craig MacMahon, OMV will continue to break open the book for us and lead discussion on chapters 4 and 5 of "Sacred Conversations," providing tips on ways to enjoy these conversations.

Contact: The book "Sacred Conversations" may be ordered at sophiainstitute.com. Enter Friendship25 at the checkout to receive 25% off. To sign-up for the Friendship Group, receive the meeting link and discussion questions, go to <https://mailchi.mp/sophiainstitute/friendship-groups>



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

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,

Ogdensburg, NY 13669

e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

Questions? Contact Mary Beth Bracy at mbracy@sophiainstitute.com.

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP

Saranac Lake - Mercy Care for the Adirondacks will host a Technology Assistance Workshop.

Date: Feb. 5

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Place: BOCES Adirondack Educational Center

Features: Mike Magurk, Mercy Care's Project and Technology Manager, will lead a presentation and discussion on Internet Safety. This workshop will focus on how to identify fraudulent emails and text messages, scams aimed at technology users, and password hygiene. There will also be an opportunity for one-on-one assistance. The Technology Workshop is free of charge but registration is required.

Contact: To register, or for more information, please contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Director of Programs and Mission Integration at abevilacqua@adkmercy.org or at 518-523-5446.

CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

BREAKFAST

Altona - Holy Angels and St. Ann's to have breakfast prepared by the Mooers K of C.

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

HOT DINNERS

Malone - St. André Bessette Parish to offer free community hot dinners.

Date: Every Wednesday

Time: 4 p.m. to 5

Place: St. André Outreach Center

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

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

HOLY HOUR AND DIVINE MERCY

Houseville - Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament and the Divine Mercy Chaplet will be observed the first Sunday of the month.

Date: Feb. 2

Time: Following 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

Contact: 315-348-6260

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

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

Date: 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

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 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

MONTHLY BRUNCH

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

Date: Feb. 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 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

Editor: Pope 'gave absolute freedom'

By Victoria Cardiel
Catholic News Agency

"Hope is the mainstay that undergirds Pope Francis' entire life and is the thread that holds together this long narrative, even in the pages in which he recounts true horrors," commented Carlo Musso, the Italian editor of Pope Francis' autobiographical work "Hope," getting right to the point regarding the theological virtue so fundamental to the life of the pontiff.

The volume was to be published after the Holy Father's death, but at the last moment he changed his mind, Musso told ACI Prensa, CNA's Spanish-language news partner, in an interview: "His idea was to publish a posthumous book, but then the 2025 Jubilee of Hope came along and became a propitious occasion to bring it to light," he explained.

In the volume, which was released Jan. 14, the Holy Father makes clear the great difference between optimism - something more fleeting, which may be here today and gone tomorrow - and hope, which he understands as an active force.

The book is the fruit of a six-year process - until very re-

cently secret - to put the Holy Father's memoirs into writing. "In the autobiography, the reader will obviously be able to get a look into his personal life, his priestly life, and the entire pontificate. But it's clear that hope has been the glue that holds them together, because even in difficulties, in tragedy, Pope Francis always sends a concrete and invincible message of hope," the editor said.

"Hope" compiles conversations, messages, and texts that the Holy Father provided him. "I then wrote a first draft and then we went over it together for accuracy," Musso related, making it clear that the pope didn't steer clear of any topic: "He gave absolute freedom, without red lines."

"This journey began in 2019 and comes to an end at the beginning of December 2024, when the pope created 21 new cardinals who once again demonstrated his vision of a universal Church," he explained.

The Italian editor - who has come to know Pope Francis in all his human dimension - pointed out that he is "a man born in 1936 who only looks back in order to project his gaze even farther ahead."

Over the course of 400 pages,

the pontiff narrates in first person the twists and turns of his life that have marked his 88 years, from his childhood in Argentina in the midst of a family of Italian immigrants to becoming the successor of St. Peter.

It all begins with a terrifying episode: the sinking of the transatlantic ship Principessa Mafalda, known as the "Italian Titanic." His grandparents, along with his father, Mario, had bought tickets to travel on the ship that set sail from Genoa on Oct. 11, 1927, bound for Buenos Aires.

However, they ultimately didn't board the vessel because they were unable to sell their belongings in time. "That's why I am here now; you can't imagine how many times I have thanked divine providence for it," the pontiff recounts in the book.

For Musso, this episode influenced the pope's "sensitivity" on this subject, as did many others that have marked his magisterium, such as the cruelty of war or his inclination to open up paths to interreligious dialogue. "His personal experience of fraternity is clearly evident when he says that it was common for him to interact with Muslims and Jews," Mus-

so noted.

In the last chapter, Pope Francis imagines the future of the Church, which "will continue forward, because I am but a step."

"I dream of a papacy that is increasingly more service and communally oriented," he wrote.

The Holy Father predicts, among other things, that the Catholic Church "will become increasingly universal and its future, and strength will also come from Latin America, Asia, India, Africa, and this can already be seen in the wealth of vocations."

He also proposes that the Church and Catholics grow "in creativity, in understanding the challenges of contemporary times, openness to dialogue, and not being closed off by fear."

For all this, Musso assured that the memory of Pope Francis is, in reality, "an ongoing present moment, so it's not just a narration of the past."

"Hope is his legacy for humanity," he said.

This story was first published by ACI Prensa, CNA's Spanish-language news partner. It has been translated and adapted by CNA.

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

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 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.

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

rcdony.org

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 serving 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. To volunteer in this program, you can live in one of the following counties. Franklin, Essex County, Clinton County, St. Lawrence County or Jefferson County

Contact: Melissa Howard, Volunteer Coordinator at (518) 359-7688 or E-mail: mhoward@cathcharities.org



SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

What do we need?

Here's a little quiz. What do the products Balance of Nature, Relief Factor, Prevagen, My Pillow and every other product advertised on tv have in common?

Yes, they want you to buy a product, in fact, buy into a product. But, before we buy, the producers of those ads know that they must create in our heads this message: "You need what we are offering." We see these ads, and, on occasion, we think: maybe I need to try that. I know, for myself, that every time I can't think of someone's name, I think, maybe I should buy some Prevagen.

Let's add to the list of what we need: God or his Son Jesus or their Holy Spirit to that list of our needs?

In today's readings we are presented with two individuals: Isaiah and Peter. Both experience God. Both realize their need for God. Both have the same reaction to God: I can't be in your presence because I am a sinful man. Both Peter and Isaiah have the exact same reaction when faced with the divine.

Their reaction was not "glad to see you" or "could you hold while I take this other call." It was simply: "I am an unclean man" or "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man."

What an extraordinary reaction!

The presence of the divine immediately

forced them to recognize their sinfulness, their unworthiness, and their need for God. Yes, their actual need for God, dare I say thirst for God.

Where do we fit into this picture? We have a very hard time with sin, not that we don't commit sins, but that we don't like admitting that we commit sins. You know the excuses. It was

just a white lie. I did it because of what he did to me. I don't go to church because I don't get anything from it, or I'm too busy. Well, he hit me first. I was drinking, and I didn't realize what I was doing.

All those statements are excuses. We commit a bad act, but we can-

February 9

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

READINGS

Isaiah 6:10a, 3-8

1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 11

Luke 5:1-11


not admit that we did it. So, we change the nature of the act to make it ok.


Sin is insidious because it makes certain things look enjoyable, because we go beyond reason to justify doing the act, and because it makes our judgement superior to God's judgement.

Remember Satan? His fundamental sin was a refusal recognize God's authority, his greatness, his power. So to speak, he made his own religion with his own rules.



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

 Celebrating Catholic Schools Week
Called to be Saints



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The Vocation Office

And so, Peter and Isaiah, when they come face to face with God, the all-good, they recognize without hesitation their sinfulness. Why? Well, when we compare ourselves to other people, we are always going to come out the winner.

If we are honest, when we compare ourselves to God, we are losers who can be forgiven only when, as did Peter and Isaiah, we acknowledge that sinfulness and seek forgiveness.

In our relationship with God, recognizing and embracing our true need for God is the first step. If we don't take that first step, then the rest makes no sense.

When the printed word looks blurry, we should recognize our need for glasses or a


new prescription; when it seems that everyone mumbles, maybe there's a need for a hearing aid. When we are faced with the impossible, maybe then we will realize that with God all things are possible.

When Peter and Isaiah admitted to God their sin, when they admitted that God needed to be in their lives, then God made them realize that sin was not a permanent condition, that sin could be forgiven, and that God wanted to be with them. The same applies to us.

May we recognize our weaknesses, our needs, and then look to God. We pray that we may recognize God's mercy so that we, too, can always be members of God's holy family.

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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

Lunar New Year blessings

The great "ChunYun army," the endless crowd of people who travel across China to celebrate the Chinese New Year with their loved ones, marks one of the most significant moments of the year. Internal migrants who work in large cities return to their places of origin for the holiday, which this year fell on January 29.

For Chinese Catholic communities, the Lunar New Year is an opportunity to develop pastoral initiatives focused on friendship and sharing with everyone. In the diocese of Shanghai, more than 60 parishes have received a blessing from Bishop Joseph Shen Bin along with a printed symbol of blessing that they can hang on the doors of their homes and which have been given to all the faithful by their priests during Mass.

During the homily of the Mass celebrated on January 26 in the cathedral, Bishop Joseph Shen Bin invited everyone to "renew themselves internally in the sign of the Jubilee to welcome the New Year with a completely new perspective" and to "spread the joyful good news of the Gospel and peace." As a concrete sign of charity, the offerings of the Mass will go to the communities of Tibet affected by the earthquake.

The local Catholic communities see in the most important celebration of Chinese culture a privileged occasion also on a pastoral level. In Wuhu, Anhui province, priests and nuns dedicated themselves to caring for 12 elderly and sick people in the parish during these days with special care, also organizing visits to hospitals and nursing homes to bring them the sacraments of the Eucharist, Penance and Last Rites.

At the same time, priests and nuns have been recipients of good wishes and gratitude. In the diocese of Xi'an, the Seraphic Youth Group shared a moment of coexistence with priests, nuns and Bishop Anthony Dang Mingyan in the cathedral. These pastoral initiatives, inspired by the Jubilee, and organized on the occasion of the Lunar New Year, were also carried out in the parishes of the provinces of Beijing, Wenzhou, Jiangxi and Zhejiang, and in the diocese of Sanyuan (province of Shaanxi), led by Bishop Joseph Han Yingjin.

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

Adams — Janet Helen Winnett Nichols, 94; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 29, 2025 at St. Cecilia's Church; burial in St. Cecilia's Cemetery.

Altona — Marion Lynn (Charland) Alexander, 58; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 28, 2025 at Holy Angels Church.

Chateaugay — Martin Allen Franklin, 96; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 30, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Clayton — Teresa L. (Favero) Marshall, 92; Mass of Christian Burial April 26, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Clayton Cemetery.

Constableville — Donald J. Dolan, Sr., 77; Graveside Services in spring at St. Patrick's Church.

Dannemora — Laurie Couture, 53; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 4, 2025 at St. Joseph's Church.

Dannemora — Dale Robert Sr., 75; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 1, 2025 at St. Joseph's Church.

Elizabethtown — Joann Elizabeth Pecor, 81; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 31, 2025 at St. Elizabeth's Church.

Ellenburg — Virginia Brown McCauley, 82; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 28, 2025 at St. Edmund's Church; burial in Immaculate Heart Cemetery, Churubusco.

Massena — Laura E. Barry, 85; Graveside Services at a later date in Calvary Cemetery.

Massena — Francis Edmund Byington, 89; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 30, 2025 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Louisville Community Cemetery.

Mooers — Henry J. Garceau, 78;

Funeral Services Feb. 1, 2025 at the Hamilton Funeral Home.

Mooers Forks — Frank Ashline, 89; Mass of Christian Burial at St. Ann's Church.

Plattsburgh — Geoffrey M. Spear, 63; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 1, 2025 at St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Port Henry — Thomas J. Scozzafava, 84; Mass of Christian Burial in spring at St. Patrick's Church.

Redford — Theresa A. (Lafountain) Bodah, 71; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 28, 2025 at Church of the Assumption.

Redford — Edward C. Chartier, Sr., 91; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 31, 2025 at Church of the Assumption; burial in Church of the Assumption Cemetery.

Rouses Point — Eve Marie Cole, 49; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 6, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church.

Rouses Point — Helen (LaBom-

bard) Sample, 79; Mass of Christian Burial in spring at St. Patrick's Church.

Saranac Lake — Stephen J. Duprey, 79; Mass of Christian Burial in spring.

St. Regis Falls — Mary (Blow) LeMieux, 83; Mass of Christian Burial in spring at St. Ann's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ticonderoga — Leslie Ann (Hall) Tubbs, 76; Funeral Services Jan. 31, 2025 at Wilcox & Regan Funeral Home.

Tupper Lake — Shirley Ann (Duffy) Dechene, 88; Mass of Christian Burial Jan. 27, 2025 at St. Alphonsus Church.

Watertown — Sol Cea-Perez, 84; Mass of Christian Burial Feb. 8, 2025 at Holy Family Church; burial in Brookside Cemetery.

Watertown — John Rae, 92; Funeral Services Feb. 3, 2025 at Cummings Funeral Service, Inc.; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

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NY shrine now a national pilgrimage site

On Jan. 27, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops announced that Our Lady of Martyrs Shrine in Auriesville, New York, has been designated a national shrine for pilgrims.

The shrine was in-

formed of its new official status by Father Dustin P. Dought, executive director of Secretariat of Divine Worship for the U.S. Bishops, in a letter to Bishop Edward Scharfenberger of Albany, who, in a personal capac-

ity, is chairman of the board of Friends of Our Lady of Martyrs, which runs the shrine.

In August 2024, the board of the Friends of Our Lady of Martyrs had formally requested that the sanctuary be des-

ignated as a National Shrine.

Traditionally known as the National Shrine of the North American Martyrs, the National Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs is located a short distance from the Empire State's capital region and about three hours by car from Manhattan, Boston and Buffalo. It encompasses the former Ossernenon village, where Jesuit priests Saints Isaac Jogues, René Goupil and Jean de Lalande were martyred in the 1640s. It is also where convert St. Kateri Tekakwitha, known as "The Lily of the Mohawks," was born in 1656.

Opened in 1885, the shrine has been administered for most of its history by a succession of Jesuit provinces in

the northeastern United States, and was formally owned by a non-profit corporation named Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs, Inc.

In 2017, that foundation transferred the ownership of the Shrine to Friends of Our Lady of Martyrs, a nonprofit corporation composed of lay people, diocesan clergy and other supporters of the shrine, and chaired in a personal capacity by Bishop Scharfenberger.

"We are delighted that the bishops have confirmed what the faithful have long instinctually known: The National Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs is our home for the cultivation of holiness here in the U.S., Canada and Mexico," Bishop Scharfenberger said.

Now is the perfect time to volunteer.

With everything that has happened in our community this year, it is more important than ever for volunteers to stand up and support their friends and neighbors. When joining **RSVP**, not only are you helping your community, but you're joining a family who cares as much as you.



The RSVP 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.

Upcoming opportunities

There are so many ways you can help your community out that you might not even know about! Here are some examples of what you can do:



Be a Friend

Check on friends, share a meal, help around the house, go for a walk or just stop by to catch up.



Give a Ride

Drive your neighbors to their appointments, to pick up prescriptions or to the store.



Help at School

Volunteer at local elementary schools, tutor students, or be a mentor to those in need.



Give a Meal

Support the local food pantry by shopping, organizing, cooking, or anything else.



Meals On Wheels

Donate your time to your local Meals on Wheels program and prepare or deliver meals.

Not only do you get the benefit of feeling amazing after helping someone, RSVP will help pay some of your mileage (.56 cents/mile) and honor your efforts at a yearly recognition event.

Opportunities available in Franklin and Hamilton County Want more info about how to get started?

Hamilton and Franklin County:

Melissa Howard
518-359-7688

mhoward@cathcharities.org

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

Clinton and Essex County:

Kate Gardner
518-566-0944

kgardner@cathcharities.org



EVENTS IN NEIGHBORING DIOCESES

FINDING THE ONE

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, another relative or a close friend. 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-formation-for-ministry-spring-workshop> For more information contact Deacon Jeff Dixie: 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. Register early to save \$20. Please go to the event website for the bios of the speakers, schedule for the day and to register.

Contact: Register at www.ignitecatholicmen.org