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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 79 Number 44

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MARCH 12, 2025

Follow me: Finding 'Hints of hope'

Bishop Terry R. LaValley reflects on 'Hints of Hope' in the NCC.

We need to look no further than our *North Country Catholic* for Hints of Hope. As I mentioned in the opening Mass for the Jubilee, it is in the pages of our diocesan paper that we find information about many diocesan, parish or school events that are eagerly anticipated. We read about new ministries and individuals who desire, believe and expect that God will use them to bear fruits.

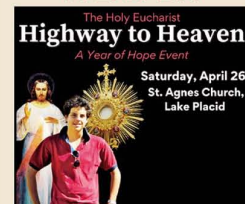
FULL STORY, PAGE 3

FREEZIN' FOR A REASON



On Feb 15, four parishioners — Mike Chase of Knights of Columbus, Bill Durnin, and Peter Siskavich, son of deceased Deacon Francis "Frenchie" Siskavich, and grandson Kyle Siskavich — organized a pond hockey tournament to raise funds for St. Bernard's Church in Lyon Mountain. Eight teams participated, and a few extra skaters joined the fun. Though it was a cold day, everyone enjoyed the picturesque view from the "Church Pond." The tournament ran a four-man roster with three-on-three games. There were raffles along with St. Bernard's pucks and magnets for sale. The winning team got to hoist a trophy, 'the Holy Grail.'

HIGHWAY TO HEAVEN



On the eve of the canonization of Carlo Acutis, the first millennial saint, our diocese will gather to behold the Eucharistic Miracles of the World Exhibit he created. We will offer a special Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament, where I will carry Jesus among you in the monstrance and lead a diocesan Consecration to the Holy Eucharist. The event will be held April 26 at St. Agnes Church in Lake Placid.

FULL STORY, PAGE 4

Pope: Lent is a time to accept our fragili-

By Kristina Millare
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis said the Lenten journey reminds the Church that hope in Jesus Christ ultimately overcomes fears of fragility, weakness, and the brevity of life.

"Made of ashes and earth, we experience fragility through illness, poverty, and the hardships that can suddenly befall us and our families," the pope said in his homily prepared for Ash Wednesday.

"Lent, however, is also an invitation to rekindle our hope," he said. "We are invited to lift our eyes to the One who rises from the depths of death and

brings us from the ashes of sin and death to the glory of eternal life."

The pope is continuing his medical treatment at Gemelli Hospital and was unable to attend the Mass held inside the Basilica of Santa Sabina located on Rome's Aventine Hill.

"The ashes remind us that we are dust, but they also set us on a journey toward the hope to which we are called," Cardinal Angelo De Donatis said, reading the papal text. "Jesus descended to the dust of the earth and, by his resurrection, has drawn us with himself into the Father's heart."

Focusing on Easter as the rea-

son for undertaking the journey of Lent, the pope in his homily told the congregation of cardinals, bishops, and religious brothers and sisters of Benedictine and Dominican orders that the risen Lord is waiting for us "at the end of the road."

"The hope of Easter that we journey toward reassures us of God's forgiveness," the Holy Father said, quoting his predecessor Benedict XVI. "Even while submerged in the ashes of sin, hope opens us up to the joyful acknowledgment of life."

Acknowledging the "social and political realities of our time" — including war, ideological opposition, abuse of power,

and exploitation — the 88-year-old head of the Church said the world's problems should spur people to walk together, be open with one another, and turn to our God who wants peace and reconciliation.

"Let us turn back to God, let us return to him with all our hearts," the pope said. "Let us learn from almsgiving to go beyond ourselves, sharing each other's needs and nurturing the hope of a fairer world."

In his homily, the Holy Father also said accepting the fragility of our human condition "is good for us" as it reminds us who we really are "despite the masks we wear" and of our need for God.

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'I just want it to be right'

It was the fourth time I had installed the drain.

I was replacing a bathroom sink. It was my first time trying to do any task that remotely related to plumbing.

I struggled to get the drain sealed properly. I read the instructions that came with the sink more times than I could count. I watched eleven billion YouTube videos outlining the process. Three different times, I thought I did every single step correctly. Three different times, the drain leaked when tested.

To say I was frustrated would be an understatement. I cried.

Knowing I was not expe-

rienced with plumbing, I made sure I had help lined up if I couldn't complete the job on my own, but I'm too stubborn to give up easily.

**Darcy L.
Fargo**

"One more time," I said to myself. "I'm going to install this drain one more time. If it leaks, I'll call for help."

I carefully installed the drain yet again. I checked every step as I completed it. I waited for the sealant to cure.

As I prepared to turn on the faucet for the fourth test, I paused. I was nervous. I was afraid the drain would leak again. I didn't want to fail yet again. I didn't want to call

for help.

"I desperately hope it doesn't leak," I said, mostly to myself. "I just want it to be right."

I thought of that drain, which did not leak, as I prayed with a focus on hope in this jubilee Year of Hope. It's basically, "I just want it to be right."

Then I looked at what the Church had to say about hope. The catechism's description says, "we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises..."

Desiring the kingdom of heaven is "just want(ing) it to be right, but the Church takes it further. Hope includes trust in Christ. That's a beautiful kind of hope.

As we kickoff our annu-

al subscription campaign, we at the North Country Catholic continue to share "Hints of Hope," the stories of the people, organizations, schools and ministries trying to make it right here in the North Country, trusting Christ, sharing Christ and following Christ. We share the "Christ-led, Christ-fed and hope-filled" messages of our wonderful bishop. We share the efforts of the Church throughout the world to help bring us to Christ and to eternal life through Him.

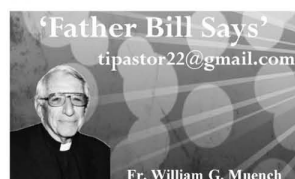
We invite you to renew your subscription or subscribe for the first time and join us in sharing those "Hints of Hope," and we thank you for journeying with us as Pilgrims of Hope in this jubilee year.

A good Lenten practice

Lent is good. In many ways, Lent is a gift from our God. Lent challenges us; we are asked to do something for Lent. Lent challenges us to go into a desert with Jesus to find ourselves - who am I, Lord - and to allow God to find each one of us. Lent is filled with so many wonderful opportunities to grow in grace and holiness. Lent is our time for change. Lent is a time for renewal.

Many find the best way to do something as a sacrifice for Lent is by attending daily Mass during the days of Lent. One of the joys of Lent each year is the large groups that fill the Church joining together in each parish Church for the daily Mass throughout each of the Churches in the diocese.

I want to tell you about a personal memory of mine - way back when I was in high school - a few of the guys decided to go to morning Mass before



school each day. I also remember that one of our group was given a post war jeep by his father - so he would pick us up each morning to get us to Church for Mass. And then on to school. I have no doubt that this Lenten practice had a profound influence on my vocation. However, some thought that that yellow jeep also influenced my decision.

I still believe frequent attendance at daily Mass is a perfect Lenten sacrifice. Each participation in the Holy Mass is a transformative experience. When doing this each day during Lent, we truly become new people - more alive in the Lord. God makes us holier as we spend this regular time

with Jesus at the Holy Mass. Participating at Mass each day establishes a truly closer relationship with our God.

During Lent, the Scriptures that are read at each Mass are the same every year. These Scriptures become like good friends from year to year. We truly renew our friendship with them each year. The result is that each year we again pray and listen again to the message of Jesus and become more like the Lord as we remember his words.

Each time we celebrate Mass, there is a Eucharist, a time to remember the Lord's Last Supper and a time to offer our gratitude as we go to the altar of the Lord. This is again a perfect way for each of us to develop a more perfect relationship with our Lord and Savior. At each Mass, we join with Jesus in his sufferings, his death and his resurrection. Each Eucharist

is a time for gratitude to Our Lord Jesus for all that he accepted for us. Each time we receive the Blessed Eucharist in Holy Communion, Jesus stays with us throughout the day bringing peace and strength of faith. Our Lord gives us enthusiasm to live well a disciple of the Lord.

These Lenten daily Masses become a foundation for our whole Lenten Program. We are united with the Lord in a unique way. Each day is filled with the Lord's joy and happiness. We are united through Jesus will all the members of Christ's Church. Lent becomes our road to becoming a saint. On Ash Wednesday, the Gospel Acclamation prayer was, "If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Lent is about opening our hearts to the message of the Lord and to the love of our God, to our dedication to becoming a saint.

FOLLOW ME

Finding 'hints of hope'

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

With the 2025 Jubilee upon us, we've talked a lot about hope. What is hope? If I was asked to define or describe "hope" to someone who had never heard the word, an answer might not roll off my tongue.

Even the word "hope" is somewhat complex. It can be both a noun and a verb - we can hope for nice weather, and nice weather can give us hope. As a verb, it can be to "cherish a desire with anticipation: to want something to happen or be true" or to "expect with confidence" or two other definitions. As a noun, it can be "desire accompanied by expectation of or belief in fulfillment" or "trust." Those are just a few of the definitions suggested by Google. There were more.

Our Catechism of the Catholic Church offers yet another description, "the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit." (#1817)

Regardless of the definition, we need to look no further than our *North Country Catholic* for Hints of Hope. As I mentioned in the opening Mass for the Jubi-

lee, it is in the pages of our diocesan paper that we find information about many diocesan, parish or school events that are eagerly anticipated. We read about new ministries and individuals who desire, believe and expect that God will use them to bear fruits. And we learn about how people here in the North Country are following Christ, placing trust in His grace and trying to cooperate with that grace to get themselves and those around them to eternal life with Him. We see the Holy Spirit bestowing graces and breathing life into the Church and into our friends, neighbors, fellow parishioners through the stories shared in the newspaper's pages.

Through the *North Country Catholic*, I communicate with Catholics around the diocese as we move forward, Pilgrims of Hope guided by a loving God, sharing the Hints of Hope we see all around us. The paper also shares local, state, national and international news, uniting us with the Church universal, and information relevant to our faith and our lives.

This weekend, the annual *North Country Catholic* subscription campaign begins. I ask every family to subscribe to our diocesan paper. If you are a current subscriber, thank you for renewing your subscription in this

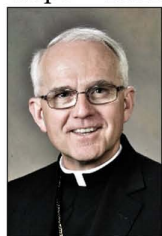
week's campaign. Why not consider obtaining a subscription as a gift for a family member? I invite those who do not currently subscribe to consider how important it is today to be

an informed Catholic Christian and allow our diocesan newspaper to be a vehicle to help you and your families share our Hints of Hope. Thank you for your prayerful support.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Terry R. LaValley

Most Reverend
Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg



Bishop Terry
R. LaValley

The Diocese of Ogdensburg

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

WEEKLY NEWSPAPER FOR THE DIOCESE OF OGDENBURG

Bringing you
Hints of Hope
during this Jubilee Year of Hope



- Personal stories of faith
- Parish and Diocesan News
- Scripture Reflections
- Important messages from Bishop Terry R. LaValley
- Catholic news from around the nation and world



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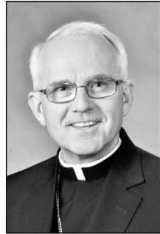


Preparing for the 'Highway to Heaven'

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As I recall worshipping with others at the Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis last summer, I can't imagine any Super Bowl event (even if it involved my NY Giants!) that could match the electrifying environment that God's Spirit and the Presence of His very Body and Blood caused. We don't need another strategic plan, we need missionary disciples whose ongoing, life-long encounters with Jesus change us into joy-filled disciples in mission, thousands of which we witnessed at the stadium.

On Saturday, April 26, 2025, the faithful of the North Coun-



Bishop Terry R. LaValley

try will have the tremendous opportunity to experience a taste of this "electrifying environment" at the "Highway to Heaven" event at St. Agnes Church and School in Lake Placid. On the eve of the canonization of Carlo Acutis, the first millennial saint, our diocese will gather to behold the Eucharistic Miracles of the World Exhibit that he created. We will offer a special Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament, where I will carry Jesus among you in the monstrance and lead a diocesan Consecration to the Holy Eucharist.

Every activity aimed at carrying out the Church's mission must draw the strength it needs from the Eucharistic Mystery.

To help us prepare for the Consecration to the Holy Eucharist, I am encouraging all of the faithful to begin praying with the 33 Days to Eucharistic Glory book on March 24.

The Eucharist has the power to continually form and transform you and me. It is essential that we re-focus our attention on the Holy Eucharist as a Mystery to be believed, a Mystery to be celebrated, a Mystery to be adored, and a Mystery to be lived. The challenges we face with a shortage of Church vocations, fractured families, and divided communities are not unique to our diocese. The Holy Eucharist is the "source and summit" of who we are and what we believe as Catholics. When we worship as we believe through weekly Mass and Eucharistic Adoration, we will experience a renewed

Church, healing in our families, and peace in our world.

The soon-to-be St. Carlo Acutis said, "the Eucharist is my Highway to Heaven." Please join me in honoring this holy teenager and praying before our Eucharistic Lord. This diocesan Consecration to the Holy Eucharist will offer miracles of God's love. Join me in this Jubilee year as heralds of hope. Christ walks beside us as our strength and our Food for the journey, and He enables us to become witnesses of hope. After all, we are Christ-led, Christ-fed, and Hope-filled.

In Christ our hope,

Terry R. LaValley

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

A day of miracles, prayer and hope

By Mary Beth Bracy,
consecrated virgin
Contributing Writer

It all started with a dream.

When North Country attendants of the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis returned home this summer, they were mindful of Bishop Andrew Cozzens words: the revival isn't over, it is just beginning. Participants began to informally meet monthly and brainstorm how they could bring a taste of the great hope they experienced to our diocese. A result is "The Holy Eucharist: Highway to Heaven" event - a day of miracles, prayer and hope - scheduled to take place on Saturday, April 26, on the Eve of Divine Mercy, at St. Agnes Church and School in Lake Placid.

A key feature of this event is the interactive Vatican exhibition of the Eucharistic Miracles of the World, conceived and designed by Bl. Carlo Acutis, who will be canonized that weekend and



become the first millennial saint. Carlo, who died at age fifteen of leukemia, wrote of his great love of the Blessed Sacrament, evangelized his parents, friends and strangers, went to daily Mass and Eucharistic Adoration, and cared for the poor and forgotten. Bl. Carlo said, "The Eucharist is my highway to Heaven."

Over the course of this event, which runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., attendants will have the opportunity to experience this through Mass, an inspirational talk by Father Theodore Crosby at 11 a.m., all-day Eucharistic Adoration and confessions, and a special Holy Hour led by Bishop Terry R. LaValley at 2 p.m., where he will carry Jesus in the monstrance among the faithful and lead a con-

secration to the Holy Eucharist. Benediction will be at 3 p.m.

The event is for the whole family and will also include opportunities for fellowship and service.

The Eucharistic miracles exhibit will remain open until 5 p.m., and the parish offers Mass both before and after the event. Participants can attend just one or two portions of the event or come for the whole day.

The countdown to the consecration to the Holy Eucharist begins on March 24. The diocese is using the book "33 Days to Eucharistic Glory," for the consecration. Bulk orders of 250 books may be placed for as little as \$2 at <https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/33-days-to-eucharistic-glory/33PE-PO.html>. If you

have questions about obtaining books, please contact Ken Racette at kracette1a@gmail.com or (518) 578-3056.

Several parishes across the diocese will be holding small-group discussions on the book to prepare for the consecration. If you have questions about starting a small group, please contact Deacon Bill O'Brien at billob315@gmail.com or (315) 528-0461.

Local Catholics expressed a longing for what they saw at the Eucharistic Congress via video, which is what inspired the organizers Father Bryan D. Stitt, Amy Schirmer, Carolyn Pierce, Deacon Bill O'Brien, Ken and Kathy Racette and Mary Beth Bracy to embark on this endeavor.

The event will also in-

clude informational and inspirational displays with pamphlets and holy cards on the Real Presence and Eucharistic Adoration. Attendants of the event will be able to view these free displays and request one for their parish. Catholic items will also be available for purchase.

Pierce shared that, "Bishop Cozzens' concluding remarks after the last (National Eucharistic Revival) Mass were, 'So go, don't stay, and tell everyone what you experienced here.' So I'm so happy our Bishop is acting on that 'mission mandate' to bring us together in Lake Placid to know the joy of being with the Lord — in adoration, in taking Jesus out in procession, and learning more about the Eucharist — and receiving His love and mercy... So, please plan now to come April 26, be open to receiving what Jesus wants to give you."

More information about the event may be found at <https://www.rcdony.org/jubileeh2h>.

The sacrament of hope: Jesus waits for you

By Mary Beth Bracy, consecrated virgin
Contributing Writer

The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament of Hope. During this Jubilee Year, which coincides with the Year of Mission in the National Eucharistic Revival, there has been a resurgence in devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and adoration in our diocese and throughout the country. Local faithful shared their thoughts on the power of prayer before Jesus, our Eucharistic Lord.

Father Bryan D. Stitt, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Canton, explained what inspired him to expand Adoration in his parish and add a 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. opportunity every Friday.

"Going to the National Eucharistic Congress and experiencing Adoration in the Lukas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis inspired me to expand the hours of Adoration here at St. Mary's," he said. "Coordinating prayer and worship in a stadium is far from ideal. Nevertheless, it was done so well there that I realized I knew I should bring some of this back home. If we wait for things to be ideal, we often miss the good."

While a youth, Father Stitt was fortunate to encounter the Real Presence of Christ.

"It was during Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament that I first saw my father pray," Father Stitt said. "I don't think I'll ever forget it. For a big, poorly educated blue-collar worker to be brought to his knees was very significant. And of course, it wasn't just dad. Still in my teens, I personally learned the power of quiet prayer in the midst of our noisy world. This was reiterated by my formation at Wadhams Hall. When I got to Major Seminary, the rector instituted a daily Holy Hour of Adoration. Though it was optional for the seminarians, that's when a daily Eucharistic Holy Hour became a crucial part of my spiritual life. 25 years later, it still is."

Although there are many reasons to begin or attend weekly

Eucharistic Adoration, Father Stitt shared the most important: Jesus wants it.

"Some years ago, a teenaged boy was reflecting on Confession," Father Stitt relayed. "He was thinking about the passage in the Gospels when Jesus gave the Apostles the gift: 'Whose sins you forgive are forgiven.' He then said to me, 'I guess, if Jesus gave the Church this gift, he wanted us to take advantage of it.' Brilliant. I'd say something very similar about Eucharistic Exposition and Adoration. It is such a gift. 'If Jesus gave the Church this gift, we can be sure he wants us to take advantage of it.'"

Parishes are also increasingly endeavoring to share the gift of Jesus' Real Presence with children and families. Father Michael J. Jablonski, pastor of Church of the Assumption in Redford and St. Joseph's Church in Dannemora, related that there has been a children's Mass in his parishes for three years.

"Kids bring up gifts and lector," Father Jablonski explained. "We keep it going during the summer as well."

This special monthly Mass is preceded by a Holy Hour of Adoration that families attend together. This hour of blessings is held before the 4 p.m. anticipated Mass and the 8:30 a.m. Sunday Mass at St. Joseph's Church in Dannemora, and before the 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass at Church of the Assumption in Redford. The next children's Mass will be on the weekend of March 15 and 16.

During the week, there is also Eucharistic Adoration from 11 a.m. to noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Redford and on Wednesdays and Fridays in Dannemora. Confessions are heard during Adoration. This time with Jesus concludes with a Marian litany in Redford and the St. Joseph's litany in Dannemora.

During Lent, Father Jablonski is giving Magnificat books to his parishioners to help them grow in love with the Mass. Many of the adorers in their

Adoration, hope grows at Cathedral parish

By Mary Beth Bracy, consecrated virgin
Contributing Writer

"The Eucharistic Adoration at St. Mary's Cathedral started before COVID," shared Dan Washburn. "Mary Wood and the other members of the Legion of Mary came and asked Father Joe (Morgan) if they could have the Adoration on Friday. And Father agreed to have it before the noontime Mass at the Cathedral. It was very slow at the beginning. They struggled to come in for Adoration on a regular basis. But they continued it anyway."

The number of people gathering to spend time with Jesus has since increased.

"Now, from the three peo-

ple that started out, it became 15 people and more (who) wanted to come in for Adoration," noted Washburn. "They are all staying for the Mass."

Initially, Eucharistic ministers were exposing and reposing the Blessed Sacrament. Father Michael Marzan has since taken on the role.

"Since Father Mike (Marzan) started (leading) it, there is more reverence; as we do the traditional way of the Eucharistic Benediction," said Washburn. "It has made a huge difference. And now we integrate the Rosary. People really love the focus on the Blessed Sacrament, the focus on prayer, the reverence."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

parish are daily Communicants. He has found that this time with our Lord has brought about a new sense of hope and rebirth.

"There is a correlation between more people going to Confession with the Adoration," he said. "[It has borne great fruit] in daily Mass people and what they do, and some of the Sunday people are volunteering and doing things they didn't before. The Lord challenges us when we sit in His presence and the Holy Spirit. We've got to get back Adoration and the basics."

Father Jablonski said he encourages everyone to spend time with Jesus in Adoration.

"People aren't that familiar with Adoration," he said. "Folks, we have our Lord here, come on. Our Lord is the life line to eternal life and we need him especially in this day and age, and we need to turn to him so we can keep our souls ignited. If we don't, that fire will be burned out. The devil is alive and well. If we go to Adoration, we are able to bring our

Lord out to the world that is in such need and does not know him anymore."

Father Jablonski said he hopes more parishes will schedule regular Adoration opportunities.

"I encourage parishes to give Adoration a chance," he said. "Start with your daily Mass people, have it before the daily Mass. Start small and you'd be surprised how things grow. It makes it easier and we can minister better and move on. It's doable. Then take it to the Sunday Mass crowd. It helps them get a taste so maybe they'll come to Adoration during the week. With our families, it is so vital."

In Holy Cross Parish in Plattsburgh, Ken and Kathy Racette, weekly adorers at Holy Cross in Plattsburgh, have invited others to join in the parish Eucharistic Adoration. Since the beginning of the revival, just by word of mouth and sharing literature, approximately 25 new adorers have signed up to spend an hour with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament each week.

Adoration, hope grows

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

The use of the incense is something special. Incensing the Blessed Sacrament at the Benediction is a sign of adoration and worship given to Christ who is truly present upon the altar. It becomes a visible sign of our prayers rising to heaven."

The Holy Hour also includes adoration hymns, bells and candles.

"(Attendees) said, 'It's wonderful that Father Mike is doing all of that.' It gives us such a deep prayer feeling because we're in front of the Blessed Sacrament and we wanted it," Wood recalled. "I had the feeling that Jesus himself called us to do what he wanted us to do. What he was asking us to do - to worship him in the Eucharist."

God blessed their fidelity, reflected Wood.

"We were able to add Wednesday Adoration after the outcome of the Friday Adoration....



PHOTOS DEACON BILL O'BRIEN AND ANGIE MORLEY

Eucharistic Adoration is held in St. Mary's Cathedral.

The first time I came in and saw Father Mike, I thought, 'What is he doing? This is wonderful.' And then I knelt down. It could become more powerful. I was able to become more prayerful in the presence of Jesus. And that's hard to do. It's hard to clear your mind and really believe that we are in the presence of Jesus Christ. But we're in the presence of him all the time. Some of us do

know that. But there's a more special way to be in the presence of Jesus. We just got to commit, like doing the regular Holy Hour."

Amy Schirmer explained why Eucharistic Adoration is important to her personally. "Because I love Jesus and I want to be with him and this is a beautiful way to do that quietly," she said. "Well, I think the first time I came in, seeing the candles and everything was dark except for the altar, it draws you. It draws you into devotion and it's just lovely. It's like being with your best friend in the place where everyone's relaxed and it's so intimate, it's so beautiful. I don't know how to explain it."



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"If you take scripture literally, and some of it has to be taken literally, when he said your garment will overflow, the hem of your garment will overflow," added Donna Merreck. "He is so generous with his gifts. We have been blessed beyond measure. And we have to attribute it to adoring the Lord for one hour, whether it's daily or on Friday or how often you can adore the Lord. He will not be outdone in generosity. And when you look back, hindsight is the greatest teacher because we can say, you know, this was totally the hand of God who worked."

Merreck is grateful for the countless graces and blessings in her life from Eucharistic Adoration.

"When children can see particularly their father and mother praying and that it's done quietly, it does preach the Gospel," she said. "Our three children are practicing Catholics. Their spouses are practicing Catholics. That's to give him the honor and glory. That is how we have been blessed. So there is an impact on the family."

Merreck's suggestion: "just try it."

"Give him 15 minutes the first time and then after a week or two weeks you'll be going back for 20 minutes, a half an hour," she said. "Then it'll increase until you give him an hour. Sometimes, there is always a struggle of giving time in adoration. If you think you haven't got the time of the day, you don't have enough time, that's a struggle.

You'll find time and you have to do it."

"I think it's a blessing to the whole parish," Wood noted. "I see more people at Mass now. There's something that's bringing people in. It's the fact that Jesus is blessing us and calling us, and more people are hearing him now."

Our faith in the Holy Eucharist is at the heart of what makes us Catholic, explained Wood.

"To bring the power of the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ into our hearts. There's this mercy, there's this love," she said. "The Eucharist is the summit of the Catholic Church, the source of Christian life. That's what makes us different. And when you sit here in front of the exposed Blessed Sacrament and you really look, and you say the prayers, especially the reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus (it is powerful). I do like the litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We pray for the reparation of sins, for the forgiveness of sins to everyone. As you look around, there are so many things to be prayed for, the culture of abortion, the kind of hate that you see and murder and bloodshed, you see all of these things and only Jesus can change it. So yes, that's part of adoration. You know, for me, one hour of personal silent prayer is not enough, it would be better if it was two hours."

Father Michael Marzan contributed interviews for this article.

**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/diocesefburlington>

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

For advice about your rights: contact an attorney

FOLLOW ME

Explore 'who and whose we are'

Editor's note: The following is Bishop Terry R. LaValley's homily from the Rite of Election, celebrated March 9 at St. Mary's Cathedral.

*On the first part
of the journey
I was looking
at all the life.
There were plants and
birds and rocks
and things.
There was sand and
hills and rings.
The first thing I met
was a fly with a buzz
And the sky
with no clouds.
The heat was hot and
the ground was dry
But the air was full of
sound.*

*I've been through the
desert on a horse with
no name.*

*It felt good to be
out of the rain.*

*In the desert you can
remember your name
'cause there ain't no one
for to give you no pain.*

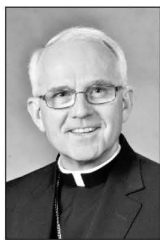
A few years ago, I reflected on these lyrics with you, and I thought a renewed consideration could be helpful for Lent 2025, this Jubilee Year of Hope. Now, I have a pretty good idea of your age if you recognize the words of this hit tune by America, called "A Horse with No Name." Why in the world would the bishop call our attention again to this old-

time classic on this the first part of the journey of Lent? Furthermore, what did the songwriter mean by a Horse with No Name? It's reported that he said: "This anonymous horse was a vehicle to get me away from all the confusion and chaos of life to a peaceful, quiet place." The rain symbolized all his problems, so he goes to the desert, where one wouldn't expect all this rain (personal problems) to follow and soak him through and through. The desert was a getaway place for him, a place for thinking and exploring who he was.

It's appropriate that our Lent begins with a story in the desert. Perhaps it's not feasible for most of us to visit a geographical desert. But we do have Lent, which serves as a desert of time, rather than of place. If we want to "remember our name" explore from the depths of our being who and whose we are, we can make Lent the vehicle, the time for such self-reflection.

The Church describes Lent in many ways. We compare our forty days in the desert to Christ's being in the desert forty days. We speak of fast-

ing and abstinence. We understand Lent as being a time of self-sacrifice. Interestingly, the word Lent, itself means "spring." Despite our descriptions, Lent is not so much intended to be a bleak and dark time in



Bishop Terry
R. LaValley

which we match our spiritual mood with that of the darkness of winter. Lent is intended to be a new beginning, a new springtime in which we reinvigorate our faith. Fasting, abstinence and self-sacrifice are not the point of Lent. These traditional disciplines are the tools of Lent to help us explore who we are and how we might grow closer to One Who is the source of all our blessings.

Our task in Lent is like that of Israel's forty days in the desert. It is an opportune time to take a good, hard look at ourselves - our lives and our behaviors, especially because we owe absolutely everything to God. During Lent we are encouraged to put aside all else and devote ourselves to concentrating on our relationship with God and the temptations in our lives that threaten to harm that relationship. We use fasting and self-denial to do this.

Notice that the remedies of the three temptations that Jesus encountered in the desert are addressed with the three practices that our Church invites us to take up during this Sacred Season: fasting,

almsgiving and prayer.

By fasting and other acts of self-denial, we learn self-control. By almsgiving, we practice detachment from material things and avoid creating false needs for ourselves. By prayer, especially using the Scriptures as Jesus did, we humble ourselves before God, relying on His grace. These disciplines are tools to help us focus.

At Mass, when we bring up our gifts of bread and wine, let us make a conscious effort to also bring our Lenten sacrifices to the altar. When the priest prays, "May the Lord accept this sacrifice... for the praise and glory of His Name," let us be focused on the mystery of the moment, joining our own daily sacrifices with the sacrifice of Christ Himself to the Father.

I hope that all the liturgies, prayers, acts of mercy and classes that the parish offers you this Lent will help you to stay focused on what will enhance your personal relationship with Jesus. It's important, too, to remember to have patience with ourselves and with our neighbors during this Lenten journey. It can be a time to usher in a new springtime in our lives of faith...a new commitment to the Church and parish, a renewed enthusiasm to worship and praise the God who has spared nothing so we might enjoy eternal happiness. Can there be a better reason to be a true pilgrim of hope. This is truly a graced

time in the desert to remember who you are and respond to God's awesome gifts.

As we set out on this first part of our journey of Lent, we welcome our catechumens and candidates to our beautiful Cathedral for the Rite of Election! It's truly a day of blessing for the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Dear catechumens and candidates, with the continued guidance of your parish's OCIA team and staff, please make these days of intense prayer a privileged time of personal encounter and shared joy with Jesus Christ. We are so grateful to all those, who in your faith journey, have been faithful companions: your family members, fellow parishioners, your pastors and members of the parish OCIA teams.

Thank you for coming to St. Mary's Cathedral this afternoon to be counted among the elect. I pray that, as you continue your pilgrimage of faith, that you develop the spiritual discipline of always being attentive to the blessings you've received in life and then giving praise and honor to God, the Source of all blessings, through your compassionate works of mercy and, of course in your participation in this great Prayer of Thanksgiving, Holy Eucharist. In the Lenten desert, we can remember our name, celebrate it and reclaim it - O Christian, disciple of Jesus, pilgrim of hope and child of God. May God be praised...forever may God be praised!

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Starr Burke
Loretta and Andy Cappiello
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Cosgro
Deacon Gerald Defayette
Mr. and Mrs. Chris DeGrandpre
Mr. Arlen Favero
Mrs. Josephine Garratt
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Giroux
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hay
Mr. and Mrs. Eldred Hutchins
Mrs. Joan Jarvis
Mrs. Carolyn Keable

Plattsburgh Continued

Patricia Kelley
John and Vicki Masella
Mr. and Mrs. George Miller
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Nephew
Terry and Janice Norcross
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Polhemus
Kristine Portal
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Racette
Sisters of Charity of St. Louis
Paul Spilman
Mr. and Mrs. Keith Stark
Mrs. Margaret Stewart
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Taylor

The CC of Moriah, Port Henry

Rev. Alan Hauser
Mr. and Mrs. Antonio Lemza
Alton Supernault
Mr. Peter Zelinski

St. Martin's Church, Port Leyden

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Beltowski
Ms. Stacey McCall
Mr. and Mrs. David Sessions

St. Mary's Church, Potsdam

Felicitas Baxter
Mr. and Mrs. James Corbett
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Lahendro
Mr. and Mrs. William Simmons

St. Patrick's Church, Rouses Point

William Ancilt
Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Barcomb
Patricia Carey
Mr. and Mrs. Colin Duffy
Mr. and Mrs. Arsene Letourneau
Mary Racicot
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Vacca

St. Ann's Church, St. Regis Falls

David Montroy

St. Andrew's Church, Sackets Harbor

Mr. and Mrs. Grover Brenon
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Hunneyman
Anne Thomas
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Townsend

St. Bernard's, Saranac Lake

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Bartlett
Mr. and Mrs. Barry Kilbourne
Mr. Kenneth Wiley

Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Schroon Lake

Michel Michelsen Lee
Mrs. Frances Williford

St. Hubert's Church, Star Lake

Peter O'Shea

St. Mary's Church, Ticonderoga

Mr. John Gonyea
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Liddell
Mr. and Mrs. David Rutkowski

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

Mr. and Mrs. James Ellis
Mrs. Jeannette Keniston
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mitchell
Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell Robillard

St. Mary's Church, Waddington

Mrs. Joan Andres

Church of the Holy Family, Watertown

Mr. and Mrs. David Brancheau
Mr. and Mrs. Mike Grandjean
Mr. and Mrs. James Keohane
Robin Kinne
Mr. and Mrs. John Lewis
Mrs. Beverly Shepard
Mrs. Joyce Surace

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church, Watertown

Mr. Ronald Perciaccante
Miss Suzanne Williams

St. Anthony's Church, Watertown

Mrs. June Marzano
Mr. and Mrs. Dominic Spano

St. Patrick's Church, Watertown

Sandra Haight

The CC of St. Philip of Jesus and St. Joseph, Willsboro

Matthew Bosley

Other

Amanda Ames, Potsdam
Kyle Aumell, Watertown
John and Angela Bashaw, Fort
Covington
Mary Bobak, Grand Island
Nancy Dugen, Wilson, NC
Deacon James Gillen, Jonesboro,
ME
Emily Ford, LaFargeville
Garth Griffin, Brushton
Cindy Farmasi Jamboree,
Copenhagen
Ms. Mary Krescenci, Troy
Jason Lewis, Liverpool
John Mellon, Exeter, NH
David and Audrey Peartree,
Rochester
Henry Pedicone, Niskayuna
Paul Seymour, Merrill

This listing reflects extraordinary, sustaining, special and patrons from Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2024. Although every effort has been made to include the names of every patron, some mistakes are inevitable. If, however, an omission or error has occurred, we do apologize. Please notify us at 315-608-7556 so that we may correct our records.

PLEASE NOTE: Parishes are listed with their legal parish name, not each individual worship site is listed as some worship sites are combined under one parish name.

Thank
You!

Environmental Stewardship

Lenten tools for planting

As we consider a greening of Lent this year, let's look at the first tool given to us by Jesus in the Gospel for Ash Wednesday, PRAYER. Prayer is a way to prepare the soil of our hearts to receive the seed of God's word and make it grow. During Lent, we strive to spend more time in prayer. One simple but accessible way to pray is to stop for even a moment and be amazed at the wonders of creation that unfold before us from morning to night, and then, like the psalmist, give praise to God. In Psalm 8 he begins by crying out: O LORD, our Lord,

*How majestic is Your name
in all the earth,*

*Who have displayed Your
splendor above the heavens!*

How often do you pray with creation? As we pray the Psalms, we notice how often the psalmist prayed with elements of creation. Often, we find aspects of the earth like rocks, mountains, rivers, waters, moon and stars used in the prayers of the Israelites. Praying Psalm 104 we experience the richness of the psalmist's familiarity with the earth's elements. Did you know trees are mentioned more than 90 times in Scriptures?

Reading the Gospels, we see that Jesus is very attentive to His Father's creation. We see him often using elements of the natural world to illustrate lessons for our lives, i.e. lilies of the field, birds of the air, vine and branches, mustard seeds, to name but a few.

What might praying with creation look like for us here during Lent? For example, we experience the earth going through a change, referred to as "mud season," a necessary melting time before new life in spring. During this Lenten season are we not being called to a change of heart? As we endure this "mud season" of the earth, might it not remind us that we need to pray about the changes we being called to make so that new life in Christ and our neighbors can occur?

Bishop's Public Schedule

March 12 – 9:30 a.m. – Diocesan Department Head Meeting at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

Noon – Lunch followed by Lenten Day of Reflection for all Diocesan Staff at Wadhams Hall in Ogdensburg

March 13 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

March 14 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

March 15 – 11 a.m. – Mass and Celebration of Saint Joseph's Day at St. Anthony's Church in Watertown

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

March 17 – Noon – St. Joseph's Home Foundation Board of Directors Meeting at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg

March 18 – 9 a.m. – St. Joseph's Home Board of Managers Meeting at St. Joseph's Home in Ogdensburg

Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

March 19-21 – Seminarian Visit at Saint Vincent Seminary in Latrobe, Pennsylvania

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

MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

The executive order on IVF

On February 18, President Trump issued an executive order entitled, "Expanding Access to In Vitro Fertilization" (IVF), in which he stated, "My Administration recognizes the importance of family formation, and as a Nation, our public policy must make it easier for loving and longing mothers and fathers to have children."

The order sets in motion a review process to obtain policy recommendations for "protecting IVF access and aggressively reducing out-of-pocket and health plan costs for IVF treatment."

Although it seeks the good end of fostering family building, it embraces a reckless and

unethical means of pursuing that goal. By doing so, it champions wrongdoing and cooperates in evil.

The use of IVF to bring new human life into the world always involves a disordered choice on the part of a couple or an individual. By allowing various third parties and employees from the infertility industry to build their children for them, parents commodify, objectify and instrumentalize both their own sexuality and the vulnerable bodies of their embryonic children.

Because of IVF, an industry has arisen that, at its core, produces and markets human beings, and treats persons as products. This has had the effect of establishing a subclass and dehumanizing an entire segment of humanity: those who can now be sold, exploited, manipulated or handed over to stem cell researchers for destruction.

Every human being has the right to be conceived under his or her

mother's heart, in the safety of her body, and under the loving embrace of his or her parents. Instead of receiving their offspring as



Father Tad Pacholczyk, Ph.D.

"gift" through their own marital embrace, those who seek IVF pursue a false "right" to manufacture their sons and daughters in laboratory glassware.

This results in collateral damage on multiple levels, including the freezing and destruction of embryonic children, eugenic screening of those children for specific traits or sex selection, heightened rates of birth defects, the taking advantage of surrogate mothers, and the "selective reduction" of multiplet pregnancies.

Given the moral objectionability of IVF, what should the administration do when it comes to IVF?

Simply put, the opposite of what it has done thus far.

It should seek to forbid the practice through statutory mechanisms, or, if that is not yet politically possible, limit and circumscribe the practice by bringing it under tight regulation and oversight.

Rather than cooperating with the multi-billion dollar infertility industry and playing into its agenda by expanding IVF funding and availability, the Trump administration ought to clamp down on this largely unregulated behemoth.

The golden rule in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Rest in Peace

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

March 12 – Rev. Joseph L. Stickelmyer, 1984

March 13 – Rev. James Keveny, 1880; Rev. Ferdinand J. Ouellet, 1929; Rev. Joseph A. Bachand, 1950; Rev. Joseph N. Sestito, 2024

March 14 – Msgr. Maurice John Bellamy, 1958; Msgr. Edgar A. Gallagher, 1961; Rev. John Quinn, M.S.C., 1962; Rev. Joseph E. Turcotte, O.M.I., 1980; Rev. Edward C. Rivette, 1981; Rev. Timothy J. Soucy, 2009

March 15 – Rev. Charles J. McMorrow, 1898; Rev. Howard G. Goiser, 1984

March 16 – Rev. William A. MacDermott, 1913; Msgr. Noel V. Zimmerman, 1994

March 17 – Rev. Michael Froc, O.M.I., 1905; Rev. Francis X. Parisian, 1955

March 18 – Rev. Joseph Murtagh, 1928

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:

March 27 – 3:30 p.m. – St. Agnes School, Lake Placid

State Department cancels U.S. bishops' contract for refugee settlement

By Daniel Payne
Catholic News Agency

The State Department has canceled two multimillion-dollar refugee resettlement contracts with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), a move that comes as the bishops themselves are suing the Trump administration over a major funding freeze.

Two Feb. 26 "notice of termination" letters from State Department Comptroller Joseph Kouba informed USCCB Associate General Secretary Anthony Granado that two fiscal year 2025 agreements for refugee resettlement — including for a program known as "Enduring Welcome" — were "immediately terminated" as they "no longer effectuat[e] agency priorities."

The USCCB was directed to "stop all work on the program[s] and not incur any new costs" and "cancel as many outstanding obligations as possible."

The U.S. Department of Defense describes the Enduring Welcome program as "the U.S. government's long-term resettlement program," which resettles Afghan allies and their families in the United States.

Records from 2024 show the canceled programs included two separate grants totaling about \$27 million for refugee resettlement. The grants were meant to cover a period from October 2024 to September 2025.

USCCB president Archbishop Timothy Broglio said in a December 2024 letter to members of Congress that the U.S. bishops have "consistently express[ed] support for individuals who risked their lives and the lives of their family members to assist the U.S. mission and U.S. personnel in Afghanistan," including through Enduring Welcome.

The Department of State published the letter as part of a court filing related to the USCCB's lawsuit against the agency, brought last month over what the bishops said was the unlawful suspension of funding for refugee programs in the United States.

The Trump administration ordered the funding suspension as part of a series of executive orders President Donald Trump issued upon taking

office. Dozens of states, groups, and nonprofits have sued the Trump administration over the funding cuts, arguing that the government exceeded its authority in canceling grants and humanitarian awards.

In its lawsuit last month the USCCB noted that it has worked with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration for "nearly half a century" and that the bureau had committed "around \$65 million in federal funding" to the USCCB and its affiliates for refugee services in fiscal year 2025.

In recent years, the USCCB has received more than \$100 million annually from the federal government to support migration and refugee services.

The U.S. bishops had brought their suit in U.S. district court, but in its filing last week the State Department said that with the official cancellation of the contract, the matter is now a "contract dispute" that should be addressed by the Court of Federal Claims.

The district court's authority over the case is now "clearly absent," the department claimed, as "the parties' agreements are no longer in force."

The USCCB did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Tuesday morning. In a Monday filing, however, the bishops argued that the suit "must remain in district court" because the Court of Federal Claims "cannot provide the relief most important for USCCB."

The termination of the contract, the bishops said in the Monday filing, was "causing irreparable injury to USCCB, frustrating the conference's mission to assist refugees assigned to it."

"There is no dispute that without the funds the government promised when it assigned refugees to USCCB, USCCB will be unable to continue providing essential food, housing, and training to the thousands of recently arrived refugees in its care," the bishops said.

"Every day that passes with the unlawful termination in effect is another day that USCCB is unable to fulfill its mission to follow the model of Jesus Christ and serve these poor and vulnerable neighbors," they argued.

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

White House holds Ash Wednesday Mass for staff

A Catholic Mass was reportedly celebrated for the staff at the White House in observance of Ash Wednesday. An email from the White House Management Office informed staff that the Mass would take place in the Indian Treaty Room at 8:30 a.m. The Indian Treaty Room is located in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, adjacent to the White House. "Staff who observe are welcome to attend," the email stated. President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump also issued a greeting for Ash Wednesday. "This Ash Wednesday, we join in prayer with the tens of millions of American Catholics and other Christians beginning the holy season of Lent — a time of spiritual anticipation of the passion, death, and resurrection of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," the message reads. "During the Lenten season, Christians spend 40 days and 40 nights praying, fasting, and giving alms to deepen our faith and strengthen our belief in the Gospel," the statement continues.

Baltimore Archdiocese lowers confirmation age

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore has decided to lower the age of confirmation to 9 in a move designed to increase family involvement in the formation of youth. Amid growing disaffiliation from the Church, Catholic leaders across the country are striving to better catechize young people by lowering confirmation age requirements. The Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and the Diocese of Salt Lake City both lowered confirmation age requirements in December 2024. Other archdioceses including Seattle, Boston, and Denver have lowered their confirmation ages in recent years as well. For Lori, who has led the Archdiocese of Baltimore for nearly 13 years, the crux of the catechesis crisis is a lack of family engagement. After a "broad consultation" of Catholic theology, developmental psychology, and other dioceses' experiences, Lori said he found "the decisive factor" for young people remaining in the faith was family involvement.

EU bishops call for unity and solidarity with Ukraine

In the context of the growing geopolitical complexity and uncertainty surrounding peace in Ukraine, the presidency of the Commission of the Episcopal Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) issued a statement on Tuesday, March 4, expressing strong support for Ukraine. The European Catholic bishops stated that "Ukraine's struggle for peace will also be decisive for the fate of Europe and the world." They also emphasized that "Ukraine's struggle for peace and the defense of its territorial integrity is not only a fight for its own future. Its outcome will also be decisive for the fate of the entire European continent and of a free and democratic world." In a geopolitical landscape that the bishops of the European Union described as "complex" and marked by "the unpredictability of the actions taken by some members of the international community," the COMECE presidency urged the European Union and its member states "to remain united in their commitment to support Ukraine and its people."

VIRTUAL EVENTS

LENTEN PODCAST

Join Father Chris Looby for a special Lenten podcast series titled From Sorrow to Hope.

Date: The series will begin on March 10 and conclude on March 14.

Features: This five-part series will focus on the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary and reflect on how Christ's Passion leads us to the ultimate hope of the Resurrection. Each episode will include scripture, prayer and reflections to guide listeners in deepening their faith. New episodes will be available daily on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Amazon Music/Podcasts. Join Father Chris as we walk the Lenten journey together from the sorrow of the cross to the joy of new life in Christ.

Contact: For more info visit <https://sites.google.com/view/from-sorrow-to-hope>

FRIENDSHIP GROUP MEETING

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

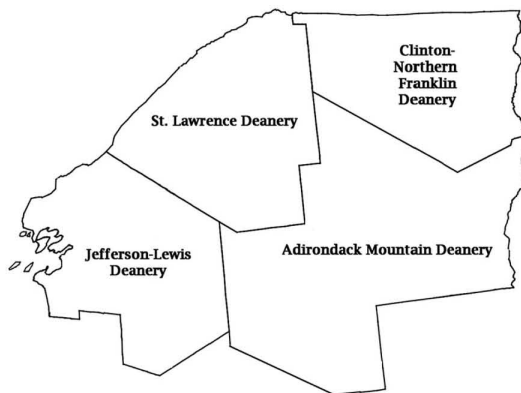
Date: March 27

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Zoom

Features: In our final discussion on "Sacred Conversations," Father Craig MacMahon, OMV will guide us through chapter six to the end, and break open "how-to" tools for application, including the "Rules of the Road," and conversation starters to help you use these to improve your life and help people in need.

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



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.

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

SPIRITUAL CARE COMPANION TRAINING

Lake Placid – Mercy Care for the Adirondacks is holding training for its new Spiritual Care Companion Volunteer Program.

Date: March 19

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

Features: Mercy Care is launching its new Spiritual Care Companion Volunteer Program, in collaboration with Jane Stratton, parish nurse educator, and Christine Voce, St. Agnes Church outreach coordinator. A Spiritual Care Companion will receive training to accompany an elder on their spiritual journey through loss, grief, spiritual or physical distress, transitions in living circumstances, joys or blessings in their life.

Cost: There is no cost, but registration is required.

Contact: To register, visit <https://www.adkmercy.org/event/spiritual-volunteer-training-march-19/> or contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Mercy Care's Program and Mission Integration Director, at abevilacqua@adkmercy.org or call Lexi for more information at 518-523-5446.

CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

FISH FRY

Plattsburgh – Holy Cross to have

Fish Fry's during Lent.

Date: Starting March 7

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6:30

Place: Holy Cross Parish Center

Cost: \$15 dine in

Menu: Haddock, fries, mac & cheese, coleslaw, roll with butter, beverage & dessert.

Contact: For more information call the parish office at 518-563-0730

LENTEN FISH FRIES

AuSable Forks – Come join the AuSable Forks Knights for fried fish.

Date: March 21 and April 4

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6:30

Place: Holy Name Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$15, Children under 12, \$10

Features: Take-outs Available.

ULTREYA

Plattsburgh – All Cursillistas and guests are invited to the next Ultreya.

Date: March 14

Time: 5:45 p.m. (come early at 5 p.m. for the Fish Fry dinner, \$15 per person for dinner).

Place: Holy Cross Parish Center
Features: Deacon Ken Lucia will MC, Ken Racette will give the witness talk and Father Alan Schnob will to the spiritual talk. Any Cursillista and anyone interested in learning more about

Cursillo in the North Country are welcome to join us.

Contact: RSVP always appreciated by emailing Marika Donders at mdonders@rcdony.org

BREAKFAST

Altona – St. Ann's and Holy Angels to have an all you can you eat breakfast prepared by the Ladies of St. Ann.

Date: March 16

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, Juice and 50/50.

CORNED BEEF DINNER

Fort Covington – The parish of St. Mary's of the Fort is hosting a Corned Beef Dinner.

Date: March 16

Time: 11 a.m. until sold out

Place: Fort Covington Adult Center, 2526 Chateaugay St

Cost: per meal - \$15. Take-out only.

Menu: Corned Beef, Cabbage, Potatoes, Carrots & Dessert

TAIZE PRAYER

Plattsburgh – Taize prayer service to be held.

Date: March 27

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Our Lady of Victory Church

Features: Gather around the Cross for prayer this Lent.

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

SPAGHETTI & MEATBALL DINNER

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

Date: 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

CORNED BEEF & CABBAGE

Constableville – St. Mary's Youth Group will host a St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage dinner.

Date: March 17

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

Place: Parish hall on James Street, Constableville

Features: Dine in or take out. Be served a delicious dinner by members of the youth group as they raise funds for their activities, including monthly family fun nights.

Cost: \$12 for adults, \$6 for kids under 10.

Contact: For more information or to make a donation, call Jean Lieber at the parish office, 315-348-6104.

FRANCISCAN RETREAT

Watertown - The St. Joseph of Cupertino Fraternity will be hosting a prayerful and spiritual Franciscan Retreat.

Date: March 23

Time: 2 p.m.

Place: St. Patrick's Church

Features: Guest Speaker will be Sr. Pat Larkin, OFS— Regional Spiritual Assistant at the Kateri Tekakwitha Region OFS. Refreshments will be served.

Contact: Any questions for more information, contact Marcia Rittenhouse: 315-788-7573

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

Clayton - All are invited to come to St. Mary's Church for Exposition, Adoration, Morning Prayer, and the Rosary. Opportunity for Confession is also available.

Date: Each Sat. March 8 to April 12

Time: 10 a.m.

Features: In addition to our own intentions, we will pray for Seminarian Tyler Fitzgerald who will be ordained to the Diaconate this May.

Contact: For more information contact the parish office at 315-686-3398.

ST. LAWRENCE

FISH FRY

Gouverneur – Every Friday during

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

TikTok tiny Jesus figures left in Capitol

By Tessa Gervasini
Catholic News Agency

In recent days, congressional staff working in the U.S. Capitol have reported seeing something unusual in the normally staid grand corridors and offices where Congress conducts its business: Tiny Jesus figurines are popping up everywhere.

Congressional aides have shared images of the little statues on X after spotting them around the Capitol. One was found perched on a marble column in Statuary Hall, another was seen propped up on a pillar directly outside the doors of the Speaker of House's office.

Some are a bit more hidden, including a diminutive Jesus placed high on a small ledge and one tucked next to a frame on the wall. Another tiny figu-

rine was even discovered inside a lawmaker's office in the Canon House Office Building.

Whoever is placing the Jesus figurines around the Capitol appears to be participating in the new "mini Jesus figure" TikTok trend. TikTok is even selling packs of up to 100 tiny Jesus statuettes on the app's store, TikTok Shop. Many Christian users are encouraging others to buy them to place in stores, hospitals, gas stations, or any other stops they make throughout their days.

TikTok users participating in the trend are posting videos of themselves leaving the figurines in public spaces, often with the hashtags #jesuslovesyou and #spreadingthelove. The trend is meant to serve as a reminder that "everyone needs a little Jesus," according to some of the

viral videos.

Users can search the phrase "hiding mini Jesus" on the app to see dozens of people spreading Jesus by placing the figures around for strangers to find.

CNA spotted one of the figures near an entrance to the Capitol. The Jesus statue matched the ones posted online with a "Jesus loves you" message on it.

Erik Rosales, Capitol Hill correspondent for "EWTN News Nightly," told CNA he has heard about "more than two dozen baby Jesus on Capitol Hill" found all around the building.

Rosales told CNA he's spoken to a number of tour guides who told him they have seen quite a few while giving tours.

"They don't remove them, but they let other people know. Then the architects of the Cap-

itol are the ones that are taking them," Rosales said. "They've collected a bunch of them."

Whoever is placing them there seems to be determined to keep the presence of Jesus in the Capitol.

In a post on X, Politico reporter Mia Camille McCarthy explained that shortly after she removed a figurine near her office it was replaced.

"We took the last mini Jesus left outside our office and it was REPLACE," she posted. "If you're leaving mini Jesus statues outside our office....please email me...."

It remains a mystery who is leaving the mini-Jesus statues, but one thing seems clear: It's a message meant for everyone, Democrats, Republicans, independents, and even members of the press.

Around the diocese

Lent St. James School will have a Fish Fry.

Date: Every Friday in Lent.

Time: 4:30 p.m. until gone

Cost: \$15, Eat in or take-out

Features: Dinner includes fried fish, choice of macaroni and cheese or french fries, cole slaw, dinner roll, beverage and your choice of dessert.

Contact: Gouverneur area delivery available. Call 315-287-0130

ALPHA

Massena — You are invited to Alpha.

Date: March 25

Time: 6 p.m. to 8:30

Place: St. Mary's Social Hall

Features: Join us for a free meal and great conversations as we explore life and faith.

Contact: For more information contact the Parish office 315-769-2469 or www.massencatholics.com

LENTEN DAY OF MERCY

Canton — St. Mary's Church will be hosting a Lenten Day of Mercy.

Date: March 26

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

Features: Confessions will be heard in the Divine Mercy Chapel.

Contact: For more information email cantonsec@rcdony.org or (315)386-2543

ACIES

Ogdensburg — The Legion of Mary will present the ACIES ceremony.

Date: March 30

Time: After the 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: Catholics are invited to renew their devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. ACIES means ARMY DRESSED IN BATTLE OF ARRAY in Latin and demonstrates the Legion mission to unite with the Blessed Virgin and stand against evil. Prayers, music and hymns will be followed by refreshments. Anyone who loves our Blessed Mother is invited to attend.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

WOMENS DISCERNMENT

Canton — Come and join Bishop LaValley and the Campus Ministers to learn more about "The Call to Holiness and Mission."

Date: March 22

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: St. Mary's Church

Features: It is a call to "Let Go, Let God" fill our lives with His love, joy, peace as Pilgrims of Hope in this Jubilee Year. Any young woman 18-30 years old are welcome to attend. Holy Hour and Luncheon after presentation. Sponsored by the Vocation Office.

Contact: If you are interested in attending, register at <https://www.rcdony.org/womensluncheon>.

PRIESTHOOD DISCERNMENT

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

SURVIVING DIVORCE

Watertown — 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 Watertown location.

Date: Tuesdays starting March 18

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: In school behind St. Anthony's Church

Cost: \$25

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

ENGAGING FAMILIES

Massena — Spring LEAD event to be held for Parishioners already engaged in or who would like to be trained in how to engage families, how to engage in adult faith formation and the OCIA process.

Date: April 5

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

Place: St. Mary's Social Hall

Contact: Register at www.rcdony.org/leadevent. For more information contact Cathy Russell at 315-393-2920 or crussell@rcdony.org

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CHRISM MASS

Ogdensburg — All the faithful of the Diocese of Ogdensburg are invited to join Bishop LaValley in the annual Renewal of Priestly Commitment, the Blessing of the Holy Oils, and the consecration of the Sacred Chrism for use in all the churches of our Diocese.

Date: April 10

Time: 11 a.m.

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

Features: This ritual symbolizes that we are one family in Christ. Those unable to participate in person may view the Mass via livestream at <https://www.rcdony.org/livemass>.



SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

Not what we expect

Some things in life are stranger than fiction. Even in the scriptures, especially those of this Sunday, we read about hard to explain events that can make us wonder about reality. The story in the first reading presents a simple situation and a simple promise at the beginning of the passage and at the end. At both ends of the story God promises Abraham a long line of descendants and real estate where they can settle and multiply. The in-between part can leave us somewhat stupefied.

Between these two promises, God directs Abraham to prepare a sacrifice laden with precise details on how to

prepare the offering. The details may leave us dumbfounded or, at least, curious or even puzzled. We lack a clearly defined explanation, but we know through faith that God has his ways, and his ways are not our ways. Hopefully, in our lives we have learned through experience that God's ways are better than ours.

If the first reading leaves us scratching our heads for understanding, the Gospel can cause even more wonder. We name this event the Transfiguration because the author tells us that Jesus' face changed in appearance, his clothing became dazzling white, and two men appeared, Moses

March 16

Second Sunday of Lent

READINGS

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 9:28b-36

and Elijah. The eeriness of the first reading pales in comparison to what we read in the Gospel.

Are these events real or are they just the authors' imaginations run wild to enliven their stories? Peter actually attests to the reality in his letter when he explains that the disciples never followed strange myths and that ultimately the beauty and reality of this event became even more apparent in the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Jesus was transformed, transfigured, in this

event. However, Peter, James, and John were likewise transformed. They did not shine or become dazzling white like Mr. Clean. The transfiguration of Jesus showed Jesus as he truly is, someone beyond anything one could imagine. This transfiguration transformed Peter, James and John in such a way that they saw and experienced Jesus beyond anything they could imagine.

Almost like a real estate developer, Peter proposes to build three tents. Today, we would use the term "three shrines." Peter wishes to preserve the experience so that he and others could relive the experience. As you can imagine, that's not going to happen.

Even though we do not have the transfig-

uration experience of Peter, James, and John, we do have a similar experience. Those of us of a certain vintage (that's church talk for "old") may remember these words from a hymn: *Adoro te devote latens deitas, quae sub his figuris vere latitas*, often sung during Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Loosely translated: "I fervently adore your divinity hiding in the external sign but truly present in this sign." Yes, Jesus is present in the Eucharist, truly present, mysteriously present.

We might want Christ to be present according to our norms. Well, the only response that we will receive to this longing is the one found in the gospel: "This is my chosen Son. Listen to him."



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

CALLED TO SERVE

The vows are poverty, chastity and obedience

We are in Catholic Sister's Week. March 8 to 14.

Never heard of Catholic Sister's Week? I drew a blank too!

Do not confuse this with the Religious Retirement collection in December or the World Day for Consecrated Life in February. Catholic Sister's Week is different.

It is different because it lasts a week, not a day or two. It is different because it focuses our attention on religious sisters. We call them nuns. Nuns is a derivative of the Latin and means women to take solemn vows.

There are nine orders of nuns in the Ogdensburg Diocese. My first clue that such an observance existed was in a

note from a friend, Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSJ. In her work in the diocesan Vocations Office, Sister Eamon discovered Catholic Sister's Week, an official part of National Women's History Month. That is March, by the way.

The week "shines a light on the spirituality, mission, and community building of women religious."

In previous columns and homilies, I've talked about the significant role religious sisters played in my life. Dominican Sisters from Amityville were my teachers in grade school in the Brooklyn/Queens Diocese.

I remember my principal, Sister John Anthony, OP, standing out-

side her office on nice days at the end of our lunchtime/school yard shenanigans. She would ring the school bell that summoned all of us uniformed boys and girls back to the classrooms. And we dutifully obeyed.

Several years later, Sister John Anthony, OP, became President of Molloy College in Rockville Center. One of the students at Molloy then is my wife, Kathy.

Sisters influenced life at home too. Sister Amata Marie, SSJ/Brentwood, was my grandmother's sister. Aunt Mary would stop by the house with another Sister from

time to time for a visit. They were both in the Josephite habit of the time, a black robe with a starched white bib. The headdress was black. It covered a starched white

bonnet that puckered the sister's cheeks. Some SSJ still wear those habits. Most have adopted more comfortable and fashionable garb.

I recall the first time Sister Amata came to breakfast in street clothes. "Hey," this seven-year-old blurted, "Aunt Mary has

hair."

It has been my pleasure to meet and spend time with many of the sisters who serve in our diocese. They are from



Deacon Kevin Mastellon

the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod, the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, the Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church, the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Daughters of the Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Dominican Sisters of Hope, the Sisters of Charity of St. Louis, and the Sister Adorers of the Precious Blood.

Should you cross paths with a religious sister this week, offer words of thanks and encouragement. To each of them and all their sisters, God bless you and thank you.

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

On mission in 'Impenetrable' region

This is part three of our series covering the lives of those living in the slums of Argentina. This article is written by Ines San Martin, the vice president of Marketing and Communications in the Pontifical Mission Societies national office in New York City. She is a native of Argentina.

It is often said in Argentina that even though God is everywhere, He operates in Buenos Aires. Yet, this doesn't apply to the Church's evangelizing efforts, which reach far beyond the capital into Argentina's northern region, known as the Impenetrable. Here, in the northern provinces of Chaco, Formosa and Santiago del Estero, the Church's mission extends to remote areas where the government, locals say, hardly operates.



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

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In Monte Quemado, Santiago del Estero, Father Juan Lanzotti, a missionary from Rosario and the diocesan director of The Pontifical Mission Societies for the Diocese of Añatuya, leads a mission grounded in the legacy of Bishop Jorge Gotteau. Known as "the missionary bishop," Gotteau transformed the landscape of the Añatuya Diocese, not only by expanding the Church's presence through the construction of 15 parishes and 200 chapels but by uplifting the local community with education, healthcare, and essen-

tial infrastructure.

His work continues to inspire priests like Father Juan, who face similar challenges in bringing hope and the Gospel to a region as beautiful as it is harsh.

This remote area lacks infrastructure and resources, and until Bishop Jorge's arrival in the 1960s, it also lacked a strong spiritual foundation.

When he took on the role of bishop, he knew he was called to serve in one of the most impoverished and forgotten areas of the country, a place where extreme temperatures, scarce drinking water,

and barren landscapes make life a constant struggle. Bishop Jorge did not shy away from these challenges; instead, he embraced them as his mission. His motto, *Ad Jesum per Mariam* ("To Jesus through Mary"), encapsulated his dedication to bring both material and spiritual aid to Añatuya.

Berta Cortez, a mission animator at the parish in Canal de Dios, grew up in one of the seven orphanages founded by Gotteau. Raised amidst the challenges of rural poverty, she recalls his relentless work with the government to bring running water and electricity to the region. "We owe a lot to the Church," she said. "Yes, me personally, but also as a community. Had it not been for Monsignor Gotteau, we would still

lack basic things."

Gotteau not only saw to the building of these essential services but also empowered lay leaders like Berta to continue his work, creating a legacy of resilient faith that persists today.

Father Juan further elaborated on the challenges faced by the community and the absence of the government: "There is virtually no presence from the national government in this region. The governor buys people off and uses a private helicopter, but we have no medevac services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this lack of resources was a tragedy. People know the governor is corrupt, but they feel powerless. And they have so little that the governor can often buy them for two loaves of bread."

OBITUARIES

Brasher Falls — Joan Kowalchuk Moore, 75; Mass of Christian Burial in spring at St. Patrick's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Cadyville — Thomas Joseph Delisle, 70; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2025 at St. James Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Croghan — Richard Boliver, 83; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2025 at St. Stephen's Church; burial in St. Stephen's Cemetery.

Crown Point — Gloria (Ross) Tubbs, 90; Mass of Christian Burial March 15, 2025 at Sacred Heart Church.

Keeseville — Anne Marie (Hetz) Healey, 88; Mass of Christian Burial March 8, 2025 at Church of the Immaculate Conception.

Lake Placid — Marion (Ruderman) Sileo, 87; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2025 at St. Agnes Church.

Lake Placid — Patricia (Lamica) Preston, 82; March 3, 2025 at St. Agnes Church; burial in St. Agnes Cemetery.

Lowville — Delilah M. Mahoney, 86; Graveside services in spring at Lowville Rural Cemetery.

Madrid — Richard A. Cardoza, 78; Graveside Services in spring at St. John the Baptist Cemetery.

Massena — Charlotte Ann (Kellogg) Chase, 82; Funeral Services March 3, 2025 at Phillips Memorial Home; burial in Pine Grove Cemetery, Norfolk.

Ogdensburg — Donlad J. Brenno, 88; Funeral Services March 4, 2025 at Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

Peru — William Joseph "Bill" Fornecker, 75; Mass of Christian Burial March 1, 2025 at St. Augustine's Church; burial in St. Augustine's Columbarium.

Plattsburgh — Scott M. Goldfarb, 68; Memorial Mass March 3, 2025 at Our Lady of Victory Church; burial in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Port Henry — Lucille M. (Levesque) Trow, 99; Services to be held at a later date.

Saranac Lake — Donna Jean (Hilliard) Burman, 81; Funeral Services March 4, 2025 at Fortune-Keough Funeral Home;

burial in Union Cemetery, Vermontville.

Saranac Lake — Agatha "Aggie" Oehler Sullivan, 89; Mass of Christian Burial March 8, 2025 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in St. John's Cemetery, Lake Clear.

Tupper Lake — Margaret "Peggy" Ann (Boyea) Callaghan, 82; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2025 at St. Alphonsus Church.

Waddington — Dr. David A. Zysik, 67; Memorial Mass March 3, 2025 at St. Mary's Church.

Watertown — Shawn Michael Baker, 72; Mass of Christian Burial March 4, 2025 at Holy Family Church.

Watertown — Jodi W. (White)

Baytos, 55; Mass of Christian Burial March 1, 2025 at Holy Family Church.

Watertown — Arthur J. Jobson, 67; Funeral Services March 7, 2025 at D.L. Calarco Funeral Home, Inc.

Watertown — Jacqueline (Dionne) Keating, 74; Mass of Christian Burial March 6, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church.

Watertown — Edward C. Thomas, 89; Mass of Christian Burial March 1, 2025 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

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THE FEAST BEFORE THE FAST



(Above) Mardi Gras was celebrated on March 3 at Immaculate Conception Church in Brownville. Pictured at the gathering are, from left, Father Matt Conger, Father Don Robinson, Father Scott Belina and Father Mickey Demo. (Right) A Mardi Gras celebration was held at St. Andrew's in Sackets Harbor. Among the attendees were, from left, Father Jay Kumar, MSC, Father Scott Belina, Father Donald Robinson and Father Frank Natale, MSC.



Executive order

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

the IVF industry has long been that if it makes gold, it's got to be good and ethical. Its unique and much-touted "self-regulation" has made it into something of a laughingstock, so much so that the industry is often branded by the epithet, "the wild west of infertility."

Strict regulation of IVF has a strong precedent even in some of the more progressive countries in Europe. If Germany and Italy have been able to regulate IVF by passing laws that restrict the production of embryos to a maximum of three at a time, with the requirement that all three be implanted, why couldn't the administration, at a minimum, establish similar regulations to limit the collateral damage of IVF in the US?

In our country, hundreds of thousands of

cryopreserved human embryos have been abandoned and condemned to perpetual stasis in liquid nitrogen. The practical effect of the Italian and German laws has been to preclude the production of supernumerary embryos during IVF, and to eliminate the humanitarian tragedy of freezing and storage of the youngest human beings by clinics.

For couples facing infertility, the administration could take the ethically upright approach of promoting, and assuring coverage for, restorative reproductive medicine in place of IVF. This medical approach pursues a thorough evaluation of the underlying causes of a couple's infertility, and provides tailored therapies so they can bring new life into the world through the marital embrace. It seeks to address the

causal mechanisms of infertility such as an inability to ovulate, low sperm count, endometriosis, blocked fallopian tubes, and/or early miscarriages during pregnancy. Among the better-known examples of this approach are Na-Pro Technology, FEMM and NeoFertility.

The laudable goal of making it easier for "loving and longing mothers and fathers to have children" could also be promoted through other creative strategies, including changing tax structures to incentivize stay-at-home spouses, subsidies for childbirth expenses, the expansion of healthcare access and coverage, educational vouchers and other steps to increase the likelihood that more children will be welcomed into a family.

Rather than governmental intrusions promoting exploitative

Help the hungry

Put your faith in action with Bread for the World's Offering of Letters!

- What is it like to be hungry and have no source of food?
- Are you willing to lend a helping hand to people in need?
- Do you have time to write letters to address this problem?

The Sisters of St. Joseph Social Justice Committee is sponsoring a Bread for the Word Offering of Letters on Tuesday, March 18, at 10 a.m. at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse in Watertown.

As people of faith, we are called to give our time, talent and treasure and use our voice to help end hunger. Bread for the World (a faith based bi-partisan organization) is working to inspire our leaders in Washington, D.C. to pass legislation that reduces hunger in the U.S. and around the world.

- Every year, Bread for the World organizes churches and other groups to write letters and emails to their members of Congress who have the power to impact the policies and programs that can end hunger.
- By taking part in Bread for the World's 2025 Offering of Letters, you will help support domestic and international nutrition programs.
- Your letter matters. Combined with letters from people in our area and with voices of thousands of people across the country, you are urging U.S. decision makers to pursue a world without hunger.

technologies like IVF, Americans are entitled to upright approaches that beckon life into society through loving acts of marital intimacy and nurture and support it within the sanctuary of the family.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his

doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as Senior Ethicist at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org and www.fathertad.com.