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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 80 Number 6

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

APRIL 30, 2025

## *Remembering Pope Francis*

DECEMBER 17, 1936 – APRIL 21, 2025

TIMELINE BY USCCB  
PHOTO BY CNA/EWTN

- 1936 - December 17: Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to Italian immigrant parents.
- 1957 - Falls gravely ill with severe pneumonia; right lung partially removed.
- 1958 - March 11: Enters novitiate of the Society of Jesus.
- 1960 - March 12: Takes first vows as Jesuit.
- 1961 - Begins studying philosophy at San Miguel Seminary, Buenos Aires.
- 1964-65 - Teaches high school literature and psychology at Jesuit secondary school in Santa Fe.
- 1966 - Teaches at prestigious Colegio del Salvador secondary school in Buenos Aires.
- 1967-70 - Studies theology at San Miguel seminary.
- 1969 - December 13: Ordained a priest.
- 1971-73 - Serves as master of novices and vice chancellor, San Miguel seminary.
- 1973 - Takes perpetual profession as Jesuit.
- 1973-79 - Serves as superior of Jesuit province of Argentina and Uruguay.
- 1979-85 - Serves as rector of Colegio Maximo and theology teacher.
- 1986 - Goes to Germany to finish doctoral thesis.
- 1992 - June 27: Ordained auxiliary bishop of Buenos Aires.
- 1997 - June 3: named coadjutor archbishop of Buenos Aires.
- 1998 - February 28: Installed as archbishop of Buenos Aires.
- 2001 - Co-presides over Synod of Bishops.
- 2001 - February 21: Elevated to the College of Cardinals.
- 2005-11 - Serves as president of Argentine Bishops Conference.
- 2013 - March 13: Elected to be 265th successor to Saint Peter.
- 2015 - September 22-27: Apostolic Journey to the United States
- 2025 - April 21: Died at the age of 88, in Vatican City on Monday of the Octave of Easter.



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## Yes, he was small

"He's small, but he's the pope!"

The text accompanied a picture of the U.S. Capitol. The lawn in front of the building was packed tightly with thousands of people. In front of the crowd, surrounded by a sea of people in dark-colored business suits on an upper balcony of the Capitol, was a person clad entirely in white.

The figure in white, the figure that appeared so small to us from our spot toward the middle of the lawn, was

Pope Francis.

The post was made by my friend and cousin, Jared, as the two of us stood in that throng of people and received a papal blessing after Pope Francis' historic address to a joint meeting of Congress in 2015.

While Jared was referencing how tiny the pope appeared from far away and relative to a massive building, I've thought about that quote more times than I could count in the years that have followed.

**Darcy L.  
Fargo**

Pope Francis was elected to the role shortly before I returned to the Catholic Church after more than a decade far removed from her. While there were a variety of people, events and teachings that brought me home, Pope Francis was one of them.

It's fair to say I was wallowing in sinfulness back then. I thought I didn't belong in the Church. I didn't think she would welcome someone like me.

Then I saw a pope who washed the feet of prisoners and who openly talked about being a sinner himself.

Pope Francis helped me feel like I belonged in the

Church.

Was Pope Francis perfect? No. I've yet to find a perfect person anywhere in the Church or in the world.

Despite his imperfections and occasional blunders, I loved that he could dine with heads of state and famous people, yet he seemed to prefer hosting the homeless and hungry. He chose a guest house over a palace.

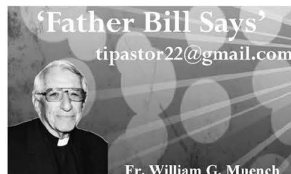
He held possibly the most prestigious title in the world, and he chose to hold it with humility.

He made himself small though he was the pope, and I pray we all can learn from that example.

## 'I loved Pope Francis'

We, Catholics, are again in a time of "sede vacante - being without a Pope. As you know, Pope Francis has died after a severe illness. So, we now await the election of our next Holy Father. Today, I am reminded of the several popes who have served the Church during my lifetime. The Holy Father of our Catholic Church when I was born was Pope Pius XI. Then Pope Pius XII was elected in 1939. Then, when I was studying in the seminary, Pope John XXIII was elected in 1958. He was the Pope who initiated the Second Vatican Council. Then, only a few years later, when I was a young priest, Pope Paul VI was elected in 1963. He was the pope who completed the work of the Council. In 1978, Pope John Paul was elected. He was the pope who died one month after being elected. Then Pope John Paul II was elected that same year. He was pope until 2005, when Pope Benedict XVI was elected. Pope Francis was elected in 2013.

I loved Pope Francis. I



was so pleased when he chose to accept the name of Francis. I had a special devotion to St. Francis of Assisi, as did Pope Francis. Pope Francis chose to imitate St. Francis in his spirituality. He lived a simple life, and he had an intense concern for the poor and needy. He was humble, dedicated to peace, a very caring person. Pope Francis was truly a people's pope.

I remember how humbly and gently he began his papacy. I remember well the evening he was elected. He began speaking to the large crowd of people in St. Peter's Square that night. Simply, he began "Buona sera," Good evening. He then told the people that before he would bless them, he wanted them to bless him with a prayer. It a blessed moment. The whole assembly

became silent in prayer. I want to tell you that I placed my hand on the tv so that I could join in the prayer at my home.

I remember how Pope Francis decided to stay in his room in the Santa Marta hostel rather than the spacious papal apartment. He was known to make many telephone calls, quite surprising bishops and priests and friends throughout the world. I remember how Pope Francis wrote and spoke often to the priests of the world, his pastors in many places. I was a pastor then and remember his powerful lessons for us. He called upon us, priests, to never forget the people who were often forgotten, the marginalized ones in our place. He reminded us not to leave anyone out of our love and concern. He used an interesting expression: we, priests and pastors, should be like shepherds who smelled like their sheep. We should be involved with them. Pope Francis thought of the local parish as being a "field hospital after a battle." The

Church needs the ability to heal wounds, the ability to warm the hearts of the faithful. Parishes should be places of healing and mercy, meeting our people with compassion not judgment. How could you not be ready to follow this leader ready to stand with us, priests, in love. I certainly heard him with his expectations of me.

Pope Francis spoke of a parish as a mother with an Open door. Our parishes must be welcoming and inclusive and not closed in on themselves. He saw a parish with an open door as a sign of God's welcome to all.

So, now, we Catholics must turn to the power of the Holy Spirit and pray that the Spirit's wisdom and boldness comes to these Cardinal electors to bring us a Holy Father with such love, a father who will lead and guide us and be overwhelmed with the power and love of the Holy Spirit. May we be confident and filled with hope that God will walk with us and bring to us a wise and Christ-like Holy Father.

## TERMS TO KNOW

**APOSTOLIC SEE OR HOLY SEE:** The earthly heart of the Church is often referred to as the Apostolic See or Holy See. A see is a seat of authority, from the Latin "sede" for "chair." In the Church, bishops possess chairs of spiritual authority, which is why in part their dioceses are called sees. The Roman Diocese has been called the Apostolic See or Holy See from ancient times, as it is the seat of authority of the chief apostle Peter, who has Christ's authority over holy things. The expression applies to the pope and those in Rome who assist him in governing the universal Church.

**CAMERLENGO:** The camerlengo, or chamberlain has the key role of organizing the process during the vacancy of the Apostolic See, the interregnum. It is the camerlengo, assisted by the master of papal liturgical celebrations and other officials, who certify the death of the pope. During the period of vacancy the camerlengo, assisted by the vice camerlengo, gathers reports from the departments of the Curia so that the College of Cardinals can manage the ordinary affairs of the Holy See until a new pope is elected. This is necessary since virtually all department heads lose their offices when a pope dies.

**CARDINAL ELECTORS:** Cardinal electors are those who are eligible to vote in a papal election. All cardinals under the age of 80 on the day on which the Roman See becomes vacant are allowed to participate in the conclave. The exceptions are those who are legitimately prevented by illness or other circumstances, those who have been deposed by the pope, and those from whom the pope has accepted the renunciation of the cardinalate.

**COLLEGE OF CARDINALS:** The collective name given to the body of cardinals, known formally as the Sacred College of Cardinals. This group consists of bishops, and by exception priests, whom a pope has chosen to be his close advisers and collaborators – and to whom he has entrusted the task of electing his successor – are called cardinals. The name derives from the Latin for "hinge" and came into use in the fourth century. The College of Cardinals, or all cardinals collectively, was constituted in its current form in A.D. 1150, although the cardinals have served as the exclusive electors of the pope since 1059.

**CONCLAVE:** When the cardinal electors gather to elect a pope their assembly is called a conclave. The name is derived from the Latin for "cum clavis" ("with a key"), describing the symbolic but historical procedure by which the cardinal electors are locked into the place of election until their task of electing a new pope is finished. Its procedures are minutely governed today by the apostolic constitution *Universi Dominici Gregis* of Pope John Paul II, as amended by Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, and allows for no innovations on the part of the cardinals. By tradition and law, votes are taken once or twice in a morning session and once or twice in an afternoon session. When the session concludes without an election, the ballots are burned, causing black smoke to emanate from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel. However, if a pope is elected they are burned with a chemical agent, producing the characteristic white smoke signaling the election of a pope.

**DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF CARDINALS:** The most senior member of the College of Cardinals, elected from among the ranks of the cardinal bishops, and confirmed by the pope. The dean is assisted by the vice dean in convoking the cardinals when the pope dies, as well as presiding over their congregations and over the conclave. He is the one who

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## Bishop LaValley celebrates Mass for the Holy Father

*Editor's note: The following is Bishop Terry R. LaValley's homily from a special Mass held for Pope Francis on April 23.*

As soon as I learned that the Holy Father died, my memory kicked into overdrive and I began reminiscing about the few occasions in which I had the privilege of meeting and talking with him: once during his Pastoral Visit to the U.S., once on a pilgrimage I led to holy places in Italy and, the first time, at our NYS Bishops' ad limina visit.

Allow me to share with you something about that first visit. The bishops of New York State met with him in a room where all the chairs were arranged in a circle. In true synodal fashion, Pope Francis asked that we go around the room and ask him a question about anything we wished. Most of the questions posed by the bishops ahead of me addressed the more politically sensitive and contentious issues of the day. I decided that I wanted to get a little more personal with him.

"What keeps you up at night?" I asked the Holy Father. He paused, then he said, "the condition of our families today." He then went on to share the prayers he says for his own family and their struggles. He spoke of the very troubling divorce rate. The Pope said that even in his own family there were some real challenges that he expounded upon. He was so concerned about the fragile state of our families today.

It was no mere coinci-



PHOTO BY DARCY FARGO/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

**Bishop Terry R. LaValley talks about an encounter he had with Pope Francis in 2019 as he delivers his homily during a Mass held for the Holy Father on Wednesday, April 23.**

dence that he convened the Synod on Families, and he inaugurated the Jubilee Year of Hope on Holy Family Sunday. Ministry and support of families was important to him. During this Easter Season, a time in which our hope, of course is focused on the Resurrection, we pray for the strengthening of the faith life of our families, particularly their participation in Holy Eucharist, the Mass.

On this Easter Wednesday, in today's familiar Gospel story of the Road to Emmaus, we meet some followers of Jesus who, dejected, confused

and discouraged, are encountered by the Risen Lord and experience a Eucharistic moment. Like those early followers of Christ, many of our loved ones experience discouragement, disappointment, confusion and even anger in our troubled world today. May we never tire of encouraging them, especially our family members to join us for the ultimate encounter with Jesus at the Eucharist.

We pray that the earthly labors of our Shepherd, Francis, bring him the reward of eternal life with our God in heaven. AMEN.



PHOTO BY DANIEL IBÁÑEZ/EWTN VATICAN

Pope Francis speaks the Easter blessing "urbi et orbi" from the central loggia of St. Peter's Basilica on Easter Sunday, April 20.

## Pope Francis' final hours, return to St. Peter's Square

By Salvatore Cernuzio  
Vatican News

"Thank you for bringing me back to the Square."

This expression of gratitude was among Pope Francis's last words to the person who watched over him tirelessly throughout his illness, as well as before.

He spoke those words to Massimiliano Strappetti, the nurse who, according to the Pope himself, once saved his life by suggesting colon surgery, and whom the Holy Father later appointed in 2022 as his personal healthcare assistant.

Mr. Strappetti stayed by the Pope's side during all 38 days of his hospitalization at Rome's Gemelli Hospital, and keeping watch round-the-clock during his recovery at the Casa Santa Marta. He was with the Pope on Easter Sunday, during the Urbi et Orbi blessing.

The day before, they had gone together to St. Peter's Basilica to review the "route" he would take the following day when he was to appear on the Central Loggia of St. Peter's Basilica.

### EMBRACING THE CROWD

The late Pope wanted to offer one last, meaningful surprise to the 50,000 faithful with a ride in the popemobile on Sunday after the blessing on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica façade.

However, Pope Francis did hesitate a bit and asked the opinion of Mr. Strappetti, asking him, "Do you think I can manage it?"

Once in St. Peter's Square, he embraced the crowd, especially the children, since this was his first ride after being discharged from Gemelli hospital, as well as the last outing among the faithful of his life.

Tired but content, the Pope afterwards thanked his personal healthcare assistant, saying, "Thank you for bringing me back to the Square."

These heartfelt words reveal the deep desire of the Argentine Pope to be among the people of God, enjoying the human connection he made a hallmark of his papacy.

### The final hours

The Pope then rested on Sunday afternoon and

had a quiet dinner.

Around 5:30 AM, the first signs of the sudden illness appeared, prompting an immediate response from those keeping watch over him.

Around an hour later, after making a gesture of farewell with his hand to Mr. Strappetti, lying in bed in his second-floor apartment at the Casa Santa Marta, the Pope fell into a coma.

According to those who were with him in his final moments, he did not suffer. It all happened quickly.

His was a discreet death, almost sudden, without long suffering or public alarm, for a Pope who was always very reserved about his health.

The passing of Pope Francis came the day after Easter, when he was able to offer the city and the world his final Apostolic Blessing and embrace the faithful once more.

It was exactly the people of God with whom, from the very first moments of his election on March 13, 2013, he had promised to walk "together."

### TERMS TO KNOW

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

asks the electee to accept election as pope. The dean always has the titular office of the bishop of Ostia, the diocese located at the mouth of the River Tiber, on whose banks Rome sits. The cardinal dean also holds the title he held at the time of his promotion to dean. If the dean is over the age of 80 and therefore ineligible to participate in the conclave, his duties are performed by the vice dean. If he, too, is over 80, the task of running the conclave falls to the most senior cardinal bishop under the age of 80. In the current conclave, both the dean (Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re) and vice dean (Cardinal Leonardo Sandri) are ineligible, so the conclave will be directed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

**INTERREGNUM:** The period between the reigns of popes, formally called the vacancy of the Apostolic See, or "sede vacante." A vacancy may come about due to the death of a reigning pope or to his resignation from office. If a pope has died the cardinals gather in Rome to mourn him and to plan and carry out his funeral and burial. In both the case of death and resignation, they will meet in conclave to elect his successor. During a vacancy, except for certain offices necessary for day-to-day affairs, all department heads in the Roman Curia lose their authority, and the power of the cardinals is limited to those matters concerned with guarding the authority and patrimony of the Holy See for the next pope.

**MAJOR PENITENTIARY:** The major penitentiary is one of the curial officials who do not lose their offices with the vacancy of the Holy See. The major penitentiary is responsible for indulgences, the provision of confessors for the patriarchal basilicas in Rome, and judging questions of conscience (called the internal forum) submitted for adjudication to the Holy See. These include dispensations and absolution from sanctions, such as excommunication, which are reserved in law to the Holy See.

**NOVENDIALES:** Following the death of the pope nine days of official mourning are held, called the Novendiales, meaning nine days. The nine days of official mourning, commencing with the day of the solemn funeral Mass, are called the Novendiales. This funeral Mass, and Day 1 of the Novendiales, must fall between the fourth and sixth day after death, that is, on the fifth, sixth, or seventh day of the interregnum, as determined by the College of Cardinals. The mourning period then continues until the nine days are completed.

**PROTO-DEACON:** The name used for the most senior cardinal deacon who makes the announcement to the waiting world that the election has taken place and proclaims the name of the new pope by exclaiming "Habemus papam!" ("We have a pope!"). The proto-deacon is the longest serving of the cardinals who hold the rank within the College of Cardinals of cardinal deacon (the other ranks being cardinal priests and cardinal bishops) based on the date of his appointment to the college and by the order of announcement on the "biglietto" or papal decree. The current proto-deacon is Cardinal Dominique Mamberti.

**SISTINE CHAPEL:** When the cardinal electors gather to deliberate and vote for the next pope, they will do so in the Sistine Chapel of the Apostolic Palace. Built for Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484), after whom it is named, this chapel was made famous by Pope Julius II (1503-1513), who in 1508 commissioned Michelangelo to decorate its vault, a task he completed in 1512. Later, Michelangelo painted the "Last Judgment" on the altar wall for Pope Paul III (1534-1549).

# Remembering Pope Francis: Local reflections

Across the North Country, individuals who had opportunities to meet Pope Francis or attend a papal Mass or audience, and those who were touched by the Holy Father's words and actions spent reflecting on his impact in the week following his passing.

**DEB MULLIN**

Deb Mullin of Lowville recently traveled to Rome with her husband, Bob, and was there for the Holy Father's final public appearance.

"I feel so blessed to have had the opportunity to witness a part of our Catholic history by attending the Easter Mass in St. Peter's Square at Vatican City," she said. "As we waited in anticipation for Mass to begin, I thought about how I had prayed every day since Pope Francis first entered the hospital that he would recover and be able to attend Easter Mass."

Mullin said she was worried that she experienced some guilt around those prayers.

"I questioned if I was praying for Pope Francis's recovery or more for myself – so that I would be able to see him in person," she reflected.

Despite those feelings, Mullin said experiencing St. Peter's Basilica and Square and receiving a blessing from Pope Francis erased her feelings of guilt.

"St. Peter's Basilica's sheer size, detailed architecture, the statues throughout it, the Dome, and the Apostle's that line the facade of the Basilica literally took my breath away," she said. "So, as I look back on my visit to St. Peter's Basilica and Square, I have two take aways: First, an awe-inspiring experience of being at Easter Mass that will forever be etched in my mind. Second, because of Pope Francis's love for all his people, and because he demonstrated such selflessness in making an appearance to give us his final blessing, I felt he wouldn't be upset if I was praying more for myself to be able to see him in



PHOTO BY JESSE SOVIE/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

**Pope Francis traveled the streets of Philadelphia during his 2015 visit to the United States.**

person than for his recovery."

Mullin said she was also able to see the Domus Sanctae Marthae, commonly referred to as Casa Santa Marta, a guest house where Pope Francis resided from the time he was elected to the time of his passing.

"I asked our guide if any other pope had ever resided there," she recalled. "He said, 'No. Pope Francis was the first.'"

**FATHER CHRISTOPHER J. LOOBY**

Father Christopher J. Looby, pastor in Morrisonville, Peru and Cadyville, had the opportunity to join the Holy Father in celebrating Mass when he was leading a pilgrimage group in February of 2017.

"It took months of planning," Father Looby said. "In February of 2017, Bishop LaValley wrote a letter to the Vatican requesting permission for me to concelebrate Mass with the Holy Father. A few weeks later, that permission was granted – faxed back to our Chancery with instructions I had to follow precisely. I was to report to the gates of the Vatican early – 7 a.m., I be-

lieve – for a 7:30 Mass at the pope's private chapel at Casa Santa Marta."

Looby didn't tell the pilgrims traveling with him about his plans to see the Holy Father.

"The morning of the Mass, I quietly slipped out of the hotel, trying not to draw attention," Father Looby said. "One of the pilgrims in my group was already sitting in the lobby and asked where I was headed. I had to just smile and keep walking. It was hard keeping such a sacred secret."

After checking in vesting – putting on liturgical vestments – for Mass, Father Looby and a group of priests made their way to a chapel, where Father Looby had a front-row seat.

"And then Pope Francis entered," Father Looby recalled. "During the homily, he stood just a few feet from me, preaching in Italian. I didn't understand a word, but it didn't matter. I was absolutely transfixed. It was as if time stood still. I kept thinking: I am sitting at the feet of Peter, listening to him preach the Gospel. There was a quiet, intimate simplicity to the liturgy – but also an immense spiritu-

al weight. Standing with Pope Francis during the Eucharistic Prayer, speaking the same sacred words, breaking the same Bread, was almost overwhelming. I felt both very small and deeply honored."

**FATHER SCOTT A. BELINA**

Father Scott A. Belina, parochial vicar in Brownville, Dexter, Sackets Harbor, Adams and Henderson, said he had an opportunity to get fairly close to the Holy Father and even join him in the distribution of the Eucharist completely unintentionally during World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland, in 2016.

"It was the final Mass at the giant gathering of all the pilgrims and the pope," Father Belina recalled. "What happened was Father Bryan (Stitt) and I had gone up to the front to get our vestments and prepare for Mass. We were sitting up front with all the priests. It came time for Communion, and they had probably 1,000 people with Ciboria distributing Communion. We went trying to find where the priests were receiving Communion. At one point, someone came up and put a Ciborium in my hand. I started distributing Communion."

After all pilgrims had an opportunity to receive the Eucharistic Lord, Father Belina had "quite a few hosts left over." The priest started working his way toward the altar, front and center of the gathered assembly.

"This was my ticket to get as close to the pope as possible," Father Belina said. "I was going to return the Blessed Sacrament to whatever Tabernacle was set up, and I was going to see how close to the Holy Father I could get."

Father Belina said Pope Francis emerged from a door with cardinals and security personnel all around him.

"I was within an easy stone's throw of the pope," he said. "Although I was definitely

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# Local reflections

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

not throwing stones at him. It was something so unexpected, an unexpected privilege. I felt hope when I was there. There's something about seeing the pope, no matter who he is, that gives a sense of hope that everything is going to be ok."

Father Belina said his near encounter with the pope was "the closest we had gotten the whole time" to the Holy Father during the World Youth Day trip, at least according to his memory of events.

Father Belina was able to keep the ceramic ciborium used at the World Youth Day Mass.

## JESSE SOVIE

Jesse Sovie of Ogdensburg echoed Father Belina's sentiment, noting that the Holy Father inspired hope along with joy and enthusiasm when Sovie saw him in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in September of 2015, part of Pope Francis' three-city tour of U.S.

"I still remember how busy the streets were prior to his arrival," Sovie said. "I also remember there being so much joy, hope and enthusiasm among the many people lining the streets, in hopes of getting a good spot to watch Pope Francis drive by. As I reflect on that moment, I can identify that there seems to be a decrease in the amount of joy, hope and enthusiasm in our current culture. In a time where we seem so divided on everything from politics to sports teams, to even which social media site is considered the 'best' on, it seems as though we

## Remembering the Holy Father's care for creation

Members of the diocesan Faith & Ecology group reflected on the Holy Father and his teachings on the environment.

### TOM KALINOWSKI

Tom Kalinowski said it was the Holy Father's emphasis on care for creation that resonated with him.

"In his encyclical, *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis repeatedly emphasized that we are a part of nature," Kalinowski said. "He stated that 'Each organism, as a creature of God, is good and admirable in itself.' When addressing the problems confronting our society, Francis proclaimed that 'We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental.' Pope Francis understood well that in order to bring about healing, harmony and peace in any system, we must harbor these virtues within our own hearts. We cannot expect to resolve any issue if we contain the same negative emotions and energy that is at the root of the problems. This is why it is critical to develop a sense of peace with everyone and everything around us before we work on the environment."

Kalinowski said he feels that the Holy Father's work isn't over, though his earthly life is.

"The Pope always welcomed everyone and never showed any anger or hatred toward anyone," Kalinowski said. "I am convinced that this new saint will be more influential now that he rests with the Divine than when he worked full time in his office at the Vatican."

### BERNIE CLARK

Bernie Clark said she was "shocked and saddened" by the Holy Father's death. She said she appreciated Pope Francis' emphasis on the environment, and she felt he left a legacy of hope.

have lost our ability to see Christ in our fellow man."

Sovie said he was inspired by Pope Francis' commitment to those in need.

"While some may have disagreed in the

personal politics of the late Pontiff, no one can deny his firm and outspoken advocacy for the poor, the marginalized, and the destitute in our society," he said.

"The mission Jesus embarked on and left to

"Our diocesan group, Faith and Ecology, had been working for years on environmental issues," Clark said. "With the publication of *Laudato Si*, on the care of our common home, I felt the pope had vindicated all the environmentalists in the world. He was one of us, a kindred spirit. Pope Francis was a gift. He gave us hope. His legacy can continue to give us hope in this Jubilee year of Hope!"

"I deeply understood that we are all connected, there was a death in the family, our family, the family of Christians around the world!"

### MOLLY AMORIELL

Molly Amoriell said she felt the Holy Father "embodied what it meant to be a servant leader - a person for God and others in the Jesuit tradition."

"I worked and was a student at Loyola University Baltimore," she said. "Each day, I walked under an arch that carried the Jesuit motto, AMDG, 'For the Greater Glory of God.' Each day, each action and each word of the Holy Father's reflected commitment to this credo. Pope Francis served his Lord, all people and the earth with great love and compassion always beckoning us to do likewise."

### MAUREEN O'CONNOR

Maureen O'Connor said she saw bits of herself in the Holy Father.

"Pope Francis made a wee grimace from time to time," she said. "I, too, make a wee grimace from time to time. I would watch his face and wonder if he, like me, felt the start of uncomfortable feelings rise up, feelings of injustice, worry, discordance and wrongdoing. I am not comfortable when I am angry. I searched his holy face to see if he was a wee bit like me. My heart whispered 'yes.' This silent connection kept me close to his goodness. I will miss Pope Francis for the rest of my days on earth."

Peter, as well as all of Peter's successors, remains today. It is a special mission left not for just popes, bishops or priests. Each baptized Christian is called to join this mission. It's time to dust off our

eyes, pluck out the logs in them which prevent our ability to see Christ in each person. It is time for us to renew our faith, our sense of joy, hope and enthusiasm in living out our daily lives as a 'Christ led, Christ fed and hope filled' people. I pray that this joy, hope and enthusiasm is contagious in spreading to others as we are called to spread the gospel message."

### FATHER LEAGON

#### J. CARLIN

Father Leagon J. Carlin, currently studying Canon Law in Ottawa, had two opportunities to see Pope Francis, once in Rome in 2015 and once at World Youth Day in Poland in 2016.

"In both these opportunities, I was struck by the reality of the Office of the Pope, that upon election, the man ceases to be himself, that instead he is a visible figure of the presence of the Church in a physical way," Father Carlin said. "In a special way, at World Youth Day, as we all trudged in often difficult conditions for many miles, and slept in a field all night, we knew we were amongst Catholics, but in the morning, when the pope arrived for Mass, we knew then that we were with the Church. This brought a physical confirmation to Our Lord's promise that the Church will never be overtaken by darkness, no matter how complex and confusing things become."

"As St. Ambrose of Milan wrote, 'Where Peter is, there is the Church. And where the Church is, no death is there, but life eternal.'"

## Environmental Stewardship

## A memorable day

On May 24, 2015, an enthusiastic group of Faith and Ecology members gathered at Father Paul Beyett's home along Loon Lake to read the newly released and long-awaited Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home*.

What is this Faith and Ecology Group? At the urging of Father Paul, who had lived off grid since the 1970s, this group began more than three years before Pope Francis' encyclical to weave together science and the teachings of Gospel justice.

We were joined that day by Bishop Terry R. LaValley and a Paul Smith's science professor who authored several publications on climate change. We came to a Patriarch Bartholomew quote, which reads "For human beings . . . to destroy the biological diversity of God's creation; for human beings to degrade the integrity of the earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the earth of its natural forest or destroying its wetlands; for human beings to contaminate the earth's water, its land, its air, and its life — these are sins." For "to commit a crime against the natural world is a sin against ourselves and a sin against God."

In response, our professor offered that scientists know rapid changes in the climate are due mainly to human activities and have devastating effect. As humans, we lack the will to make the changes necessary to confront this reality. The professor applauded a leader of a major religion stating that caring for our planet was a moral and ethical responsibility of every person.

As Jesus reminded the disciples on the road to Emmaus that he had to suffer and die to bring new life, as His followers should we be surprised that we are challenged to suffer little inconveniences in order to assume responsibility for good stewardship of his precious gift?

Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ  
Faith and Ecology Member

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Pope Francis, 88, has been buried under his favorite icon of Our Lady at St. Mary Major Basilica in Rome.

Cardinal Bergoglio chose Francis as his papal name after his election as the 266 Pontiff of the Catholic Church and Bishop of Rome by a papal conclave of Car-

dinals of the Church on the fifth ballot March 13, 2013.

He answered the question asked of any new pope, "What name do you choose?" with "Francesco."

There is nothing in Canon Law that requires a newly elected pope to choose a new name. Popes adopt a new name to signal a fresh start and to honor religious figures or previous pontiffs. The practice is a

tradition, not a rule. It emphasizes the transition from a former identity to a new role as Pope.

A new name, or a changed name is not particularly unusual. Traditionally a wife in this country assumes her husband's last name when they are married. That marks a new beginning for both husband and wife.

We recall a priest who was a member of a particular Order and religious sisters and brothers who selected a new name when they were ordained or consecrated. It was one way of demonstrating a new identity or lifestyle.

The motivation for personal rebranding should not be confused with choosing a stage name. A public figure might assume a name for purely personal or marketing reasons.

I made that choice when I was just starting out in broadcasting. For a brief time, I was a disc

jockey at the college radio station, and I was spinning the hits on the local commercial station too. I chose to call myself Dan Masters on the college station and used my given name on the commercial station.

The college name fits all the criteria for a radio jock's name at the time. It was short, easily remembered, and could be adapted quite well by the jingle companies that provided such things.

Today most folks just use their real name in broadcasting, but other artists adopt stage names when they are performing.

The Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) did not explicitly "approve" a name change for religious sisters. However, it encouraged a renewal of religious life, which included a wider practice of returning to baptismal names. Following Vatican II, some religious were offered the option to return to their baptismal names, and many did so.

One tradition remains though. When a new pope is selected by the Cardinals meeting in the Sistine Chapel, he will be asked if he accepts and then, presuming he says "yes," he will be asked "What name do you choose?"

It is always interesting to hear his answer to that question. It provides a clue as to the direction the new pope will lead.

God be with the cardinals.

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

## CALLED TO SERVE

## What's in a name?

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**April 30** — 5 p.m. — Dinner with the Diocesan Review Board followed by a Meeting at Bishop's Residence

**May 1** — 9:45 a.m. — Episcopal Council Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

6:30 p.m. — Confirmation at The Roman Catholic Community of Brownville and Dexter in Brownville along with St. Andrew's Church in Sackets Harbor and St. Cecilia's Church in Adams

**May 2** — Noon — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

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

**May 3** — 4 p.m. — Confirmation at St. Mary's Church in Clayton along with The Catholic Community of Alexandria in Alexandria Bay

**May 4** — 8 a.m. — Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

2 p.m. — Confirmation at Holy Cross Parish (at St. John the Baptist Church) in Plattsburgh

**May 5-7** — Deacon Assembly at the Cambria Hotel Lake Placid in Lake Placid

**May 7** — 12:30 p.m. — Council of Deacons Meeting at the Cambria Hotel Lake Placid in Lake Placid

6:30 p.m. — Confirmation at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake along with St. Agnes Church in Lake Placid, St. Brendan's Church

## Protecting God's Children

## The Diocese of Ogdensburg

is able to schedule sessions of the training, Protecting God's Children for Adults. 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. To arrange for training, call 315-393-2920 or email jgrizzuto@rcdony.org

## Rest in Peace

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

**April 30** — Rev. Michael W. Holland, 1906; Rev. Louis Grenier, M.S.C., 1958

**May 1** — Rev. Joseph J. Halde, 1891; Rev. Edward P. Burns, 1985

**May 2** — Rev. Jean Marie Royer, O.M.I., 1905; Rev. Joseph M. Blais, 1948; Rev. Leon LaPorte, 1954; Rev. Burchard Murray, O.S.A., 1966

**May 3** — Rev. Cormac Walsh, O.F.M., 1977

**May 4** — Rev. J. Napoleon Pelletier, O.M.I., 1935

**May 6** — Rev. P.A. Lynch, O.S.A., 1927

## 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

## APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

# Our mission to protect vulnerable adults

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Pope Francis often reminded Catholics of our role in caring for the vulnerable and persons living with a disability, confirming the Church's commitment to all members of the faith. He has specifically announced that the Church "must meet people's needs for 'belonging, relating to others and cultivating their spiritual lives so they experience the fullness and blessing of the Lord' for the 'unique and marvelous gift' that they are."

Pope Francis described the Church's pledge to focus on inclusion as "each person, with his or her limitations and gifts, feels encouraged to do his or her part for the good of the entire ecclesial body and for the good of society as a whole."

There are several Church documents that provide us with a greater understanding of how we are to help vulnerable adults in our pledge to include them in all facets of Church life, regardless of whether we encounter them in our specific ministries. These include the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (Charter), which specifically addresses how dioceses are to establish and maintain safe environments for children and later included a revision involving vulnerable adults. Other documents include *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* and the updates to Canon Law. While we have these definitions and examples to guide us, we should personally consider how we recognize whether someone is a vulnerable adult, as they may not share certain characteristics or circumstances that demonstrate their potential vulnerability. And, we should further reflect on how we can be sensitive to those with disabilities or vulnerabilities while respecting their needs and abilities.

## NO COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

As many as 61 million U.S. adults, or about one in four, report experiencing some form

of a disability. Disability is a natural part of the human experience and people with disabilities make up a significant portion of the population, regardless of gender, race, age or economic status. Yet the terms "disability" and "vulnerability" contribute little to a full understanding of the unique limitations or concerns experienced by any one person. Misconceptions abound in the common understanding of the vulnerable, or persons living with physical, intellectual or developmental disabilities. Those misunderstandings, largely borne by a lack of knowledge, often serve to cast all into a category with pre-conceived limitations that are not always true, such as the myth that a vision-impaired person cannot work or support herself, the belief that a person utilizing a mobility device must have a caregiver, and on and on. Another myth is that vulnerable adults are always elderly, and that if one is elderly, it makes them vulnerable. However, what is true is that persons living with a disability may experience challenges related to cognition, mobility, sensory impairments, medical conditions, and a myriad of other concerns.

Even those educated about vulnerabilities or disabilities, including medical professionals, sometimes fail to recognize the abilities of those that might experience a vulnerability. I share the following example with the permission of our adult son, Peter, who was diagnosed with cerebral palsy as an infant. By his fifth birthday, despite years of physical and occupational therapy, he could not walk. A local pediatric orthopedic surgeon reviewed Peter's medical records and listened to my responses about Peter's current abilities. Without conducting any tests or even examining him, the orthopedic surgeon said, in Peter's presence, "he's never going to walk, why don't you forget about that kid and just put him in a wheelchair."

Shortly thereafter, a different orthopedic surgeon not only asked Peter questions, listened



to him, and included him in all our decisions, but helped him through many surgeries to be a man today who walks without assistance, who graduated from college with a Master's degree, and thrives in his workplace.

This initial stereotyping, and insensitivity by a medical professional, could have severely limited Peter's ability to thrive. Reflecting on this example helps us to think about our own possible beliefs, which could impact how prepared we are to help people around us who may be more vulnerable.

Living with a disability represents just one of many aspects about a person. Many people living with disabilities experience barriers to education, employment, social inclusion and many other life experiences born from implicit and explicit biases and stereotypes.

At the International Safeguarding Conference hosted by the Pontifical Gregorian University in June 2024, experts agreed that the Catholic Church must prioritize safeguarding efforts and ministry for persons with disabilities. Sheila Hollins, a prior member of the Pontifical Commission on the Protection of Minors, in her keynote address, acknowledged that persons with disabilities face considerably greater risk of abuse. She noted that "many 'unconscious biases' put a disabled person at risk of abuse," such as the perception that nobody would abuse a person with a vulnerability because of their unique circumstances and reminded us that those with a disability may face additional barriers "to being heard, to being able to explain, to be able to

understand" the abuse they experienced.

## DISPELLING THE MYTHS OF VULNERABILITY

Adopting practices that facilitate an understanding of the individual, rather than relying on stereotypes or misconceptions, will further our pledge to the vulnerable and those experiencing a disabling condition. Some tips for interaction and treating everyone as unique persons include:

**Don't assume** – Simply because a person is labeled with a diagnosis or condition does not serve as a predictor of the needs, limitations or abilities of that individual. When interacting with a person experiencing a vulnerability, do not rely on preconceived ideas or biases, but instead, approach the experience with the intention of understanding the person as an individual, with unique interests and abilities. Similarly, do not assume a limitation experienced by a person can be easily seen. While some vulnerabilities are observable and identifiable, many are not. For example, medical conditions, such as diabetes, and mental health concerns may not be visually apparent.

**Ask questions** – Sometimes people tend to fixate on a person's perceived physical or cognitive limitations. Perhaps ask, with genuine curiosity, if there is a way for you to show genuine care or help to people around you who may be vulnerable or living with a physical, intellectual or developmental disability.

**Focus on abilities** – When interacting with a person living with a disability, focus on their abilities, not limitations.

**Practice respect** – All people, no matter their circumstances, deserve acknowledgment, respect and understanding. Don't assume you can't communicate directly with the person living with a disability. For example, interact and talk directly with the individual, affording them the respect you would with others who do not experience a limiting circumstance.

**Use positive, non-stigmatizing language**  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

APRIL 30, 2025

# New York Bishops weigh in on suicide bill

New York State Catholic Conference

*"Euthanasia and assisted suicide are a defeat for all. We are called never to abandon those who are suffering, never giving up but caring and loving to restore hope."* – Pope Francis, 2019

On Easter Monday, April 21, Pope Francis ended his earthly journey and entered eternal life. The Holy Father gave us many examples to emulate throughout his life and ministry, even right to the end when he gave us an example of a holy, natural death.

Sadly, the very next day, news reports indicated that the New York State Assembly would take up legislation (A136/S138) to legalize state-sanctioned suicide for those who are diagnosed with a terminal illness. Euphemistically titled the Medical Aid in Dying Act, this bill would usher in a dangerous new era in our state, turning the Hippocratic Oath taken by physicians to "do no harm" on its head and leaving vulnerable individuals – people with disabilities, the elderly, and those in impoverished and medically underserved communities – subject to pressure and coercion to end their

lives so as not to be a "burden" to society or an excessive cost to insurance companies.

One only need to look to the example of our neighbor to the north, Canada, to understand the risk. That country passed a similar law to New York's bill in 2016. Within a few short years, it was expanded to allow not only those with terminal illnesses, but also those with "chronic" illnesses, such as arthritis, to end their lives. In 2027, the law is set to expand to those whose only underlying condition is mental illness, such as depression, anxiety or anorexia.

At a time when New Yorkers are rightly concerned with issues such as affordability, crime, homelessness, federal cuts to Medicaid, behavioral health access, and their children's education, it is unconscionable that lawmakers would consider now an appropriate time to legalize suicide for a segment of the population.

Think of the message this sends. Sadly, we are facing a suicide crisis among young people in our state, and the government rightly spends large sums of money to prevent these tragedies and to deliver a consistent message that life is worth living. Now

our state will be telling its citizens that some lives – perhaps where there has been a loss of autonomy or a disability – are not worth living. We pray that the legislature reconsiders this disastrous public policy, and we call on Governor Hochul to exercise her veto authority should the bill come to her desk.

**Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan,**  
Archbishop of New York  
**Most Rev. Edward B. Scharfenberger,**  
Bishop of Albany  
**Most Rev. Robert J. Brennan,**  
Bishop of Brooklyn  
**Most Rev. Michael W. Fisher,**  
Bishop of Buffalo  
**Most Rev. Terry R. LaValley,**  
Bishop of Ogdensburg  
**Most Rev. Salvatore R. Matano,**  
Bishop of Rochester  
**Most Rev. John O. Barres,**  
Bishop of Rockville Centre  
**Most Rev. Douglas J. Lucia,**  
Bishop of Syracuse  
And the Most Reverend Auxiliary and Emeritus Bishops of New York State

## Protect vulnerable adults

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

**ing language** – When referring to a vulnerability or to a disability, the American Psychological Association (APA) urges the use of "person first" language. Person first language emphasizes the person first, not the disability, for example, they are not a "disabled person," or a "handicapped person," rather, they are a person living with a disability.

**Communicating our concerns about vulnerable adults** – Many cases of vulnerable adult abuse are not recognized or reported. Most vulnerable adults, like all others, are abused by people they know, and more often by a family member or caregiver. Some assume that adults will be able to identify when they are being manipulated and possibly abused, and that they should be able to make the decision to report or seek help on their own. This is not always true for any vic-

tim, including vulnerable adults. Any victim's ability to perceive abuse and to communicate about perceived abuse may be impeded because of close relationships and reliance on caregivers who may also be harming them, and a fear of backlash or embarrassment.

The misperceptions and biases surrounding those with vulnerabilities may also contribute to the failure of mandatory reporters to recognize and report potential abuse that the church pledges to protect. To learn more about indicators of abuse of vulnerable adults, you can visit U.S. Department of Justice or your state's Adult Protective Services.

Vulnerable adults may be more likely to be isolated from other adults, such as in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, in their own homes, or in long-term care facilities. This means it can be more challenging for the abuse to be recognized by or communicated to

another adult. The circumstance of a vulnerable may be different than situations of child abuse, where children may be more likely to interact with multiple adults in their daily lives (such as school, activities, etc.). Potential isolation makes it even more important for an adult visiting or interacting with a vulnerable adult to be mindful of anything concerning regarding the vulnerable

adult's welfare.

If you have any concerns regarding possible abuse, neglect or exploitation of a vulnerable adult, contact the Adult Protective Services within your state. You can also contact law enforcement.

### CONCLUSION

Vulnerable adults and persons with disabilities are not all the same, and have different levels of abilities, including verbal skills and opportunities

to convey information, including evidence of abuse. In our pledge as a Church and as a people to protect all among us, be willing to approach every person as an individual, prepared to understand that person's unique abilities and challenges, as you fulfill your duty to exercise vigilance in discerning and reporting potential abuse of the vulnerable in our community.

The Diocese of Ogdensburg

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# Pope Francis in his own words: Key quotes

By Kristina Millare  
Catholic News Agency

Throughout his 12-year papacy, Pope Francis gave many addresses, talks, and statements, and he penned numerous encyclicals and apostolic exhortations emphasizing themes of hope, mercy, compassion, and joy.

His words often focused on the dignity of the poor, migrants, refugees, and the elderly as well as the importance of marriage, family life, and care for the environment. Advocating for “synodality,” Francis also called for a Church that listens and walks together.

Below is a collection of quotes that reflect Pope Francis’ vision for a more compassionate and Christ-centered world.

## HOPE

In his first encyclical letter *Lumen Fidei*, Pope Francis said faith in Jesus Christ helps one to joyfully live life “on wings of hope.”

Constantly encouraging people to turn to God, the Holy Father opened the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope writing in *Spes Non Confundit*: “Christian hope does not deceive or disappoint because it is grounded in the certainty that nothing and no one may ever separate us from God’s love ... The death and resurrection of Jesus is the heart of our faith and the basis of our hope.”

## MERCY

Pope Francis often said that God’s style is one of “closeness, mercy, and tenderness.”

Exactly two years before closing the Jubilee Year of Mercy, the Holy Father penned his first papal apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* on the 2013 solemnity of Christ the King, writing: “Let me say this once more: God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy ... Time and time again he bears us on his shoulders. No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unfailing love.”

## JOY

As the first pontiff in history to criticize “sourpusses” in a papal document, Pope Francis reiterated the evangelical importance of joy, a fruit of the Holy

“May I give you a piece of advice: Never end the day without making peace.” — Pope Francis

Spirit, in *Evangelii Gaudium*.

In a message to participants of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints’ 2022 “Holiness Today” symposium, he said: “Without this joy, faith shrinks into an oppressive and dreary thing; the saints are not ‘sourpusses’ but men and women with joyful hearts, open to hope ... Blessed Carlo Acutis is likewise a model of Christian joy for teenagers and young people. And the evangelical, and paradoxical, ‘perfect joy’ of St. Francis of Assisi continues to impress us.”

## LOVE FOR THE POOR

Choosing the name “Francis” in honor of St. Francis of Assisi was a powerful signal to the world that the pope wanted a “Church which is poor and for the poor!”

With his burning desire for the love of Jesus Christ to reach the world’s peripheries, the Argentinian pope insisted that the poor are true evangelizers who must not be ignored.

In his 2015 apostolic journey to the Philippines for the country’s Year of the Poor, the Holy Father asked young people: “You who live by always giving, and think that you need nothing, do you realize that you are poor yourself? Do you realize that you are very poor and that you need what they can give you? Do you let yourself be evangelized by the poor, by the sick, by those you assist?”

## MIGRANTS & REFUGEES

Migrants, displaced people, refugees, and victims of human trafficking always held a special place in the Jesuit pontiff’s heart.

In 2016, Francis instituted the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and called on Catholics worldwide in 2020, through *Fratelli Tutti*, to open their arms to those affected by war, persecution, poverty, and natural disasters.

In his 2018 World Day of Migrants and Refugees message, he said: “The Lord entrusts to the Church’s motherly love every person forced to leave their

homeland in search of a better future ... In this regard, I wish to reaffirm that ‘our shared response may be articulated by four verbs: to welcome, to protect, to promote, and to integrate.’”

## ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE

Pope Francis spoke in Catholic and secular venues about the detrimental impacts of a “throw-away culture” perpetuated by unscrupulous profiteering and rampant consumerism.

Having written two key documents — including *Laudate Deum* — dedicated to the care for God’s creation, he wrote in *Laudato Si’* in 2015: “We have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”

## MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE

Among several practical pearls of wisdom for families — including advice to mothers to “stop ironing the shirts” of their sons so that they marry soon — Pope Francis told newlyweds in 2016 that the words: “May I?”, “Thank you,” and “I’m sorry” are key to maintaining peace in the home.

“There are always problems and arguments in married life,” the pope said. “It is normal for husband and wife to argue and to raise their voices; they squabble, and even plates go flying! So do not be afraid of this when it happens. May I give you a piece of advice: Never end the day without making peace.”

## YOUTH & THE ELDERLY

Known as the “grandfather of the children” at the Holy Family Church in Gaza, Pope Francis traditionally used his weekly general audiences to convey his spiritual closeness with both the youth and the elderly.

When the pope instituted the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly amid the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, he said: “The future of the world depends on this covenant between young and old. Who, if not the young,

can take the dreams of the elderly and make them come true? Yet for this to happen, it is necessary that we continue to dream.”

“Our dreams of justice, of peace, of solidarity can make it possible for our young people to have new visions; in this way, together, we can build the future,” the pope said.

## SYNODALITY

The Argentinian pope often said he preferred a Church that goes out into the world even if “bruised, hurting, and dirty because it has been out on the streets.”

The Holy Father insisted priests be shepherds “with the smell of sheep,” urged consecrated brothers and sisters to bring God’s “light to the women and men of our time,” and called on laypeople to “bring the novelty and joy of the Gospel wherever you are.”

Urging all Catholic faithful to learn how to listen and walk together as one missionary Church, the Holy Father said at the close of the Vatican’s 2024 Synod on Synodality meeting: “Everyone, everyone, everyone! Nobody left outside: everyone ... It is up to us to amplify the sound of this whispering, never getting in its way; to open the doors, never building walls.”

“How much damage the women and men of the Church do when they build walls, how much damage! Everyone is welcome, everyone, everyone!” he said.

## POPULAR PIETY: OUR LADY, ST. JOSEPH & THE HEART OF JESUS

Pope Francis was known to love the simple faith and devotion of the people. His own childlike affection for Mary, the Mother of God, and St. Joseph was evident to millions.

However, the pontiff’s belief in the power of popular piety reached its climax in his last and lengthy encyclical letter, *Dilexit Nos*, in which he wrote: “The flames of love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus also expand through the Church’s missionary outreach, which proclaims the message of God’s love revealed in Christ ... As we contemplate the Sacred Heart, mission becomes a matter of love.”

# Supreme Court seems to support opt-outs for LGBT coursework

By Tyler Arnold  
Catholic News Agency

During oral arguments Tuesday, most of the justices on the United States Supreme Court appeared sympathetic toward parents in their lawsuit against a Maryland school board that refused to let them opt their children out of coursework that promotes gender ideology.

Catholic, Ethiopian Orthodox, and Muslim parents sued the Montgomery County Board of Education in May 2023 after the body ended its policy of notifying parents of coursework promoting homosexuality and transgenderism and allowing the parents to opt out.

Under the current policy, the school board only permits opt-outs in narrow circumstances, which is mostly related to sexual education in health class. It does not permit opt-outs for coursework that endorses the views that there are more than two genders, that a boy can become a girl, or that homosexual marriages are moral.

Some of the coursework initially introduced in the curriculum was designed to promote these concepts to children as young as 3 years old in preschool.

Eric Baxter, senior counsel for the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, represented the parents before the Supreme Court on April 22. He argued the school board's policy violates the First Amendment of the Constitution by "indoctrinating" students about values that conflict with the religious beliefs of his clients.

"There's no basis for denying opt-outs for religious reasons," Baxter said. "... Parents, not school boards, should have the final say on such religious matters."

He said that under the policy, there are "children of an extremely young age being indoctrinated in a topic that's known to be sensitive." He said it's "designed to disrupt students' ... thinking on sexuality and gender identity."

Alternatively, the school board's lawyer, Alan Schoenfeld, acknowledged that these concepts are "deeply offensive to some people of faith" but said parents have no First Amendment right to opt children out of "learning about them."

Schoenfeld said "the board wants to teach civility and respect for difference in the classroom" and, through that, "there is obviously an incidental message in some of these books that these life choices and these lifestyles are worthy of respect."

"Incidental messages that these things ought to be normalized and treated with respect, I think, is simply part of the work that the school is doing in cultivating respect in a pluralistic school," he added.

The Republican-appointed justices, who account for six of the nine members of the court, expressed concern with the policy during oral arguments and appeared supportive of parents who want to opt their children out of the coursework.

"I guess I am a bit mystified, as a lifelong resident of the county, how it came to this," Justice Brett Kavanaugh told Baxter during the oral arguments. Kavanaugh repeatedly grilled Schoenfeld on why the board could not provide opt-outs, noting that the county previously had an opt-out, and "every other school board in the country has opt-outs for all sorts of things."

Schoenfeld said the opt-outs ceased to be feasible because of the high rates of parents opting their children out in some schools and the inability to secure spaces and supervision for all of the children opted out of the coursework.

Justice Amy Coney Barrett noted that some of the instruction materials given to teachers on the subjects are "not just exposure to the idea" but rather a "presentation of the idea as fact."

"It's saying 'this is the right view of the world, this is how we think about things, this is how you should think about things,'" Barrett added. "This is like 'two plus two is four.'"

"We have the books being read in the classroom," she said. "It's not mere exposure."

Barrett pressed Schoenfeld on numerous support materials given to teachers to help instruct students on these matters, which included telling the children that "people of any gender can like whoever they like" and that "when we're born, people make a guess about our gender and label us 'boy' or 'girl' based on our body parts — sometimes they're right; sometimes they're wrong."

## CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

### Teen's canonization postponed following pope's death

The canonization of Blessed Carlo Acutis was postponed following the death of Pope Francis. "Following the death of Supreme Pontiff Francis, notice is hereby given that the Eucharistic celebration and Rite of Canonization of Blessed Carlo Acutis, scheduled for April 27, 2025, II Sunday of Easter or Divine Mercy, on the occasion of the Jubilee of Adolescents, is suspended," the Holy See Press Office said in a statement on April 21. More than 80,000 teenagers were expected to gather in Rome for the April 27 canonization amid the Vatican's Jubilee of Teenagers, according to the Dicastery for Evangelization, with young people registered from the United States, Brazil, India, Spain, Portugal, France, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Germany, Chile, Venezuela, Mexico, Australia, Argentina, and Nigeria.

### Task force to eradicate Anti-Christian bias gets underway

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) hosted the inaugural meeting this week of a new task force to counter anti-Christian bias in federal government policies, regulations, and practices. "Protecting Christians from bias is not favoritism," Attorney General Pam Bondi said ahead of the meeting. "It's upholding the rule of law and fulfilling the constitutional promise [in the First Amendment]." The task force's first meeting on Tuesday was closed to the public and the media but included the heads of multiple federal departments and agencies along with witnesses who provided testimony on anti-Christian bias within the federal government. President Donald Trump formally established the Task Force to Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias on Feb. 6 by executive order. His order commissioned a comprehensive review of federal departments and agencies, particularly to reverse certain actions of the previous administration.

### Pope Francis warned against 'logic of fear' in Easter message

Pope Francis decried the numerous conflicts plaguing the planet and appealed to world leaders "not to yield to the logic of fear" in his Easter message "urbi et orbi" ("to the city and to the world") on Easter Sunday, April 20. The pope's traditional blessing, "urbi et orbi," was read by Archbishop Diego Ravelli, the master of pontifical liturgical celebrations, as the 88-year-old pontiff, still convalescing, was present but physically limited. Francis, who arrived at the central loggia of St. Peter's Basilica in a wheelchair, greeted the faithful with a brief "Brothers and sisters: Happy Easter!" before asking Ravelli to read the message on his behalf. "I appeal to all those in positions of political responsibility in our world not to yield to the logic of fear, which only leads to isolation from others, but rather to use the resources available to help the needy, to fight hunger, and to encourage initiatives that promote development," the message stated. The pope's Easter address — delivered amid a confluence of global conflicts — focused particularly on war-torn regions, including Ukraine, the Holy Land, Myanmar, and various parts of Africa.

## CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

## FIRST FRIDAY

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

**Date:** May 2

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

## SETON GALA

Plattsburgh — Join us for the 3rd annual Gala for Seton Catholic with the theme "Run for the Roses".

**Date:** May 3

**Time:** 5 p.m.

**Place:** West Side Ballroom

**Cost:** \$80 per person

**Features:** Dinner, Dancing, Live Auctions, Experience made baskets/Mystery items for Concerts and Baseball team tickets. So much more as the school host a Fund a Need event for the Drama and Arts Departments. Come dressed in your best Derby Attire.

**Contact:** Please contact Sue Pellerin for more information at spellerin@setonknights.org

## UNDERSTANDING MENTAL ILLNESS

Plattsburgh — The Interfaith Council of Plattsburgh, Clinton County and NAMI Champlain Valley will be holding a free event, "Understanding and Welcoming those with Mental Illness into our Faith Communities".

**Date:** May 4

**Time:** 1 p.m. to 3

**Place:** Plattsburgh United Methodist church

## MOTHER'S DAY BREAKFAST

Peru — St. Augustine's Knights of Columbus to have a Mother's Day Breakfast.

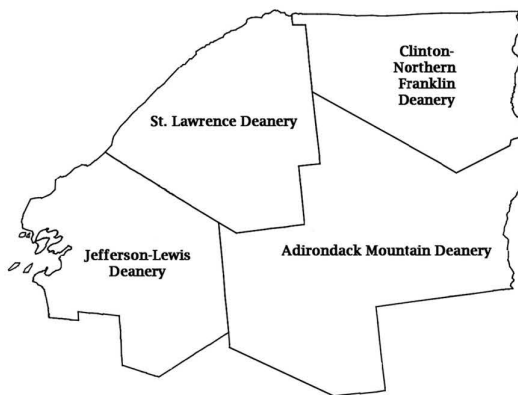
**Date:** May 11

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

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

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

Menu: Pancakes, Waffles, French Toast, Fruit Sauce, Scrambled



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

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,

Ogdensburg, NY 13669

e-mail news@northcountycatholic.org.

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

Eggs, Sausage, Bacon, Home Fries, Real Maple Syrup, Coffee, Orange Juice, and Milk

## THE RESCUE PROJECT

Brushton — Have you ever wondered Why there is something rather than nothing? Why is the world so obviously messed up? What if anything has God done about it? And how should I respond? Join us for a 9-week experience to discover how AWESOME the Good News that is the Gospel really is!

**Date:** May 14 and continues for 9 weeks

**Time:** 6 p.m.

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

**Cost:** \$10 donation to cover the cost of the books would be greatly appreciated but is not required.

**Features:** Come and hear the Gospel in a new and compelling way: How God CREATED everything good and how we were CAPTURED. How Jesus came and RESCUED us and how we can RESPOND to this amazingly Hope-filled GOOD NEWS! Each Session consists of a video, a short snack break and small group discussion facilitated by Deacon Lee Trudeau and Marika Donders. Participant guides will be provided.

**Contact:** For more information contact Marika Donders at

mdonders@rcdony.org

## CAR SHOW

Mooers Forks — St. Ann's to have their 7th Annual Car Show.

**Date:** June 1

**Time:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Place:** St. Ann's Grounds

**Features:** Kids Power Wheels Show (Entry Fee \$10); Hot Wheel Races for Kids (\$5) and Adults (\$10), cost includes car; Vehicle Pre-Register for \$15 or \$20 for the day of the show between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Set up a craft table for \$20. Top 40 picks and special awards will be at 3 p.m. There will be a Craft Fair, Theme Baskets, food and entertainment.

**Contact:** For more info or to pre-register your vehicle call 518-236-5632 or 518-236-7200 or 518-565-6754

## JEFFERSON-LEWIS

## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Houseville — The Feast of the Divine Mercy Sunday will be celebrated with celebrants Fr. Douglas Decker and Fr. John Ojuok as homilist.

**Date:** April 27

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

**Schedule:** The Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament will take place at 2 p.m., followed by the Sacrament of Reconciliation until 3 p.m. Adoration will con-

tinue at 3 p.m., followed by the Homily, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, Benediction, the Blessing of Holy Cards and Petitions, and Veneration of the Divine Mercy Image. The program concludes with a reception in the church hall. All are welcome.

**Contact:** Call 315-348-6260 for more information.

## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Watertown — Divine Mercy Sunday will be celebrated.

**Date:** April 27

**Time:** 3 p.m.

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

**Features:** According to the Divine Mercy message from Jesus to Saint Faustina, to fittingly observe the Feast, always be merciful to others, go to confession during Lent and receive communion on the Feast of Mercy. Publicly celebrate the Feast of Mercy. There will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, singing of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, brief confessions, and a procession. Please note that the celebration is not a mass.

**Contact:** For more info on how to prepare call Judy Boulton 315-783-7349 or Kim Tyler 315-486-4542 www.thedivine-mercy.org

## RUMMAGE SALE

Constableville — St. Mary's will be hosting their annual rummage sale.

**Schedule:** May 2, 3 p.m. to 8; May 3 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; May 4, Bag sale after 10 a.m. Mass

**Features:** Like previous years, we will be collecting gently used clothes/shoes, toys, household items, sports gear, holiday decorations, etc. As you do your spring cleaning consider donating those items to St. Mary's. Funds from this sale are used for the yearly heating costs of the church, parish house and hall. Donations may be left on the ramp of the hall from now until the day of the sale.

## SPAGHETTI &amp; MEATBALL DINNER

Evans Mills — The Indian River Council 7471 Knights of Colum-

bus will be having a spaghetti & meatball dinner.

**Date:** May 3

**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

## 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:** May 4

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

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

**Contact:** 315-348-6260

## LIVING STONES EVENT FOR CLM

Watertown — The Commissioned Lay Ministry Association of the Jefferson-Lewis Deanery presents Living Stones: "Jubilee Year-Rediscover Hope".

**Date:** May 8

**Schedule:** Welcoming remarks, 5:15 p.m.; Mass at 5:30, dinner immediately following and concluding with the program.

**Cost:** \$10 per person if attending dinner, no charge if only coming to the program.

**Features:** The program will be led by Fr. Garry Giroux with his presentation "As we await the Blessed Hope".

**Contact:** Register at: www.rcdony.org/clm-event

## DIOCESAN EVENTS

## 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

**Date:** May 3

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

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

# TV judge to give graduation address

By Tessa Gervasini  
Catholic News Agency

Providence College has announced that Judge Frank Caprio will speak to graduating students in May, as his health appears to be improving after treatment for pancreatic cancer.

"I am excited and honored to give the commencement address at my alma mater," Caprio told CNA. The retired judge graduated from Providence with a bachelor's degree in 1958. More than six decades later, he is now scheduled to return for the Rhode Island college's 107th commencement.

Caprio, a Catholic, was a judge for 40 years, primarily working in Providence Municipi-

pal Court. This led him to have his own Emmy-nominated television show, "Caught in Providence," where he often showed extraordinary compassion and kindness to traffic violators, earning him the title "the nicest judge in the world."

Caprio also became a successful author after publishing his memoir titled "Compassion in the Court: Life-Changing Stories from America's Nicest Judge," which he wrote after his pancreatic cancer diagnosis.

Caprio appeared on "EWTN News In Depth" in February and shared that his battle with cancer had not been easy, but he never lost faith. Since then, the judge has stayed active on social media and does not seem to be letting his health slow

him down.

The 88-year-old posts daily on his Instagram account where he appears to be physically improving. He shares messages and videos about how to spread kindness and shares with his 2.6 million followers life lessons that his cancer diagnosis has taught him.

In a recent post he said: "Battling cancer has taught me many things, but one of the most profound lessons I've learned is the importance of telling the people around me I love them."

Caprio also often posts about the importance of health and exercising. He recently shared: "Your health is worth the journey" and dedicated a post to National Walking Day.

The judge seems to be busy spending time with family, holding book signings, appearing on television shows for interviews, and now preparing for his upcoming commencement speech.

In anticipation of the upcoming ceremony, Caprio said: "The warm messages I received from around the world after the recent EWTN story are helping to provide the spiritual guidance to give an inspiring message to graduates."

Providence College at the May 18 ceremony is also set to honor Archbishop Richard Henning, who served as the ninth bishop of the Diocese of Providence from 2023-24 until his appointment as archbishop of Boston last August.

## Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

**Features:** Lunch will be provided.

**Contact:** Registration required, please go to [www.rcdony.org/priesthooddiscernment](http://www.rcdony.org/priesthooddiscernment). For more information, contact Father Howard Venette — [hvenette@rcdony.org](mailto:hvenette@rcdony.org)

### CLM RETREAT

Ogdensburg - All Commissioned Lay Ministers and Candidates are invited to register for the CLM retreat.

**Date:** May 2-4

**Place:** Wadhams Hall

**Cost:** Single, \$240.00 pp; Double, \$190.00 pp; Suite (double bed), \$220.00 pp; Suite, \$340.00 pp; Commuter, \$100. All costs include all meals.

Speaker: Father Leagon Carlin

**Contact:** Register at [www.rcdony.org/ffmretreat](http://www.rcdony.org/ffmretreat)

### GUGGENHEIM CLEAN UP WEEKEND

Saranac Lake — Help wanted in cleaning up the Guggenheim Center to get it ready for the summer.

**Date:** Start at 11 a.m. May 16 and wrap up around 4 p.m. May

17

**Features:** It takes hours of vacuuming, mopping, dusting, window washing, scrubbing and so on to get The Guggenheim Center ready for summer. Can you share an hour, a day or a couple of days to join us at Guggenheim Clean-Up Weekend?

**Contact:** Please register to help at <https://forms.office.com/r/PPDMGstZGJ>. For more information contact Deacon Jim Crowley at 315-393-2920 or [jcrowley@rcdony.org](mailto:jcrowley@rcdony.org)

### SURVIVING DIVORCE

Plattsburgh — 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 in Plattsburgh.

**Date:** Beginning May 13 on Tuesdays

**Time:** 6 p.m.

**Place:** St. John XXIII Newman Center

**Cost:** \$25 to cover material costs.

**Contact:** To register go to <https://www.rcdony.org/survivingdivorce>

For more information or help with registering, please contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 [startaglia@rcdony.org](mailto:startaglia@rcdony.org).

### LIFE-GIVING WOUNDS RETREAT

Utica — Healing retreat for adult children of divorce or separation.

**Date:** May 16-18

**Place:** Good News Center

**Cost:** \$100-\$150 per person (shared or single rooms) Scholarships are available.

**Features:** Come for a greater understanding of the wounds left by your parents' divorce or separation, for advice concerning love and trust of others, and for an experience of Christ and community that will lead to deeper self-understanding and healing. The retreat is cosponsored by the Dioceses of Ogdensburg and Syracuse.

**Contact:** To register, please go to <https://LGWsyrc.eventbrite.com>. If you have any questions, please direct them to Erin Miller at [emiller@syrodio.org](mailto:emiller@syrodio.org) or 315-472-6754 opt. 1 or Steve Tartaglia at [startaglia@rcdony.org](mailto:startaglia@rcdony.org) or 315-393-2920

### ORDINATION TO THE ORDER OF THE DIACONATE

Massena - Through the laying on of hands and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, the Most Bishop Terry R. LaValley will Ordain to the Order of Deacon Mr. Michele Boncoeur, Mr. Tyler Martin Fitzgerald and Mr. Dennis Mamwaha Ombongi. You are cordially invited to join in the Ordination Liturgy.

**Date:** May 24

**Time:** 11 a.m.

**Place:** Sacred Heart Church

**Features:** A Reception will immediately follow the Liturgy at Trinity Catholic School, 188 Main Street, Massena, NY 13662. The Ordination Mass may be viewed at [www.rcdony.org/ordination](http://www.rcdony.org/ordination). The Ordination Mass program will be available at the same link shortly before the Liturgy.

### RACHEL'S VINEYARD

Saranac Lake — After-Abortion Healing retreat to be held.

**Date:** May 23-25

**Place:** Guggenheim Lodge

**Features:** If you are suffering after an abortion, you're not alone. Join others on a weekend

retreat of hope and healing.

**Contact:** For more information call Colleen 518-524-0774, email [cminer@rcdony.org](mailto:cminer@rcdony.org) or register online: [rcdony.org/pro-life/rv-retreat](http://rcdony.org/pro-life/rv-retreat)

### DOMESTIC MISSION OPPORTUNITY

The North Country Mission of Hope is offering a domestic mission opportunity for anyone 14 years and older.

**Date:** Aug. 9 - 15

**Place:** The mission will take place in the Appalachian Region of Southeast Kentucky.

**Contact:** Please contact Deacon James Carlin for more information, costs and an application. The deadline for application is May 30.



## SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

## Many messages in complex Gospel

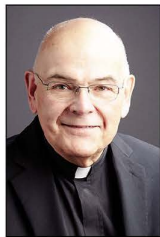
Let's spend some time reviewing today's Gospel, a rather long passage filled with events, details and meaning.

The story unwinds with a group of disgruntled men, underemployed fishermen, who had placed their confidence in Jesus. But this Jesus had been crucified and died. So, filled with sorrow, they are also discouraged. Peter, being a type of leader, says to the group something like: "Well, we have to get on with our lives. So, I am going fishing." The others join in. This was not recreational fishing but rather fishing to make a living and fishing to get something to eat.

They spend the night fishing, but insult is

added to injury. They think that they failed in choosing a leader, Jesus, and now they were unsuccessful at what they used to do for a living. Towards dawn, they see a man on the shore, but could not make out who it was, possibly because of the early morning mist. In response to his question, the disciples tell him that they have caught nothing.

Then, the man tells them to do something very strange: "toss the net over the right side of the boat." This unexpected detail makes us wonder how different the availability of fish could be from one side of the boat to the other. The result was miraculous - 153 fish, not



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

May 4

Third Sunday of Easter

READINGS

Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-190

just fish, but the Gospel writer clearly details that they were large fish. Eventually, Peter recognizes Jesus and rushes to be with him on shore.

What is happening in all of this? In this short story, that appears to be merely recounting an event, Jesus is teaching his disciples and is teaching us.

The disciples are like us. We work hard. Sometimes our work produces great results, and sometimes it appears that our work does nothing for us or for anyone else. Jesus, from the shore, gave them an alternative means to reach their goal, a means that should not

have worked - use the right side instead of the left.

Then, what about the 153 fish. Why be so specific? Zoologists at the time the Gospels were written believed that there were 153 different kinds of fish. Thus, the message of Jesus and the ministry of the apostles should go to the whole world.

Then, we have Jesus asking three times whether Peter loves him. Three times, Peter responds with "yes." Three acts of love, acts of faith from Peter that are better understood when compared with his triple denial of Jesus just before the crucifixion.

The lessons of today's Gospel are abundant. Like the disciples, we may sometimes not be able to recognize the Lord even though he is standing, not at the shore, but at the edge of our lives. Some mist, some cloudy thinking

might keep us from seeing the God who is looking for us.

In addition, if we have always found God on the left, and I don't mean politically, then maybe, like the disciples, we should throw our nets out on the right. The abundance of what God will give us is unlimited. Just as the disciples had the 153 fish, the nets were sufficient. So, too, ourselves, our lives will bear much fruit by following where Jesus is leading us even if we might feel uncomfortable.

Indeed, like Peter, we have denied our Lord, if not in words certainly by our sins. But those sins can be removed by admitting our guilt seek forgiveness as did Peter and profess our faith and our love of the Lord.

Today reminds us that, left to ourselves, we catch nothing. Following Our Lord, abundance can flow in and through our lives.

# QUEST FOR PRIESTS

WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

— PRAYER SUGGESTION —

Eternal Father,  
we lift up to you these  
and all the priests of the world.  
Sanctify them.  
Heal and guide them.  
Mold them into the likeness and  
holiness of your Son, Jesus,  
the Eternal High Priest.  
May their lives be pleasing to  
you. In Jesus' name we pray.  
Amen

(With ecclesiastical approval)

Mass  
Rosary  
Fasting  
Day Offering  
Eucharistic Adoration  
Offering of Sufferings  
Divine Mercy Chaplet

Or whatever the Lord  
inspires you to offer Him



Our Lady

MAY

2025

DIOCESE OF  
OGDENSBURG, NY

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

For more copies contact:  
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Ogdensburg, NY 13669

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REV. 11 CLEMENT RIMONDS, HGN	REV. 12 DONALD A. ROBINSON	REV. 13 STEPHEN ROCKER	REV. 14 DOUGLAS A. SCHIRMER	OUR 15 PASTOR FUTURE POPE	REV. 16 MARK R. REILLY	REV. 17 NICHOLAS J. REVILLA
REV. 18 ALAN D. SHNOB	REV. 19 FERNANDO V. SOLOMON JR.	REV. 20 BRYAN D. STITT	REV. 21 JOHN R. YONKOVIG	DECEASED 22 PRIESTS	REV. 23 JAMES V. TEIT	REV. 24 TODD E. THIBAUT
REV. 25 JUSTIN THOMAS HGN	REV. 26 SEVERINUS ASWOME KWAISI FORWIDE	REV. 27 HOWARD J. VENETTE	REV. 28 DANE WESTHOFF	REV. 29 JOHN R. YONKOVIG	REV. 30 PHILIP T. ALLEN	REV. 31 ANDREW J. AMYOT

A donation to help support  
THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS  
will be appreciated.  
The Monthly Prayer Request for Priests is graciously underwritten by:

Diocese of Ogdensburg  
Vocations Society www.myvocation.net

## What is a Foster Grandparent?

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

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



### Am I Qualified to be a Foster Grandparent?

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

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



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

Roy Foote  
age 83  
Foster Grandparent

### Want more info about how to get started?

Contact Melissa Howard,  
Volunteer Coordinator

PHONE:  
(518)359-7688

EMAIL:  
mhoward@cathcharities.org

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

# Pope Francis

By Ines San Martin

The Pontifical Mission Societies



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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director

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

On Easter Monday, April 21, 2025, Pope Francis passed away at the age of 88, just hours after imparting the Easter Urbi et Orbi blessing. His death, coming at the close of the holiest days in the Christian calendar, felt profoundly symbolic for a man who spent his papacy proclaiming the joy and hope of the Gospel to the world's most forgotten corners.

"Mission," he once said, "is a passion for Jesus and at the same time a passion for his people." It was this dual passion that animated his every step.

Pope Francis traveled - not to the traditional centers of power, but to the outskirts of the global map and the edges of the human heart. His first trip outside Rome was to the Italian island of Lampedusa, where he mourned the deaths of migrants lost at sea and condemned the "globalization of indifference."

From that moment forward, Pope Francis' passport filled with stamps from countries where popes had never ventured before - Iraq, South Sudan, the United Arab Emirates, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea. He turned the eyes of the world to places often overlooked, reminding us that Christ is most present where suffering is greatest.

He redefined what it means to be Catholic in the modern world - not passive recipients of the faith, but joyful evangelizers. Not institutional caretakers, but missionary disciples. That vision would

inspire the Church's evangelizing efforts for years to come, including the work of The Pontifical Mission Societies in more than 1,100 mission territories around the world.

Pope Francis' missionary zeal was inseparable from his deep concern for the poor. "The worst discrimination which the poor suffer," he wrote, "is the lack of spiritual care." In every visit, in every speech, he insisted that the Gospel is good news for the poor - not just in theory, but in lived, material solidarity.

In the Central African Republic, he opened the first Holy Door of the Jubilee Year of Mercy - outside of Rome. In the slums of Nairobi, he condemned corruption and economic injustice. In Qaraqosh, Iraq, he knelt before Christian survivors of ISIS violence. Time and again, he reminded the world that the Church does not run from suffering; it runs toward it.

These weren't political gestures; they were acts of faith. He believed that dialogue was not just diplomacy, but a form of evangelization, rooted in the Gospel's call to love and listen.

Francis was the first pope from the Southern Hemisphere, the first Jesuit pope, the first to take the name Francis. But what defined his pontificate was not novelty, but mercy.

In his last years, increasingly frail and reliant on a wheelchair, he did not stop. He continued to write, to travel, to preach. In his final public homilies, he urged Catholics to never lose the missionary spirit. "The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus," he said in his first exhortation. And until his last breath, he remained a witness to that joy.

Pope Francis leaves behind a Church transformed - not without tension or criticism but renewed in its missionary identity. He reminded us that the Gospel is not a museum piece but a living word meant to be shared.

At The Pontifical Mission Societies, we give thanks for a Holy Father who believed in our work, who spoke passionately about the missions, and who taught us that mission begins with encounter - with Christ, and with the poor.

He once said, "I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined." In Pope Francis, we saw exactly that kind of Church - a Church that walks, that listens, that heals.

May he rest in the peace of the Risen Lord whom he served so faithfully.

## OBITUARIES

**Altona** - Daniel L. Brunell, 64; Mass of Christian Burial April 24, 2025 at Holy Angels Church; burial in Town of Ellenburg Mausoleum.

**Carthage** - Jean B. (Gaspa) Szalach, 85; Mass of Christian Burial April 25, 2025 at St. James Church; burial in Lowville Rural Cemetery.

**Chateaugay** - Helen (Poissant) Yelle, 67; Mass of Christian Burial April 24, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Immaculate Heart Cemetery, Churubusco.

**Fort Covington** - Gail M. (LaPage) Jock, 80; Mass of Christian Burial May 1, 2025 at St. Mary's of the Fort; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Heuvelton** - Eleanor Chambers, 92; Mass of Christian Burial April 29, 2025 at St. Raphael's Church.

**Malone** - Honorable Charles "Charlie" S. Robert, 75; Funeral Services April 24, 2025 at St. Mary-Murphy-Wilcox Funeral Home; burial in St. John Bosco

Cemetery.

**Ogdensburg** - William "Bill" M. Fraser, 81; Funeral Services April 24, 2025 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Pine Hill Cemetery, Eel Weir.

**Ogdensburg** - Helen A. (Herman) Knepp, 86; Graveside services April 21, 2025 at Notre Dame Cemetery.

**Ogdensburg** - Paul G. Montpetit, 91; Private services to be held; burial in Oswegatchie Mausoleum.

**Ogdensburg** - Dorothy (Bayard) Smith, 82; Graveside services April 22, 2025 at Pine Hill Cemetery, Oswegatchie.

**Peru** - Jan M. (Seguin) LaBounty, 69; Funeral Services April 25, 2025 at the Hamilton Funeral home; burial in St. Augustine's Cemetery.

**Tupper Lake** - Helen "Peg" (Russell) Cole, 82; Funeral Services April 25, 2025 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Holy Name Cemetery.

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# U.S. cardinal is overseeing Vatican affairs

By Hannah Brockhaus  
Catholic News Agency

Following the death of Pope Francis, an Irish-American cardinal is playing a leading role in overseeing Vatican affairs until the election of a new pope.

Cardinal Kevin Farrell is a key figure in the papal succession because of his appointment in 2019 as the camerlengo of the apostolic chamber.

The responsibilities of the camerlengo, or chamberlain, include ascertaining the pope's death, performing some of the rites connected to a papal funeral, overseeing the preparations for a conclave, and managing the administration of the Holy See until the election of the next pope.

Farrell's nomination as camerlengo was one of several marks of the deep trust Pope Francis placed in the Dublin-born cleric.

In 2016, the pope named Farrell prefect of the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family, and Life, which replaced the Pontifical Council for the Laity and the Pontifical Council for the Family. He gave him the cardinal's red hat months later.

As prefect, Farrell oversaw the planning of the World Meeting of Families in Dublin in 2018 and in Rome in 2022. He also oversaw World Youth Day in Panama in 2019 and in Portugal in 2023.

In 2020, Pope Francis put the cardinal in charge of a commit-

tee monitoring internal Vatican financial decisions that fell outside other accountability norms, making him uniquely informed about Vatican finances among the hierarchy.

In 2022, the pope also appointed Farrell chairman of a new commission to oversee investments.

At the start of 2024, the cardinal added another position to his list of responsibilities: president of the court of cassation — the Vatican's so-called "supreme court" — in another papal nomination.

In his most recent sign of trust in Farrell, Pope Francis also put the cardinal in charge of the reform of the Vatican's gravely unbalanced pension fund, naming him "sole administrator," at a critical juncture.

At the death of the pope, Farrell ceased each of these roles — except for camerlengo.

Kevin Joseph Farrell was born in Ireland on Sept. 2, 1947. He entered the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ in 1966 and was ordained to the priesthood on Dec. 24, 1978. Farrell studied at the University of Salamanca in Spain and the Pontifical Gregorian University and Pontifical University of St. Thomas in Rome.

He served as chaplain of the Legion of Christ's apostolic movement Regnum Christi at the University of Monterrey in Mexico. He later denied having prior knowledge of sexual abuse on

the part of the Legion of Christ's founder, Marcial Maciel.

After leaving the Legionaries, Farrell was incardinated in the Archdiocese of Washington in 1984, serving in roles including director of the Spanish Catholic Center before becoming the archdiocese's finance officer in 1989.

Farrell caused controversy in 2018 after he suggested in an interview with an Irish Catholic magazine that priests lacked the necessary experience to provide adequate marriage preparation to engaged couples.

The comment echoed a statement of his from 2017 that priests have "no credibility when it comes to living the reality of marriage."

The cardinal was a prominent defender of Pope Francis' controversial 2016 apostolic exhortation on love in the family, *Amoris Laetitia*.

"There is nothing in *Amoris Laetitia* that is contrary to the Gospel," he said in 2019. "What does Francis do? He goes to the Gospel. Look at every chapter, it's straight out of one of the Gospels or the letters of St. Paul."

As prefect of the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family, and Life, Farrell helped coordinate the Vatican's initiatives for the *Amoris Laetitia* Family Year, marking the fifth anniversary of the text's publication.

The camerlengo is one of only

a few major officials of the Roman Curia who does not lose his office while the papacy is vacant. The camerlengo, whose role is regulated by the 1996 document *Universi Dominici Gregis* and the 2022 apostolic constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*, administers Church finances and property during the interregnum.

Paragraph 17 of *Universi Dominici Gregis* says that "the camerlengo of Holy Roman Church must officially ascertain the pope's death" and "must also place seals on the pope's study and bedroom," and later "the entire papal apartment."

The camerlengo is also responsible for notifying the cardinal vicar for Rome of the pope's death. The cardinal vicar then notifies the people of Rome by special announcement. The camerlengo takes possession of the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican and the palaces of the Latran and of Castel Gandolfo and manages their administration. As Pope Francis resided in the Casa Santa Marta in Vatican City and not the Apostolic Palace, the camerlengo will also be required to take possession and seal those quarters as well for the duration of the sede vacante.

Only the pope may choose the cardinal to fill the position of camerlengo, though he may also leave it vacant, in which case, the College of Cardinals would hold an election to fill the office at the start of a sede vacante.

## Buffalo to pay \$150 million abuse settlement

By Daniel Payne  
Catholic News Agency

The Diocese of Buffalo, New York, will pay out a massive \$150 million sum as part of a settlement with victims of clergy sexual abuse there.

The diocese said in a press release that the diocese itself, along with parishes and affiliates, would provide the payment "to survivors of sexual abuse for acts perpetrated against them by clergy, religious, lay employees, and volunteers."

The settlement amount was still set to be voted on by abuse victims and approved by U.S. bankruptcy court, but the proposal has been accepted by the committee of abuse survivors in the suit, the diocese said.

The settlement "represents an essential milestone on this protracted and arduous journey, and importantly, enables us to finally provide a measure of financial restitution to victim-survivors, which has been our primary objective all along," Bishop Michael

Fisher said on Tuesday.

"While indeed a steep sum, no amount of money can undo the tremendous harm and suffering the victim survivors have endured, or eliminate the lingering mental, emotional, and spiritual pain they have been forced to carry throughout their lives," the prelate said.

The diocese said it was still in talks with insurers "to determine amounts to be added to the final settlement fund from prevailing coverages."

In a press release provided to CNA, New York

law firm Jeff Anderson & Associates, which represented abuse victims in the suit, said the amount was "the second-largest contribution by a bankrupt Roman Catholic institution and its affiliates in any Roman Catholic bankruptcy case to date."

The settlement is "a major step forward to reaching a long-awaited resolution for the hundreds of strong, heroic survivors who came forward in the Diocese of Buffalo," attorney Stacey Benson said in the re-

lease.

The parties in the suit "continue to negotiate nonmonetary terms of the settlement, including strengthening child protection measures and the release of diocesan documents pertaining to the accused perpetrators," the law firm noted.

The payout comes several months after the largest diocesan-level bankruptcy settlement in U.S. history, when the Diocese of Rockville Centre — also in New York — agreed to pay \$323 million to abuse victims.