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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 80 Number 8

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

MAY 14, 2025

‘PEACE BE WITH YOU ALL’

Pope Leo XIV is first American pope

Catholic News Agency

On May 8, Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost was elected Pope Leo XIV by the College of Cardinals as the 266th successor of St. Peter, making him the 267th pope and the first from the United States.

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT

POPE LEO XIV:

- Robert Francis Prevost was born on Sept. 14, 1955, in Chicago to Louis Marius Prevost, of French and Italian descent, and Mildred Martínez, of Spanish descent. He has two brothers, Louis Martin and John Joseph.

- His father was a World War II Navy veteran and school superintendent; his mother was a librarian who was very involved in parish life.

- The new pope speaks multiple languages, including English, Spanish, Italian, French, and Portuguese.

- He earned a bachelor of science degree in mathematics from Villanova University in 1977 before pursuing his religious vocation.

- He completed his secondary studies at the minor seminary of the Augustinians in 1973 in Michigan. In 1977, he became a member of the Order of St. Augustine and took his solemn vows in 1981.

- He completed a master of divinity degree at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago and earned a licentiate and doctorate in canon law from the Pontifical College of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome. He went on to teach canon law in seminaries during his time in Peru.

- He was ordained a priest on June 19, 1982, by Archbishop Jean Jadot Rome.

- He served extensively in Peru from 1985 to 1998, working as a parish pastor, seminary teacher, and diocesan official. He was also part of the leadership of Caritas Peru, the Church's charitable organization.

- After being elected the head of the Augustinian Province of Chicago, he returned to the U.S. in 1999. He was elected prior general of the Augustinians in 2001 and then reelected in 2007, serving as head of the order until 2013.

- Pope Francis appointed him apostolic administrator and then bishop of the Diocese of Chiclayo, Peru, in 2014 and 2015 respectively, and received episcopal consecration on Dec. 12, 2014, at St. Mary's Cathedral in Chiclayo.

- He was made a cardinal by Pope Francis on Sept. 30, 2023.

- While serving the Church in Peru, Francis made him a member of the Dicastery for the Clergy in 2019 and then a member of the Dicastery for Bishops in 2020. In 2023, Francis made him prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops.

- His episcopal motto – which is a bishop's personal motto – is “In illo uno unum,” which means “In the one Christ we are one,” reflecting his commitment to unity.

- Prior to becoming pope, he had an active X account – the first to have his own social media account before becoming pope.



NORTH
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CATHOLICPO Box 326
Ogdensburg, NY 13669
USPS 0039-3400**Bishop Terry****R. LaValley**

President

Rev. Joseph A. Morgan

Vice President

James D. Crowley

Secretary-Treasurer

Darcy L. Fargo

Editor &

Communications Director



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It's outside my understanding

If this week taught me anything, it's that I know nothing.

As I was assembling the North Country Catholic late Thursday morning, I told a colleague, "I'm pretty sure we're not going to have a pope today. I'm going to get as far as I can into everything else and hope I set myself up well for tomorrow."

Before lunch hour was over that day, probably two hours after I had made that claim, my phone started buzzing rapidly. Between text messages and social me-

dia messages, I had about a dozen people sending me the same two words: "white smoke."



Darcy L. Fargo

We had a pope on Thursday.

I had also proclaimed pretty confidently that our next pope would not be from the Americas at least a few times over the last week.

I think you already know what the next round of messages said.

"He's an Ameri-

can!"

I didn't know what I thought I knew. It was one of those fun reminders

that the Holy Spirit does what the Holy Spirit does, and what the Holy Spirit does - what God does - is outside understanding and expectations.

Throughout Thursday afternoon and evening, and continuing into Friday, I saw hundreds of headlines cross our national/international wire service, pop up on my social media, and listed on my Google news feed.

Pope Leo XIV, the first American pope, was everywhere news could be found (my son, Jake, found out there was a new pope via a media alert from one of his favorite sports analysts).

As the news machine

continued to churn, I started seeing all the stories declaring what kind of leader Pope Leo XIV will be. All the predictable words started being bantered about - liberal, conservative, progressive, traditional, unity, division...

I closed my laptop and walked away from it. It's not that I don't care. I care deeply.

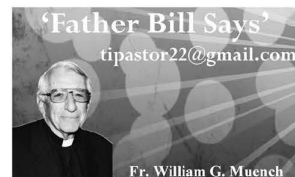
I'm trying to trust the Holy Spirit, not various news outlets or pundits and certainly not my understanding and expectations, to tell us who Pope Leo XIV's is and what kind of pope he will be.

I trust God to know everything.

The Bread of Life Discourse

I am writing this during the Third Week of Easter. This is a special week for our Catholic Church. The Cardinal electors of our Church went into conclave this week. The daily Masses each day this week have great Scripture readings. These readings will be good for the cardinal electors to listen to and think about as they move through this important conclave.

The first reading at each of these daily Masses during this Third Week of Easter is from the Acts of the Apostles. One of the readings is the story of the martyrdom of St. Stephen. I am certain that you will remember this story. St. Stephen was one of the first deacons of the early Christian Church. They were chosen to assist the apostles. Stephen was a powerful preacher and teacher. His message about Jesus disturbed Jewish leaders. They reacted with violence, and they took Stephen's life. I can only imagine that the



Fr. William G. Muench

cardinals will be inspired by Stephen's witness, his boldness and his forgiving spirit; he asked God to forgive those who took his life.

The Gospel reading at the Masses during this Third Week of Easter are from St. John's Gospel - all from chapter 6. This chapter is known as Jesus' Discourse on the Bread of Life. We find here Jesus' teaching about the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

John 6 begins with the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fish. Jesus feeds 5,000 people. This event has become an image for us of Jesus' coming to nourish us now with the Holy Eucharist. In John 6, the crowd of people catch up with Jesus the next day. St. John then presents this message as

a dialogue - the crowd with Jesus. They have seen what Jesus can do, and they want to know who he is. We then listen as Jesus teaches them what it means that he is the Bread of Life, and we learn that Jesus wants to come to us in the Eucharist.

So, let us consider that message of Jesus. He teaches us, even now, who he is. "I am the bread that came down from Heaven so that one may eat it and not die." Jesus answers all their questions. "I am the living bread that came down from Heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever. The bread I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

We, now, see and understand in faith our belief in our powerful sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. We believe in the real presence of the Lord Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. We believe we receive the Body and Blood of the Lord when we receive the Eucharist in Holy Communion. This sacrament unites us in a

special way with Our Lord and Savior, who comes to bring us strength and support.

In John 6, Jesus puts it in his words, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him."

This Gospel reading - John 6 - is an inspiration for all of us, Catholics and must fill with power and grace the cardinal electors in this new conclave.

In John 6, some of Jesus' disciples find this Eucharistic teaching of the Lord to be unacceptable and we are told they stop walking with Jesus. Jesus turns to the apostles asking if they will leave him. Peter answers him: "Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of everlasting life, and we have come to believe and to know that you are the Christ, the Son of God."

White smoke: A new pope

By AC Wimmer
Catholic News Agency

Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost has been elected as the 267th pope of the Catholic Church, taking the name Pope Leo XIV.

White smoke rose from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel at 6:09 p.m. Rome time on Thursday, signaling that the College of Cardinals had chosen a successor to Pope Francis, who died on April 21.

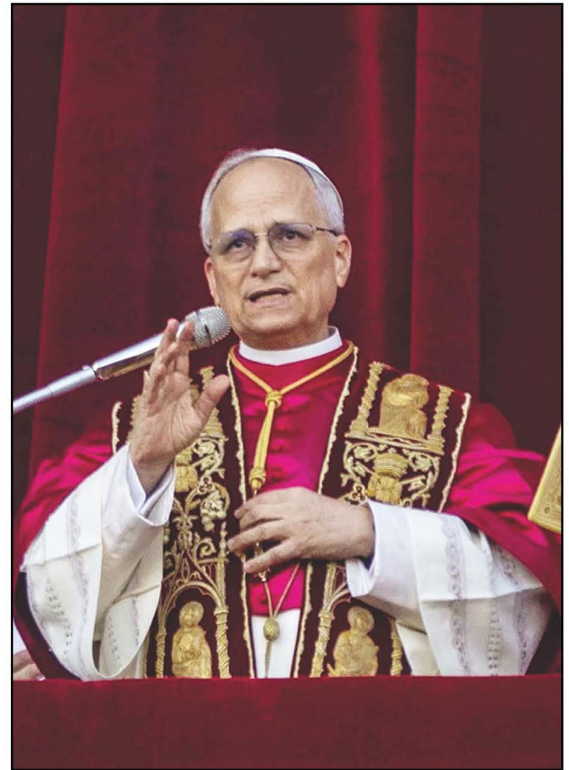
Thousands gathered in St. Peter's Square erupted in cheers as the bells of the basilica began to toll, confirming the election of a new pontiff. The crowds gathered as word spread throughout Rome that a new pope had been chosen.

The new pontiff appeared on the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica at approximately 7:25 p.m. local time, where Cardinal Dominique Mamberti, the protodeacon of the College of Cardinals and prefect of the Apostolic Signatura, announced in Latin: "Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum: Habemus Papam!"

("I announce to you a great joy: We have a pope!")

Before appearing on the balcony, the newly elected Pope Leo XIV spent time in the "Room of Tears," a small chamber adjacent to the Sistine Chapel. This traditionally named room is where new pontiffs first don the papal vestments and have a moment of private prayer and reflection as they absorb the magnitude of their election to the Chair of St. Peter.

Following the announcement, Leo XIV addressed the crowds gathered in St. Peter's Square and those watching around the world, offering his first blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) as the new Roman pontiff.



Photos by Catholic News Agency & Vatican News

(Left) White smoke billows from the chimney atop the Sistine Chapel as the world learns a new pope has been elected. (Right) Pope Leo XIV gives his apostolic blessing *urbi et orbi*, on the city and the world, after being named the 267th pope of the Catholic Church.

'Peace be with you all'

By Hannah Brockhaus
Catholic News Agency

Pope Leo XIV greeted the world for the first time on Thursday with the words "Peace be with you all."

The 69-year-old new pope, formerly Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, was elected the first pope from the United States on Thursday. A native of Chicago, Leo spoke in Italian from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, addressing the hundreds of thousands of people waiting in the square and streets below.

"Peace be with you all. Dearest brothers and sisters, this is the first greeting of the risen Christ, the Good Shepherd, who has given his life for God's flock. I too would like that this greeting of peace en-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Bishop, NY Conference find hope in first words

North Country Catholic

While the world reacts to the news of the new pope, so too does the Church of the North Country and in New York.

"God is good! I join the faithful of the Diocese of Ogdensburg in congratulating Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, who has been named as our new pope," said Bishop Terry R. LaValley. "Choosing the name Pope Leo XIV, the Holy Father will be the 267th successor of St. Peter the Apostle."

Bishop LaValley, like many, is still learning about the new Holy Father.

"Though I don't know him personally, based on the accounts I've heard, the Holy Spirit has surely come through for us again," he said. "The new Pope's words to us: 'Peace with you!' convey a message so badly needed to be taken to heart. We praise God for His faithfulness and assure the new pontiff of our strong support in his ministry among us. God Bless Pope Leo XIV."

The New York State Catholic Conference, which represents bishops across the state, expressed similar sentiments.

"We at the New York State Catholic Conference join our Bish-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Who is Pope Leo XIV? A bio of the first American pope

By Jonah McKeown
Catholic News Agency

Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost was elected Pope Leo XIV on Thursday, May 8 — the first pope from the United States.

Smiling and waving while wearing more traditional papal garb than his predecessor — and appearing to hold back tears at certain points — Leo blessed the cheering masses assembled in St. Peter's Square, proclaiming in confident Italian: "Peace be with you all!"

An Augustinian and a canon lawyer, Prevost spent over a decade ministering in South America before being called back to the U.S. to head the Midwest Augustinians and was later elected prior general of the Augustinian order, serving in that role for a dozen years. He later returned to South America after Pope Francis in 2014 appointed him bishop in Chiclayo, Peru. Francis later called him to Rome in 2023 to head the highly influential Dicastery for Bishops.

Prevost, 69, was born on Sept. 14, 1955, in Chicago. He is of Italian, French, and Spanish descent. He studied at an Augustinian minor seminary in Michigan and later earned a bachelor of science degree in mathematics from Villanova University in Pennsylvania.

He officially entered the Order of St. Augustine in 1978, making his solemn vows in 1981. He was ordained to the priesthood in June 1982 after studying theology at the Catholic Theological Union of Chicago.

After being ordained, he earned a doctorate in canon law from Rome's Pontifical College of St. Thomas Aquinas (also known as the Angelicum) in 1987.

Prevost returned to Chicago for a short time in 1987, serving as pastor for vocations and director of missions for the Midwest Augustinians (Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel). He was then sent to Peru, where he served the Augustinians in various capacities including as a regional ecclesiastical judge and teacher of canon law in the diocesan seminary for Trujillo, Peru, for 10 years.

After being elected the head of the Augustinian Province of Chicago, Prevost returned to the U.S. in 1999. He was elected prior general of the Augustinians in 2001 and then reelected in 2007, serving as head of the order until 2013.

Pope Francis appointed Prevost as apostolic administrator of Chiclayo, Peru, in 2014, and he was ordained titular bishop of Sufar that same year.

While serving the Church in Peru, Francis made Prevost a member of the Dicastery for the Clergy in 2019 and then a member of the Dicastery for Bishops in 2020. In 2023, Francis made Prevost prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops. In that capacity, Prevost played a key role in the selection of diocesan bishops around the world and in the investigation of allegations against bishops.

In 2023, Prevost spoke to Vatican News about what he considered to be the "portrait of a bishop."

"We are often preoccupied with teaching doctrine, the way of living our faith, but we risk forgetting that our first task is to teach what it means to know Jesus Christ and to bear witness to our closeness to the Lord," he told Vatican News.

"This comes first: to communicate the beauty of the faith, the beauty and joy of knowing Jesus," he added. "It means that we ourselves are living it and sharing this experience."

Pope Francis made him a cardinal in a Sept. 30, 2023, consistory.

New pope: 'Peace be with you all'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

ters into your heart, reaching your families, and all people, wherever they are, to all peoples, to all the earth. Peace be with you," Leo said in his opening lines.

The identity of the new pope was announced just over an hour after white smoke billowed from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel. The cardinal electors watched from balconies flanking the central loggia of St. Peter's Basilica as Cardinal Dominique Mamberti declared in Latin: "Habemus papam!"

Minutes later, Pope Leo XIV appeared to enormous cheers from the excited crowd.

The peace of the risen Christ, he said, is a "disarming, humble, and persevering peace" that comes from God — a God who "loves us all unconditionally."

He recalled his predecessor, the late Pope Francis, who blessed Rome on Easter Sunday just hours before his death. "Allow me," Leo said, "to follow that same blessing."

"God loves us, God loves all of us, and evil will not prevail. We are all in the hands of God. Therefore, without fear, united, hand in hand with God and among ourselves, let us go forward. We are disciples of Christ. Christ precedes us. The world needs his light. Humanity needs him like a bridge to be reached by God and his love," Leo said.

The pope asked those present to help the Church to build bridges through dialogue and encounter, working for unity and peace. He thanked Pope Francis and the cardinals who chose him to be the successor of St. Peter, history's first pope.

The pope added that he wants to "walk together ... as a united Church, always searching for peace, justice, and trying to always work as men and women faithful to Jesus Christ, without fear to proclaim the Gospel, to be missionaries."

Pointing out that he is a member of the Augustinian religious order, Leo paraphrased the words of his founder, St. Augustine, who once said in a sermon: "With you I am a Christian and for you I am a bishop."

In a special greeting to the Catholic Church of Rome, of which he is bishop, Leo said: "We must learn together how to be a missionary Church, a Church that builds bridges, dialogue, always open to receive, like this square with its 'arms' open to all, everyone who sees our charity, our presence, dialogue, love."

Breaking off from Italian into Spanish, the pope greeted the people of the Diocese of Chiclayo in Peru, where he was bishop from 2015 until Pope Francis brought him to the Vatican as prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops in 2023.

Speaking again in Italian, the pope said the faithful want "a synodal Church, one that looks always for peace, for charity, and to be close to those who suffer."

Recalling the day's feast day of Our Lady of Pompei, Pope Leo invited those present to pray a Hail Mary with him "for this new mission, but for the whole Church, for peace in the world."

After the prayer asking for the intercession of the Virgin Mary, the new pope then bestowed his first apostolic blessing, "urbi et orbi," on the city and the world.

Pope Leo XIV's homily from first Mass

Catholic News Agency

Pope Leo XIV delivered this homily at his first Mass as pope in the Sistine Chapel on May 9, the morning after being elected the 266th successor of St. Peter, addressing the cardinal electors who had chosen him:

I will begin with a word in English, and the rest is in Italian. But I want to repeat the words from the responsorial Psalm: "I will sing a new song to the Lord, because he has done marvels."

And indeed, not just with me but with all of us. My brother cardinals, as we celebrate this morning, I invite you to recognize the marvels that the Lord has done, the blessings that the Lord continues to pour out on all of us through the ministry of Peter.

You have called me to carry that cross, and to be blessed with that mission, and I know I can rely on each and every one of you to walk with me, as we continue as a Church, as a community of friends of Jesus, as believers to announce the good news, to announce the Gospel.

[Continuing in Italian] "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt 16:16). In these words, Peter, asked by the Master, together with the other disciples, about his faith in him, expressed the patrimony that the Church, through the apostolic succession, has preserved, deepened, and handed on for 2,000 years.

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God: the one Savior who alone reveals the face of the Father.

In him, God, in order to make himself close and accessible to men and women, revealed himself to us in the trusting eyes of a child, in the lively mind of a young person, and in the mature features of a man (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 22), finally appearing to his disciples after the Resurrection with his glorious body. He thus showed us a model of human holiness that we can all imitate, together with the promise of an eternal destiny that transcends all our limits and abilities.

Peter, in his response, understands both of these things: the

gift of God and the path to follow in order to allow himself to be changed by that gift. They are two inseparable aspects of salvation entrusted to the Church to be proclaimed for the good of the human race. Indeed, they are entrusted to us, who were chosen by him before we were formed in our mothers' wombs (cf. Jer 1:5), reborn in the waters of Baptism and, surpassing our limitations and with no merit of our own, brought here and sent forth from here, so that the Gospel might be proclaimed to every creature (cf. Mk 16:15).

In a particular way, God has called me by your election to succeed the Prince of the Apostles, and has entrusted this treasure to me so that, with his help, I may be its faithful administrator (cf. 1 Cor 4:2) for the sake of the entire mystical Body of the Church. He has done so in order that she may be ever more fully a city set on a hill (cf. Rev 21:10), an ark of salvation sailing through the waters of history and a beacon that illumines the dark nights of this world. And this, not so much through the magnificence of her structures or the grandeur of her buildings – like the monuments among which we find ourselves – but rather through the holiness of her members. For we are the people whom God has chosen as his own, so that we may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light (cf. 1 Pet 2:9).

Peter, however, makes his profession of faith in reply to a specific question: "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" (Mt 16:13). The question is not insignificant. It concerns an essential aspect of our ministry, namely, the world in which we live, with its limitations and its potential, its questions and its convictions.

"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" If we reflect on the scene we are considering, we might find two possible answers, which characterize two different attitudes.

First, there is the world's response. Matthew tells us that this conversation between Jesus and his disciples takes place in

the beautiful town of Caesarea Philippi, filled with luxurious palaces, set in a magnificent natural landscape at the foot of Mount Hermon, but also a place of cruel power plays and the scene of betrayals and infidelity. This setting speaks to us of a world that considers Jesus a completely insignificant person, at best someone with an unusual and striking way of speaking and acting. And so, once his presence becomes irksome because of his demands for honesty and his stern moral requirements, this "world" will not hesitate to reject and eliminate him.

Then there is the other possible response to Jesus' question: that of ordinary people. For them, the Nazarene is not a charlatan, but an upright man, one who has courage, who speaks well and says the right things, like other great prophets in the history of Israel. That is why they follow him, at least for as long as they can do so without too much risk or inconvenience. Yet to them he is only a man, and therefore, in times of danger, during his passion, they too abandon him and depart disappointed.

What is striking about these two attitudes is their relevance today. They embody notions that we could easily find on the lips of many men and women in our own time, even if, while essentially identical, they are expressed in different language.

Even today, there are many settings in which the Christian faith is considered absurd, meant for the weak and unintelligent. Settings where other securities are preferred, like technology, money, success, power, or pleasure.

These are contexts where it is not easy to preach the Gospel and bear witness to its truth, where believers are mocked, opposed, despised or at best tolerated and pitied. Yet, precisely for this reason, they are the places where our missionary outreach is desperately needed. A lack of faith is often tragically accompanied by the loss of meaning in life, the neglect of mercy, appalling violations of human dignity, the crisis of

the family and so many other wounds that afflict our society.

Today, too, there are many settings in which Jesus, although appreciated as a man, is reduced to a kind of charismatic leader or superman. This is true not only among non-believers but also among many baptized Christians, who thus end up living, at this level, in a state of practical atheism.

This is the world that has been entrusted to us, a world in which, as Pope Francis taught us so many times, we are called to bear witness to our joyful faith in Jesus the Savior. Therefore, it is essential that we too repeat, with Peter: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt 16:16).

It is essential to do this, first of all, in our personal relationship with the Lord, in our commitment to a daily journey of conversion. Then, to do so as a Church, experiencing together our fidelity to the Lord and bringing the Good News to all (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 1).

I say this first of all to myself, as the Successor of Peter, as I begin my mission as Bishop of Rome and, according to the well-known expression of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, am called to preside in charity over the universal Church (cf. *Letter to the Romans*, Prologue). Saint Ignatius, who was led in chains to this city, the place of his impending sacrifice, wrote to the Christians there: "Then I will truly be a disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world no longer sees my body" (*Letter to the Romans*, IV, 1). Ignatius was speaking about being devoured by wild beasts in the arena – and so it happened – but his words apply more generally to an indispensable commitment for all those in the Church who exercise a ministry of authority. It is to move aside so that Christ may remain, to make oneself small so that he may be known and glorified (cf. Jn 3:30), to spend oneself to the utmost so that all may have the opportunity to know and love him.

May God grant me this grace, today and always, through the loving intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church.

Mystery Players: Sharing faith for 45 years

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

When the Immaculate Heart Central Mystery Players began their prayer in performance at St. Patrick's Church in Watertown on Good Friday, the group was closing out its 45th year of sharing faith and growing friendships.

"It's the best thing the school does in terms of the school mission," said Terry Burgess, the group's director and advisor. "It gets the kids involved in their faith."

The Mystery Players perform in prayer and share the story of Christ's passion using silent acting, music/sound and lighting.

"I think the way we do it is way different than what people expect," Burgess said. "They may think it's some sort of high school Stations of the Cross. It's not. We had a priest say we healed his parish. That speaks to the power of what we do. We had a priest tell us 'it was one of the most extraordinary, moving and beautiful and amazing things I've seen in my 25 years of priesthood.' What we do is powerful, incredible and prayerful."

Burgess said he is blessed to be able to watch the kids grow their faith, grow their prayer lives and grow their relationship with each other.

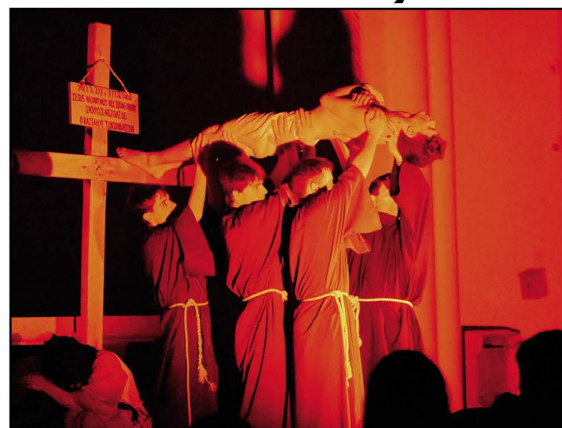
"It used to be all seniors, and now it's freshman to seniors," Burgess said. "When we first got started, their all from different classes, different social groups. You can see the camaraderie grow between them. Kids hang out together now who never would've before doing Mystery Players together. The relationships take time to build. We see it happening as we get further into it every year. We always pray together before each Mystery Play.



PHOTOS BY DARCY FARGO/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

(Above) Samuel Charlebois assumed the role of Jesus for the Good Friday prayer of the Immaculate Heart Central Mystery Players.

(Above right) Members of the Mystery Players carry Charlebois after removing Christ from the cross. (Bottom right) Olivia Staib, representing Mary, holds the crucified Christ, played by Charlebois, at the foot of the cross.



You see the depth of that change as the year goes on and they grow in trust of one another and in confidence."

Changes over the four years make some aspects of that bonding more difficult, Burgess said.

"We're self-sustaining," he said. "We used to take buses to the different locations, but we can't afford that now. You don't get quite the same camaraderie riding in a bunch of separate vehicles. But when we're on the longer trips, you still see those relationships growing."

In their 2024-25 season, the Mystery Players offered four prayer performance in Advent and 12 during Lent.

"We try to get around that number every year," Burgess said.

The experience is so powerful for those that participate, many return as volunteers.

Dan Charlebois, IHC principal, is one of those volunteers.

"I think I get out of it more than I put into it," he said. "I can't imagine my Lent and Advent without it. My family has grown up with it. It's been

a big part of my life."

Charlebois said working with the Mystery Players allows the student participants to "see a different side" of him.

"I get to help them to pray," he said. "I get to watch them become more confident in themselves when sharing during prayer. It brings me a lot of joy to see them grow in confidence and grow in faith."

Charlebois noted it will be his last time working with the Mystery Players, since he's moving away from the area later this year.

"It's hard," he said. "I think it's almost like when a priest has been at a parish for 20 years and is celebrating his last Mass there. It's been my home for so long, moving on and changing is tough."

Charlebois' son, Samuel, 17, assumed the role of Jesus in the Good Friday performance.

"I grew up with it," Samuel Charlebois said. "It's part of my life."

Other participants joined for different reasons.

"I saw how it impact-

ed everyone," said Olivia Staib, 18, of Watertown. "I wanted to be part of that."

"My friends were joining," added Elizabeth Zajac, 18, of Watertown. "And I wanted to find a new group of people - people with faith."

All three teens said they have formed deep friendships through participating in the Mystery Players.

"At the beginning of the year, we all just know each other a little from school," said Samuel Charlebois. "As we travel around and prepare together, we bond and learn things about each other we wouldn't learn seeing each other in the hallways."

"It connects you with people you wouldn't normally talk to," added Staib. "You end up with a more diverse group of

friends."

While they've benefited from the experience, the teens said it wasn't without its challenges.

"At first, it's hard to get past the original awkwardness and learning to talk to new people," said Zajac.

"I found it challenging being vulnerable and opening up to the group," added Staib. "But without that, we'd never be able to connect and come together in prayer fully."

Samuel Charlebois, Zajac and Staib, all seniors, said they're glad they participated.

"It's a very rewarding experience," Samuel Charlebois said. "We've done it so many times, we know how it feels for us, but seeing other people experience it for the first time is very uplifting."

"It changes lives," said Zajac.

Calling all artists, singers, instrumentalists

By Keith Benman
Catholic News Agency

The Diocese of Ogdensburg is putting out a call to artists and musical performers for a Jubilee-year festival to be held in August.

"The Look, Feel, & Sound of Hope" music and arts festival will take place from 3 to 5 p.m. on Aug. 24 at St. Bernard's Catholic Church in Saranac Lake. It will feature music and art illustrating the jubilee-year theme of hope as proclaimed by the late Pope Francis.

"This is an opportunity for us to come together, to take all this talent, which is spread across the diocese, and have the opportunity to see this talent come to fruition," said Father Lukas Gruber, one of the coordinators of the festival's music portion.

The festival is following the exhortation of the late Pope Francis to "fan the flame of hope" in the Jubilee year. The pope initiated the Jubilee year, with its motto "Pilgrims of Hope," by opening the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve at the end of 2024.

Organizers of "The Look, Feel, and Sound of Hope" to take place at St. Bernard's say the Jubilee year has been made even more significant for them with the pope's passing.

"(Pope) Francis would want us to remember his message long after him," said Christine Bookman, St. Mary's Cathedral music director and



PHOTO BY KEITH BENMAN/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

(Above) A choir performs at Sacred Heart Church, Massena, in December as part of the church's 100-year-anniversary celebration. Similar choirs made up of singers from across the Diocese of Ogdensburg will perform in "The Look, Feel & Sound of Hope" arts festival on Aug. 24 at St. Bernard's Catholic Church, in Saranac Lake. (Below) Father Lukas Gruber performs on the organ at Sacred Heart Church, Massena, in December. Father Gruber and other musicians from around the diocese will perform at the "The Look, Feel, & Sound of Hope" music & arts festival Aug. 24 at St. Bernard's Church, in Saranac Lake.

another of the festival's music coordinators. "We don't lose any amount of hope just because he's not with us anymore. He's watching over us."

Art works will be displayed in St. Bernard's among the pews and other areas. It is not a juried art show; all works entered will be displayed, excepting in the case of something found not appropriate.

Organizers are also encouraging all art mediums, including sewing, crocheting, painting, sculpture, jewelry, digital art — you name it.

The art works portion is open to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, as well as artists residing outside the diocese. Entry forms



ask for information on the artist and for up to three works to be submitted.

Those forms are due May 30. A photograph of the work or works is due June 30. Teens and children can also enter, but parents will need to fill out the festival "minor release"

at the festival website. "Our biggest thing is we want people to express themselves," said Carol Gonthier, one of the art coordinators for the festival. "And there's no one way of expressing yourself."

If entrants still have questions on the art

portion of the event after going to the festival website, those can be emailed to Carol Gonthier at cgonthier@twcnny.rr.com or Christy Clark Collins at christyclarkcollins@gmail.com

The music portion of the festival will consist of a performance by a Diocesan Choir open to all singers, an invite-only Diocesan Schola choir, and chamber music which may include soloists.

"This is really an opportunity for us to come together and experience music making on a large scale and one that is Christ-centered," Father Gruber said.

The Diocesan Choir will sing three hymns and festival attendees will be invited to join in.

Entry forms for the Diocesan Choir and the chamber music portions of the festival are available at the festival website and should be submitted as soon as possible.

The chamber music can be performed by groups of instrumentalists, vocalists or any mix thereof, including soloists. There are seven slots for chamber music, which requires a recording of the group or soloist performing their piece to be submitted by July 11. Examples of works that might be suitable are included at the festival website.

If entrants still have questions after going to the festival website, those can be emailed to Father Lukas Gruber at lgruber@rcd-ony.org or Christine Bookman at ogdensburgmusic@rcdony.org.

CALLED TO SERVE

Is there any reason I shouldn't do yoga?

In the United States, there are roughly 30 million practitioners of yoga, alongside an expanding industry providing yoga-related products and services, classes, workshops and equipment. But many Christians ask whether Christians should be practicing yoga. Are there any spiritual issues raised by the practice?

The concerns regarding yoga largely revolve around whether one has a partial or a full understanding of what yoga is. A partial understanding of yoga is likely to support the notion that yoga is merely a physical posturing and stretching regimen with deep breathing intended to relieve anxiety and stress. A fuller understanding of yoga, however, recognizes that it is a spirituality, extending beyond mere exercises to certain aspects of Eastern spirituality ranging from meditation, to mantras, to physical posturing and symbolic hand gestures designed to "awaken the power of the divine," where "divine" is often construed and pursued in a self-referential way.

Yoga is a philosophical and spiritual practice developed in India and has its roots in Hinduism. It is often associated with Eastern

spirituality, even if it is not always practiced in an explicitly religious way.

Certain yoga traditions still retain strongly spiritual or religious components. Some

yoga teachers or studios, additionally, may incorporate elements of Hinduism or other Eastern spiritual traditions into their practice, which can make it difficult to separate yoga from religion.

Dave Fetcho, formerly of the Ananda Marga Yoga Society, has argued, "Physical yoga, according to its classical definitions, is inheritably and functionally incapable of being separated from Eastern religious metaphysics."

It is precisely those metaphysical and spiritual beliefs that raise concerns for faithful Christians. The Christian faith differs in fundamental ways from Eastern religious beliefs; ultimately, the two perspectives make highly divergent claims about the nature of God, the human person, their relationship, and the person's ultimate destiny.

One example involves the notion of "kundalini." Yoga scholar Hans

Rieker declares, "Kundalini [is] the mainstay of all yoga practices." Researcher John White describes a problematic "elevation" of man and an intense focus on man himself through the kundalini experience, which he describes as something akin to "divinizing" a person: "The word itself may not appear...but the concept is there...as a key to attaining god-like stature."

A popular image of kundalini is of a serpent slithering as divine energy from the lower regions of the spine through all the subtle body centers and making its way to the crown. This Kundalini energy is portrayed as an awakening of a dormant spirit, said to be coiled at the base of the spine waiting to be released through yoga.

Swami Vivekananda summarizes the experience of kundalini as follows: "When awakened through the practice of spiritual disciplines, it rises through the spinal column, passes through the various centers, and at last reaches the brain, whereupon the yogi experiences samadhi, or total absorption in the Godhead."

In describing this kundalini awakening of the coiled snake energy in himself, Gopi Krishna writes: "It was variable for many years, painful, obsessive.... I have passed through almost all the stages of...medumistic, psychotic, and

other types of mind; for some time I was hovering between sanity and insanity."

For Christians this may call to mind the biblical and cunning serpent who flattered our first parents by assuring them that through their disobedience they would "be like God" (Gen 3:5). The pursuit of kundalini through yoga can be mentally and spiritually dangerous, as these practices induce altered states of consciousness that can render practitioners more susceptible or available to demonic deception.

Approaching the question from another angle, the meditative dimensions of yoga also do not appear to be compatible with authentic Christian belief and prayer, which is a personal, communitarian, and transcendent, seeking of the person of Christ.

Yoga embodies an impersonal approach which concentrates on the interior self. For example, a common mantra repeated in yoga is "So'ham," which roughly translates, "I am the universal self." As noted in a 1989 Vatican Letter To The Bishops of The Catholic Church on Some Aspects of Christian Meditation, there is the risk that such forms of meditation "can create a kind of rut, imprisoning the person in a spiritual privatism" that excludes or locks out any real openness to the transcendent God.

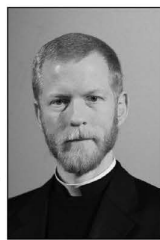
Catholics ought to avoid yoga because of these many significant

spiritual concerns. Yet some say that yoga helps them physically and psychologically. Jenny Dubay, a fitness professional and former avid yoga practitioner, has pointed out how we can get the benefits of yoga-like physical activity without the risks or harms.

"Catholics," she said, "can and should stretch their bodies. There are many stretching techniques and movements that help enhance flexibility, release muscle tension after an intense workout, and promote relaxation. There's no need to engage in a yoga practice in order to gain these benefits."

Among the alternatives to yoga are ballet, water ballet, simple stretching, Pilates, Barre classes (which uses modified ballet and Pilates movements), or low-impact or water aerobics, as well as newer approaches which rely on explicitly Christian spiritual angles, such as Prayer-Motion (developed by a Catholic Physician who claims its roots come from Benedictine monastic practices), PraiseMoves, Pietra Fitness, SoulCore, and Catholic Fit.

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



Father Tad Pacholczyk, Ph.D.

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Environmental Stewardship

Laudato Si: Chapter 1

Much of the greatness of Pope Francis resulted from his deep concern for humanity and all life on earth, and for the planet. Pope Francis seemed to radiate affection for all creation because of the way in which the natural world mirrors the magnificence, beauty and grandeur of God.

In the first chapter of his encyclical, *Laudato Si*, the Holy Father identifies what is occurring to the structure of our world. He examines facets of pollution and climate change from both a scientific and moral viewpoint. He cites problems caused by the ever-increasing lack of clean fresh water and the declining rate of biodiversity, which destabilizes ecosystems around the globe.

Because everything is interconnected, when one segment of an ecological system is disrupted, the impact ripples to all areas of the planet and affects the wellbeing of everyone and everything. The late pope noted that civil unrest and strife occurs around the world, and it reflects the ecological upheaval.

Toward the end of this chapter, Pope Francis laments that not much has been done to adequately address the issues. While great solutions to specific problems have been proposed and demonstrated, widespread implementation of these ideas has faltered. People, communities and societies have become hesitant or unwilling to alter their lifestyles to reduce their carbon footprints, eliminate plastics and adopt a simpler lifestyle.

Optimistic individuals often state that there is always hope. However, the pontiff clearly notes that researchers are indicating the tipping point for ecological disaster is rapidly approaching or has already been crossed, and he said hope will no longer be a path forward. Our society is built on unsustainable practices, and it will inevitably collapse unless we take serious actions now.

By Tom Kalinowski
St. Bernard's Parish, Saranac Lake

Rest in Peace

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

May 14 – Deacon Vincent E. Irvin Jr., 2003

May 15 – Rev. William Rossiter, 1908; Msgr. James R. McClure, 1960; Deacon William G. Schmidt, 2016

May 16 – Rev. Moses Legualt, 1908; Rev. John M. McIntyre, 1944; Msgr. Peter R. Riani, 2019

May 18 – Rev. John B. A. Legrand, 1891; Rev. Richard J. Cotter, 1928; Rev. Augustus J. Dumont, 1949

May 19 – Msgr. Arthur M. Leary, 1968; Deacon Vincent J. Frattali, 2003; Rev. Richard S. Sturtz, 2021

May 20 – Rev. Eugene Noury, O.M.I., 1961; Rev. P. Andrew L'Esperance, M.S.C., 1962

Bishop's Public Schedule

May 14 – 11 a.m. – Priest Personnel Board Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

6:30 p.m. – Confirmation at St. Stephen's Church in Croghan along with St. Francis Solanus Church in Harrisville and St. James Minor Church in Carthage

May 15 – 7 p.m. – Confirmation at the Blessed Sacrament Parish (at the Church of the Holy Family) in Watertown along with The Church of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Watertown, St. Mary's Church in Evans Mills and St. Paul's Church in Black River

May 17 – 4:30 p.m. – Confirmation at St. Mary's Church in Ticonderoga along with Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Schroon Lake

May 18 – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

May 19-21 – Presbyteral Assembly at the Cambria Hotel Lake Placid in Lake Placid

CALLED TO SERVE

The Deacon Assembly

Each year Bishop Terry LaValley calls the deacons of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, their wives and widows together in Assembly. The annual event was held in Lake Placid this year during the first week of May.

The assembly has been scheduled in a few different communities over the years but returns to Lake Placid because of the available housing and meeting facilities and its location convenient for all those travelling to the meetings.

Deacon Stephen Pitre was the featured presenter for the 60 attendees. He is the Coordinator of Diaconal Ministry for the Archdiocese of Toronto, Ontario, and Region 2 Director for the National Associate of Deacon



Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

Directors.

Region 2 of the NADD includes all the dioceses in New York State (except the Albany Diocese which aligns with the New England States) and those in Southern Ontario Province.

Deacon Pitre spoke about Deacons as a Beacon of Hope in today's world.

He encouraged deacons to engage in charitable work in addition to the liturgical settings we see most deacons in. He promoted listening as the greatest tool a deacon can develop as he sits with people who are ill or infirmed, confused, saddened by an event or events, or just looking to share.

Bishop LaValley used the occasion to meet formally and informally with deacons and spouses over the three days. Bishop celebrated the final Mass with the group. In his homily, Bishop urged deacons to continue as hope-filled representatives of Jesus Christ in their

work within the diocese.

All those presentations and events were important. The most significant time for the participants though was spent socializing.

It is not unusual for men ordained in a given year, to not see their classmates for an extended period of time. Cohorts of candidates spend three to four years together in formation and eventual ordination but then return to their parish to put their training into practice. Whatever close friendships and bonds developed during formation are jeopardized quickly by time and distance.

Since this diocese stretches from Lake Champlain to Lake Ontario, from the St. Lawrence to just North of the Thruway, it is not unusual for men and women to lose track of the friendships developed and nurtured during those formation years.

The annual Assembly is one way to overcome those separations.

Priests of the Diocese will meet in a couple of weeks to similarly meet with the bishop, learn and discuss critical issues, and meet with colleagues to renew friendships and swap stories of parish life.

Pray for your clergy.

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

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact Victim Assistance Coordinator, Terrienne Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; terrienneyanulavich@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

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

Controversial German Synodal committee to meet

By Martin Bürger
Catholic News Agency

The German Synodal Committee will meet this weekend to prepare for a council to consolidate the German Synodal Way. Four German bishops are not participating in the body due to the Vatican's warning that the synodal committee is not legitimate.

The German Bishops' Conference (DBK) and the Central Committee of German Catholics (ZdK) announced a few days ago that the meeting in Magdeburg will include the presentation of the foundational text "Renewing the Catholic Church Synodally" and discussion of a draft statute for a nationwide synodal body.

"There will also be a status report on the monitoring of the implementation of the Synodal Way's resolutions," said the DBK and ZdK, the two sponsors of the Synodal Way. "Furthermore, continued work on the action texts 'Respecting Conscience Decisions in Matters of Contraception — Rehabilitating Injured Spouses' and 'Measures Against Abuse of Women in the Church' is on the agenda."

In February 2024, Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, along with Cardinals Victor Manuel Fernández of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith and Robert Prevost, OSA, (now Pope Leo XIV) of the Dicastery for Bishops, emphasized that a synodal committee is fundamentally not legitimate. Indeed, the cardinals warned the members of the DBK against deciding to establish such a body: "Such an organ is not provided for in current Church law, and therefore any such decision by the DBK would be invalid — with the corresponding legal consequences."

"The approval of the statutes of the synodal committee would therefore contradict the instruction issued by the Holy See on the special mandate of the Holy Father and would once again present it with a 'fait accompli,'" the cardinals further wrote.

After a meeting of German bishops with representatives of the Vatican Curia in March 2024, a subsequent joint press release stated: "A regular exchange between representatives of the German Bishops' Conference and the Holy See regarding the further work of the Synodal Way and the synodal committee was agreed upon. The German bishops have pledged that this work aims to develop concrete forms of syn-

odality in the Church in Germany that are in accordance with the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council, the provisions of canon law, and the outcomes of the world synod, and will subsequently be submitted to the Holy See for approval."

Against this backdrop, the statutes of the German Synodal Committee were adopted in April 2024 at a meeting of the permanent council of the DBK. This body includes all 27 diocesan bishops. In contrast, the plenary assemblies involve all bishops, including auxiliary bishops, provided they are not yet retired.

The last meeting of the synodal committee took place in December 2024. At that time, the focus was already on "questions regarding the composition" of the synodal council. Additionally, discussions were held about "its competencies and decision-making processes."

In March of this year, the New Beginning Initiative, a group that critically examines the Synodal Way, sharply criticized a "suggestive survey" conducted by the synodal committee. In a circular sent to all 27 diocesan bishops and diocesan Catholic councils, the initiative stated that the survey "pretends non-existent facts and creates false impressions among recipients. It is therefore unusable. We therefore call on you to withdraw this 'survey' and to no longer consider its 'results,' which were generated under false pretenses."

Several survey questions refer to "the action text of the Synodal Way, 'Deliberating and Deciding Together,' which was never adopted by the Synodal Way," according to the letter, which was signed by theologian Martin Brüske and publicist Bernhard Meuser, members of the New Beginning Initiative.

The letter addressed Rome's concerns regarding some of the survey questions, which, according to the New Beginning Initiative, have not been adequately considered by the Synodal Way and represent an "attitude of ignorance toward the universal Church."

For example, the third question on the survey deals with decision-making by synodal bodies at the diocesan level. This "not only ignores the instructions of the Holy See and the results of the world synod, which has since concluded," according to the New Beginning Initiative's letter, "but also cites a SW text that was never adopted and appropriates it."

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

New Jersey diocese drops objection to grand jury probe

The Diocese of Camden, New Jersey, said this week that it will drop its fight against the state's efforts to empanel a grand jury to investigate clergy abuse allegations. Camden Bishop Joseph Williams earlier this month said he intended to "do the right thing" for abuse victims in the diocese, which has been embroiled in a yearslong fight with the state of New Jersey over whether the government can empanel a grand jury to investigate allegations of abuse by priests and other Church officials. The New Jersey Supreme Court heard arguments from both the diocese and the state last month on the matter. But in a Monday letter to the high court, Trenton-based law firm Cooper Levenson said that, per Williams, the diocese "will not object to the empanelment of a grand jury" any further. The bishop made the decision "in consultation with the diocese's board of trustees, college of consultors, and finance council," the letter said. In a letter to the diocese this week, Williams — who became bishop of the diocese on March 17 — told the faithful that diocesan leaders told the state attorney general's office that they wished to be "partners with them in this public service." "[T]he most important goal of this legal change of direction was to show our sensitivity to the survivors of abuse" and help restore their faith, Williams wrote.

Justice Dept. investigates law threatening seal of confession

President Donald Trump's Department of Justice (DOJ) is investigating an "anti-Catholic law" in Washington state that threatens priests with up to one year in jail if they fail to report child abuse they learn about during the sacrament of confession. The new law, signed by Gov. Bob Ferguson last week, adds members of the clergy to the list of mandatory reporters for child abuse. It specifically states that clergy must report abuse, even if it is learned of during "privileged communication." All other mandatory reporters, such as nurses and therapists, are exempt from the reporting requirements when the information is obtained during "privileged communication." A priest who refuses to report information learned during confession could be sent to jail for up to 364 days and receive a fine of up to \$5,000. In a press release, the DOJ expressed that one of its primary concerns is that the law seems to single out priests and confession. The law exempts most privileged communication from the mandatory reporting law but denies that right to priests by including the phrase "except for members of the clergy." "The law appears to single out clergy as not entitled to assert applicable privileges, as compared to other reporting professionals," the DOJ wrote. "We take this matter very seriously and look forward to Washington state's cooperation with our investigation." Harmeet Dhillon, the assistant attorney general of the DOJ's Civil Rights Division, sent a letter to the governor and called the mandate a "legislative attack on the Catholic Church and its sacrament of confession, a religious practice ordained by the Catholic Church dating back to the Church's origins."

U.S. leaders celebrate first American pope

By Tyler Arnold
Catholic News Agency

U.S. President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance, along with former presidents Joe Biden and Barack Obama, Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker, and scores of other elected officials throughout the country expressed joy and excitement over the selection of the first American pope, who is from Chicago.

Pope Leo XIV — formerly Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost — was selected by the College of Cardinals in Rome Thursday on the second day of the papal conclave to serve as the immediate successor to Pope Francis, who died on April 21.

He is the first pope from the United States and from North America. Francis was the first pope from South America.

"Congratulations to Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, who was just named pope," Trump said in a post on his social media

platform, Truth Social.

"It is such an honor to realize that he is the first American pope," Trump added. "What excitement, and what a great honor for our country. I look forward to meeting Pope Leo XIV. It will be a very meaningful moment!"

Vice President JD Vance, who is a convert to Catholicism, also congratulated the new pontiff in a post on X.

"I'm sure millions of American Catholics and other Christians will pray for his successful work leading the Church," the vice president said. "May God bless him!"

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who is Catholic, also shared congratulatory remarks: "May God grant him wisdom, courage, and grace as he carries out his sacred ministry."

Former President Joe Biden, who was the second Catholic president to serve in the White House, also celebrated the news in a post on X in a joint state-

ment with his wife.

"Habemus papam — May God bless Pope Leo XIV of Illinois," the former president said. "Jill and I congratulate him and wish him success."

Chicago officials beam with hometown pride

Former president Barack Obama, who spent much of his adult life living in Chicago, issued a statement with his wife, Michelle, congratulating "a fellow Chicagoan, His Holiness Pope Leo XIV."

"This is a historic day for the United States, and we will pray for him as he begins the sacred work of leading the Catholic Church and setting an example for so many, regardless of faith," Obama said.

Pritzker, who has served as the Illinois governor since 2019, referred to "the first American leading the Catholic Church" as a "historic moment" in a post on X.

"Hailing from Chicago, Pope

Leo XIV ushers in a new chapter that I join those in our state welcoming in at a time when we need compassion, unity, and peace," the governor said.

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson expressed joy over the news in a post on X and has already encouraged a papal visit back to his hometown.

"Everything dope, including the pope, comes from Chicago!" the mayor said. "Congratulations to the first American Pope Leo XIV! We hope to welcome you back home soon."

In his first address, Pope Leo XIV urged people to build bridges through dialogue and encounter to work toward unity and peace.

The Holy Father expressed his desire to "walk together ... as a united Church, always searching for peace, justice, and trying to always work as men and women faithful to Jesus Christ, without fear to proclaim the Gospel, to be missionaries."

Catholic scientists looks at origins, miracles

By Jonah McKeown
Catholic News Agency

The 2025 Conference of the Society of Catholic Scientists (SCS) will take place June 6-8 at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., with several talks set to address the origins of the human race from scientific, theological, and philosophical perspectives.

Stephen Barr, a physicist at the University of Delaware and founder of the group, told CNA he expects this year's convention to attract approximately 150 attendees, including a significant number of young participants, mainly graduate students. The SCS has grown to over 2,000 members worldwide since its founding in 2016, with its first annual conference taking place in 2017.

Key topics this year

include studies on the human mind, free will, and the relationship between neuroscience and philosophical views on human nature. In addition, three separate talks on human origins will explore the Catholic Church's views on evolution.

On the society's website, the SCS describes itself as an answer to the call of St. John Paul II that "members of the Church who are active scientists" be of service to those who are attempting to "integrate the worlds of science and religion in their own intellectual and spiritual lives."

He said one of the main goals of the SCS annual conference is to be a place where Catholic scientists meet one another and have spiritual and intellectual fellowship.

"[W]hat we want to do

is break that vicious cycle and show the world and each other that there are a lot of religious scientists ... There are a lot of Catholic scientists out there," Barr said.

"I think our organization will help younger Catholics in science see that ... they're part of a very large community" and will help them to "overcome their sense of isolation [and] make them more confident."

Barr previously told CNA that despite the large numbers of scientists who are religious, many of them likely feel they cannot share their faith openly in their workplaces. Despite the Church's long-standing support of science, Barr said he still encounters the misconception that most scientists are atheists.

"[R]eligious scientists tend to be a little quiet-

er and maybe more cautious because they're playing it safe ... You keep your head down a little bit. Why invite trouble?" he said.

Last year's conference, held at Mundelein Seminary northwest of Chicago, focused heavily on artificial intelligence. Barr said this year's event will feature a variety of topics rather than focusing on just one. While most of the speakers are highly trained scientists, "fully a third of the talks" will be given by theologians or philosophers, Barr noted.

Philosopher and Dominican Father Anselm Ramelow will discuss "Free Will, Aquinas, and the Brain," addressing claims from neuroscience suggesting humans might not have free will and are merely "machines."

Renowned Harvard

mathematician Martin Nowak will present a talk on "Does Mathematics Lead to God?" — the first time an SCS conference has featured a talk specifically on mathematics, Barr said. And a cosmologist from Arizona State University, Rogier Windhorst, will discuss the James Webb Space Telescope and what it has discovered since it launched in late 2021.

The conference will also feature an after-dinner talk by Ross Douhat from the New York Times, a Catholic convert who will discuss his new book "Believe: Why Everyone Should Be Religious," which references scientific evidence through a religious worldview.

The 2025 conference is open to both SCS members and nonmembers and will be livestreamed for free.

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

BLACK FLY 5K RUN, WALK, ROLL OR STROLL

Saranac Lake - It's time to run, walk, roll, or stroll your way through the 2025 Black Fly 5K while supporting the tuition assistance program at St. Bernard's School!

Date: June 7

Time: Check in begins at 12 p.m., race begins at 1 p.m.

Place: Dewey Mountain Recreation Center

Cost: Adult, \$27.50; Student \$22.20; Family Discount: Families of four or more receive a \$10 discount with our special Family Rate during registration. Registration Bonus: Participants will receive a t-shirt made by Stacked Graphics (register early to ensure your size is available!), a tin of Bye Bye Blackfly all-natural insect repellent, and a free ice cream cone certificate from Teddy's Ice Cream in Bloomingdale!

Features: Whether you're a competitive runner chasing a personal best or a family looking for a fun afternoon outdoors, everyone is welcome. We're excited to offer a 1K Student Fun Run — one scenic loop on the trails, perfect for younger participants who want to join the excitement without the full 5K distance!

Contact: Sign-Up: <https://runsignup.com/Race/NY/SaranacLake/StBsBlackFly5K>

CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

THE RESCUE PROJECT

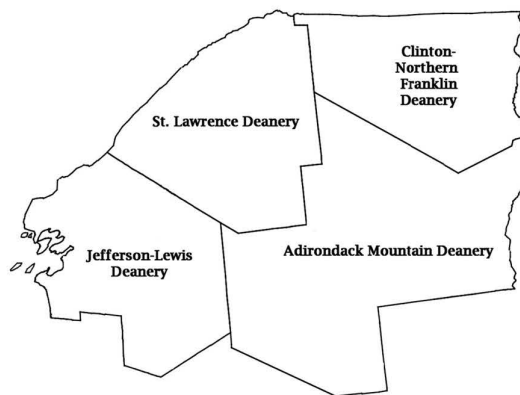
Brushton - Have you ever wondered Why there is something rather than nothing? Why is the world so obviously messed up? What if anything has God done about it? And how should I respond? Join us to discover how AWESOME the Good News that is the Gospel really is!

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.



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.

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

SOAKING PRAYER SESSIONS

Ellenburg Center - Soaking Prayers Sessions to be held every third Thursday of the month.

Date: May 15, June 19, July 17, Aug. 21, Sept. 18 and Oct. 16

Time: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Place: Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer

Features: Sessions are offered by Eve McGill, Living Waters Ministry. Soaking Prayer is surrendering yourself to the Holy Spirit in a relaxed atmosphere and being immersed in the Holy Spirit. A short introduction is given about the flow of the session followed by a 30-minute praise and worship segment to invoke the Holy Spirit. The remainder

of the time is spent listening to the direction of the Holy Spirit through Scripture readings and being open to receive healing at any level: emotional, psychological, physical, spiritual, and generational. Includes praise and worship, soaking prayer, witness/group sharing, lunch (bring your own bagged lunch), and recitation of the Rosary.

Contact: evemcgill16@charter.net or call 518-645-2648

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

FIRST FRIDAY

Champlain - St. Mary's to have

Mass, Exposition and Benediction every first Friday of the month.

Date: June 6

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

CONCERT

Peru - Mission of Hope Fund-raising Concert featuring Towne Meeting.

Date: June 8

Time: 7 p.m. to 9

Place: St. Augustine's Church

Features: Admission by Donation. Towne Meeting is known for their powerful vocal harmonies and engaging performances. Oriented in folk, their music branches into many other genres, from Americana to acoustic rock. All proceeds benefit North Country Mission of Hope.

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

DRIVE THRU DINNER

Lyons Falls - St. John's church to have their next drive thru dinner.

Date: May 20

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$12

Menu: Spaghetti with sausage and meatballs, tossed salad, Italian bread, and dessert.

Features: We are going to work with our local meat market in Port Leyden for the meat for this dinner. That being Hartley's Meat Market. Let's support our local church and our new business!

Contact: Remember, deliveries are available. To reserve your dinner, call 315-348-8945 or 315-348-8577 as soon as possible.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

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

Date: May 22

Time: 4 p.m. to 7

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

Cost: Adult, \$12; Child, \$8

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

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

RUMMAGE SALE

Evans Mills - St. Mary's is holding their annual Rummage Sale.

Date: May 23 and 24

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

Place: Parish Center

Contact: 315-629-4678 or evansmillssec@rcdony.org

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: June 1

Time: Following 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

Contact: 315-348-6260

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

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

Date: June 8

Time: 8 a.m. to noon

Place: St. James Community Room

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

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

Contact: For more information call 315-493-3224

ST. LAWRENCE

ACIES

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

Date: June 1

Time: After the 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Mary's Cathedral

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

Around the diocese

DIOCESAN EVENTS

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

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.

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



Towne Meeting will perform a concert to raise funds for North Country Mission of Hope at St. Augustine's Church in Peru on June 8 at 7 p.m. Oriented in folk, Towne Meeting's music branches into many other genres, from Americana to acoustic rock. All proceeds benefit North Country Mission of Hope.

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://LGWsy.eventbrite.com>. If you have any questions, please direct them to Erin Miller at emiller@syrodio.org or 315-472-6754 opt. 1 or Steve Tartaglia at 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. Michelet 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. The Ordination Mass program will be available at the same link shortly before the Liturgy.

ORGAN RECITAL & PILGRIMAGE

Ogdensburg – Make your pilgrimage to St. Mary's Cathedral and hear some wonderful music from Dr. Michal Szostak, International Concert Organist, Improviser, and Researcher.

Date: May 22

Time: 7 p.m.

Features: Dr. Szostak will improvise on pieces by Bach, Buxtehude, Beethoven, Strauss, and Lefebure-Wély while incorporating requests from the audience of hymns that provide a sense of hope. This concert is free and open to the public.

Contact: For more information call Christine Bookman at 315-393-3930 or ogdensburgmusic@rcdony.org

rcdony.org

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 cmminer@rcdony.org or register online: 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.

CAMP GUGGENHEIM

Saranac Lake – Camp Guggenheim registration is now open.

Dates: Session 1 - (11-14 yrs old) - July 6 to July 11; Session 2 - (12-15 yrs old) - July 13 to July 18; Session 3 - (12-15 yrs old) - July 20 to July 25; Session 4 - (12-15 yrs old) - July 27 to Aug. 1; Session 5 - (16-18 yrs old) - Aug. 3 to Aug. 8

Cost: \$425, scholarships are available

Features: Don't miss this opportunity to grow in your faith while enjoying a full camp experience in beautiful Saranac Lake!

Contact: To register go to: www.rcdony.org/youth/camp. To inquire about financial aid please email Jeannie Grizzuto at jgrizzuto@rcdony.org

FAMILY GUGGENHEIM

Saranac Lake – Registration for Family Guggenheim is now open.

Date: Session 1: Aug. 14-17; Session 2: Aug. 21-24; Session 3: Oct. 10-12

Features: Family Guggenheim welcomes families to come enjoy a special weekend in the beauty of the Adirondacks. Expect fun family workshops and activities that will have you working and laughing together. Take time for great outdoor activities like paddle boat rides, beach volleyball, and hiking. You are never too young or too old to enjoy being family at Camp Guggenheim!

Contact: Registration is open now at <https://www.rcdony.org/fg>. Financial assistance is available. For more information, contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or startaglia@rcdony.org.



SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

When we talk about love

If you're looking for something to do, search the word "love" on Google, iTunes and whatever website site you prefer.

For example, in works of Shakespeare, the word "love" appears 2,146 times while "hate" is found less than 200 times. Magazine stories and bookstore sections are devoted to love, either actual, romanticized, or fantasized. Of

course, on occasion the word is used to express the relationship of one person with another, hoping that the other responds in a reciprocal manner.

In today's Gospel Jesus speaks of love. "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Is Jesus telling his disciples that the new commandment is one of love? After all, love had been around a long time before Jesus. No, loving

is not new; loving as did Jesus is new. Jesus' manner of loving was different, so different that we have never fully understood its depth, nor have we been able to implement the fullness of its reality.

We are deluged with the word love that means whatever the writer, speaker, singer, playwright or ordinary Joe wants

the word to mean. A long-ago popular song said: "Love is a many splendored thing" - note carefully, a thing. Others call it an emotion, a feeling, an understanding or even a frame of mind. At the end of the day, who can know what love means?

So, the two basic questions are: how do we love? How does Jesus love? Let me give an example.

In "Beauty and the Beast, a curse had turned the handsome prince into an ugly monster, a beast shunned by all. A kiss, an act of love from a princess, restores his

May 18

Fifth Sunday of Easter

READINGS

Acts 14:21-27

Revelation 1:1-5a

John 13:31-33a, 34-35

beauty. While not as romantic, the interaction between Jesus and humanity is very similar. God created mankind to be beautiful and handsome. In time, with Adam's sin, original sin, we became sinners, incapable of true beauty. Only through Jesus' act of love, his crucifixion, could humanity become beautiful, free from sin once again.

Jesus' love for others endures. No matter what the person does, Jesus still loves. On the other hand, our love can be so very temporary. I just love this song; I love meatloaf; I love my social club; and the list can go on and on. But the favorite, most loved tune, can easily be replaced with another. Those kinds of love can wane over time.

Jesus' love for others meant that he gave

of himself. The long hours of preaching, the one more miracle even though he was exhausted, the visit to the sinner's home, self-giving that ends up in his own death, the greatest self-giving of all.

Look into the lives of others you know or, indeed, into your own life. In how many of your relationships are you looking for "what am I going to get out of this?" "What's in it for me?" "How am I going to profit?" "What is the payback?" Jesus never asked such questions. He simply gave of himself so that others might enjoy life.

Who deserves our love? Mother Theresa gives a quick and easily understood answer. "Who deserves our love? The ones who don't deserve our love."

Jesus' love for each person he met transformed that person. His love of humanity transformed humanity. Jesus is telling us in today's Gospel that our love for others can transform them as well as transform us.

The kind of love exercised by Jesus was a love that meant that he gave of himself, a love that transformed humanity in a way that no one else could have done.

It is said that the dis-

covery of fire transformed the world. Jesus is telling us that loving as he loved us will likewise transform the world.

The fact that some people are annoying, repulsive, dumb or whatever adjective we would like to use seems to keep us from loving them. But that is where Christian love kicks in. Jesus challenges us to love even when not convenient or comfortable. Saint Mother Theresa tells us how to do it: "God does not want our deeds; God wants the love that prompts them." Mother Theresa also states that this kind of love does not mean doing great things, but only little things with great love.

The Gospel message is a transforming one, meant to transform us and those we love. The all-encompass challenge asks us to become the best versions of ourselves by loving others with small deeds done with great love.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a French Jesuit, said it this way: "Some day, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides, and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for the second time in the history of the world, man will discover fire."



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

The Diocese of Ogdensburg

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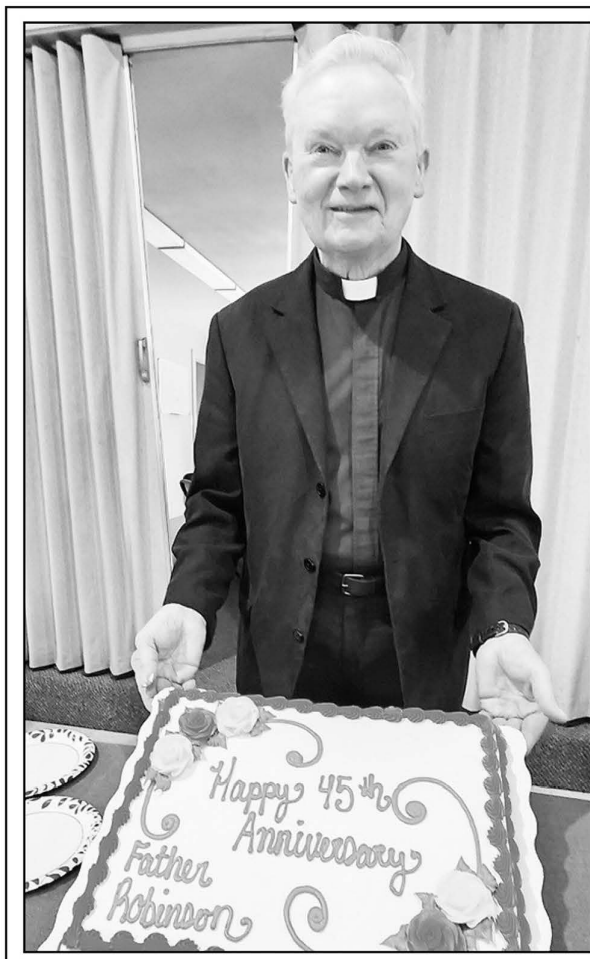
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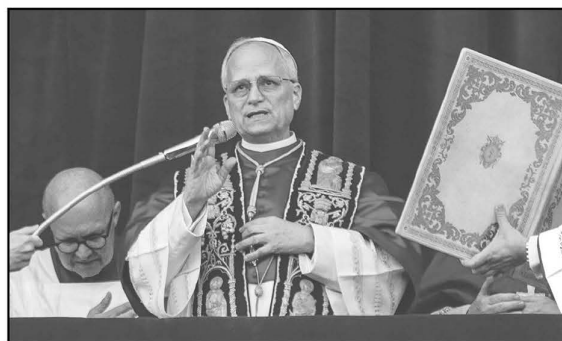
Father Donald Robinson, pastor at St. Andrew's Church in Sackets Harbor and the Catholic Community of Brownville and Dexter, was honored with flowers and cake to mark his 45th ordination anniversary.



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

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

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



TPMS welcomes Pope Leo XIV

Statement from National Director of The Pontifical Mission Societies USA, Monsignor Roger J. Landry, on the Election of Pope Leo XIV- "The Pontifical Mission Societies in the USA rejoices in the historic election of the first pontiff from the United States of America, Leo XIV, Chicago native Robert Cardinal Prevost, a missionary at heart who served for many years as a priest and bishop bringing Christ and his Gospel to the people in rural Peru. Together with all of our fellow American Catholics and citizens, and with all those served in the 1,124 missionary dioceses and territories across the world, we commit ourselves to praying for him and his intentions as he continues the work of Peter as a fisher of men throughout the globe."

The Pontifical Mission Societies of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, INC. Would also like to give Pope Leo XIV our wholehearted welcome. We are grateful for his missionary heart, especially his time spent in Peru, a country that has ties to our own diocese through our former mission parish in Mollendo. Let us all pray for Pope Leo XIV's intentions and health and continue our support for the Pope's Missions.

OBITUARIES

Brushton – Ernest E. Russell Jr., 75; Mass of Christian Burial May 9, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Carthage – Michael John F. Hall, 68; Mass of Christian Burial May 13, 2025 at St. James Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery, Evans Mills.

Fort Covington – Mary C. (Latulipe) Miller, 95; Mass of Christian Burial May 12, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in Elmwood Cemetery.

Hogansburg – Ricky C. Cook, 65; Mass of Christian Burial May 9, 2025 at St. Regis Church.

Malone – Chester L. Lawrence, 82; Graveside Services May 10, 2025 at Mound Hill Cemetery, Nicholville.

Mooers Forks – Eugene E. Bushey, 78; Mass of Christian Burial May 8, 2025 at St. Ann's Church.

Ogdensburg – Edna Mae (Redmond) Ashley, 93; Mass of Christian Burial May 8, 2025 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Lori Lee (Provost) Martioski, 47; Mass of Christian Burial May 15, 2025 at

St. Peter's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Potsdam – Elizabeth (Gallup) Fogarty, 98; Mass of Christian Burial May 27, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Ticonderoga – Richard F. Edson, 86; Mass of Christian Burial May 14, 2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Tupper Lake – Richard J. Murphy, 92; Mass of Christian Burial May 9, 2025 at St. Alphonsus Church; burial in St. Alphonsus Cemetery.

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Bishop, New York Conference

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

in giving thanks to God for the election of Pope Leo XIV, formerly Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost," the Conference said in a statement. "As the first American pope, Pope Leo's election by the College of Cardinals is of course a moment of deep national pride for U.S. Catholics. More importantly, Pope Leo brings a continuity with the ministry of Pope Francis, while at the same time gifting the Church with his own unique perspective as a son of Chicago, an Augustinian priest and provincial of that order, a missionary and bishop in Peru, and a high-ranking Vatican official as prefect for the Dicastery of Bishops. With his choice of the name Leo, he clearly signals a deep commitment to Catholic social teaching and support for working men and women."

The Catholic Conference also took note of the Holy Father's first words to the world after election.

"In emerging on the balcony at St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Leo's first words were 'Peace be with you,' which he noted were the Risen Christ's first words in the Gospel to his Apostles," the Conference statement said. "He spoke of the need for peace in our world, and we pray that his ministry serves as an instrument of that peace. As Americans, we also pray that his election serves as a much-needed moment of evangelization and renewal for the Church in our cherished homeland."

NEW ASSOCIATES OF THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH



The Sisters of St. Joseph recently celebrated the entrance of nine Candidates as Associates of the Sisters of St. Joseph. The ceremony was celebrated with prayer and followed by a reception at St. Anthony's Church, Watertown. These associates will continue to carry forward the charism and mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph through the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy "to circle the city" with love and zeal for the dear neighbor. (Above) Associates of the Sisters of St. Joseph with the new associates. (Right) Deacon Dan LeRoy signs his commitment as an associate. (Below) New members of the associates, pictured with Director Sister Mary Eamon Lyng, SSJ, at far left, and Assistant Director Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ, at far right, include, from left, Starr Burke, Plattsburgh; Lorraine Carney, Carol Warner, Mountains and Lakes Region; and Angelina LeRoy, Deacon Daniel LeRoy, Laura Mallen, William LaSage, Eva LaSage, Christine Moreton, Watertown Region. Cheri Furnace was absent and is missing from the photo.

