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The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 80 Number 10

# NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

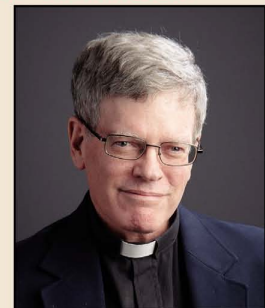
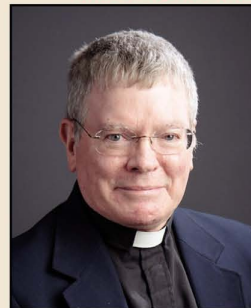
MAY 28, 2025

## A NEW HOME FOR ST. CECILIA

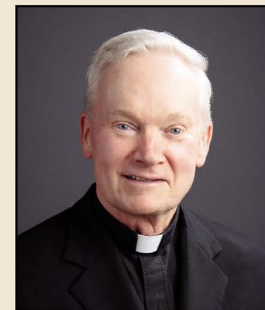


On Palm Sunday, Father Robert Decker blessed a stained-glass window of St. Cecilia at St. Cecilia's Church in Adams! The window was gifted to St. Cecilia's Church by the Sisters of St. Joseph. It was previously hung at as an exterior window at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse. St. Cecilia's Church Building & Grounds Committee oversaw the professional restorations and installation. Pictured after the dedication are, front row, from left, Sister Carol Kraegar, Sister Annunciata Collins, Sister Jennifer Votraw, back row, Deacon Larry Ambeau, Sister Gregory Munger, Sister Shirley Anne Brown, mother superior, Sister Helen Herman, Sister Mary Anne Clark and Father Robert Decker.

## THREE RETIREMENTS AMONG ASSIGNMENT CHANGES



The retirement of three priests, (top left) Father Douglas A. Decker, (top right) Father Robert L. Decker, and (bottom right) Father Donald A. Robinson, VF, were among 14 priest assignment changes recently announced by Bishop Terry R. LaValley. The moves will be effective July 2.



FULL STORY, PAGE 3

## Pope Leo appeals for end to fighting in Gaza

By Darcy Fargo  
Editor

Pope Leo XIV in the first general audience of his pontificate on May 21 appealed for an end to hostilities in Gaza and for the entrance of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip.

Speaking before tens of thousands in St. Peter's Square, the new pope ended his remarks by calling the situation in the Gaza Strip "increasingly worrying and painful."

"I renew my heartfelt appeal to allow the entry of decent humanitarian aid and to end the hostilities whose heartbreaking price is paid by

children, the elderly, and the sick," he added.

The pope's appeal comes as the numbers of dead and injured in the Gaza Strip continue to rise under Israel's attacks. According to reports, while some humanitarian aid has been allowed to enter Gaza, it has not yet been released for distribution.

One month to the day since Francis' death, Pope Leo also recalled with gratitude the "beloved Pope Francis, who just a month ago returned to the house of the Father."

Leo closely followed his written remarks, adding only the comment on Gaza during the audience.

The inaugural catechesis of the first U.S.-born pope picked up the theme begun by Francis for the 2025 Jubilee Year: "Jesus Christ Our Hope."

Reflecting on the parable of the sower, Leo noted the unusual behavior of the sower in the story, who "does not care where the seed falls. He throws the seeds even where it is unlikely they will bear fruit: on the path, on the rocks, among the thorns."

"The way in which this 'wasteful' sower throws the seed is an image of the way God loves us," he said, echoing a part of his first message from the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica after his election on

May 8, that God "loves us all unconditionally."

"First and foremost in this parable Jesus tells us that God throws the seed of his word on all kinds of soil, that is, in any situation of ours," Leo underlined.

He continued: "God is confident and hopes that sooner or later the seed will blossom. This is how he loves us: He does not wait for us to become the best soil, but he always generously gives us his word. Perhaps by seeing that he trusts us, the desire to be better soil will be kindled in us. This is hope, founded on the rock of God's generosity and mercy."

NORTH  
COUNTRY  
CATHOLICPO Box 326  
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# I'm not that type

"I knew the individual words they were saying, but I didn't know what they meant when used in those combinations," I told my friend. "I had no idea what they were talking about. I felt like I didn't belong in the discussion. I was in a room full of Catholics who are like fine wine - people who are mature and developed in their faith - while I sat in my corner feeling like a Capri Sun juice pouch."

It happens to me far more frequently than I'd like. If it's not a Catho-

lic term that I don't know but everyone else does, it's a prayer, a song, or the name and/or content of a book, document or encyclical. I'll have no idea what it is, what it means, or why and how everyone else seems to know about it.

**Darcy L. Fargo**

"I am surrounded by people who are smarter about this stuff than me and who are holier than me, and I include you in that," I told my friend. "I know

it's not a competition, but I can't help but feel like I'll always be miles behind everyone else. I feel like I'll

never be as Catholic as the people around me."

My friend's response left me choking on my words.

"I feel that way about you," she said.

We went on to talk about the holiness we see in one another. I told my friend that she radiates Christ's peace in her prayerful, calm and even temperament. I told her I aspire to trust God the way she does. She told me I reflect the joy of the Gospel. She told me she's inspired by my boldness and humor and the way I see Jesus in everyday happenings.

I guess God knew what He was doing making us each different. I'm grate-

ful to God for those people in my life who know so much about Jesus and our Catholic faith. They've helped me grow in knowledge, and they inspire me to continue learning. But if God wanted my knowledge to be like theirs, it would be. Instead, God gave me different experiences, knowledge and gifts. He uses those, too.

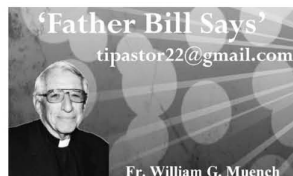
If we're doing our best to go where God is calling us and do what He's asking of us, then we're probably the kind of Catholics He wants us to be even if we're not the kind of Catholics we want us to be.

Juice pouches aren't so bad.

## Pentecost continues today

The Acts of the Apostles tells us much about the first Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came down on the apostles in wind and fire - in power - to transform those first apostles of Jesus. This was an important moment in the history of our Church. We call this the birthday of the Church. Those apostles were still gathered in the Upper Room, and the doors were locked. We are told the apostles were anxious. They wondered if they would face the same persecution as Jesus. They were now alone. Jesus had ascended to Heaven. They were dreadfully confused and didn't know what they were to do. Then the Holy Spirit came to show them the way, just as Jesus had promised.

On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came with power, challenging those apostles to go into the streets. The Holy Spirit prepared them to bring the story of Jesus to all who would listen. They must be ready to preach all that Jesus had taught them. They

**Fr. William G. Muench**

would face arrest, even some persecution. The Holy Spirit now inspired them to be missionaries; they knew their mission was to change the world for Jesus.

The Holy Spirit still continues to come to us today and still challenges you and me to be active in this Catholic Church. All that happened so many years ago continues to happen for the Catholic Church through the power of the Holy Spirit.

I am thinking right now of the many young people who are receiving the Holy Spirit through the sacrament of confirmation during this time of Pentecost. Bishops everywhere are going to their parishes to challenge young people through the power of the Holy Spirit; they are called to make their lives witnesses to

the Lord Jesus, demonstrating the power of a life lived in peace and non-violence, a life of mercy, of forgiveness of service to others. They're called to be ready always to make their world a better place.

I am also thinking of the action of the Holy Spirit, who recently called together the cardinals of the Catholic Church to elect a new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, to lead our worldwide Church upon the death of our beloved Pope Francis. In another Pentecost this conclave transformed our Church into a profoundly new way. And these cardinals chose a pope - one from our own country - to lead Catholics everywhere. We, Americans, were blessed and challenged to be worthy; the new Pope, Pope Leo XIV is one of us.

The Holy Spirit has asked for a gift from us, for the Church Universal. We must pray in a special way, a new way, for this American pope. We want Pope Leo to inspire the Catholic Church, the worldwide Catholic

Church, and to demonstrate the American Catholic faith that is alive and strong.

Also, I see the Holy Spirit active today in Catholic diocese throughout this world in the ordination of many new priests at this time of Pentecost. I continue learn of the many priesthood ordinations - new priests ready to live out their vocation as a priest of the Lord Jesus. These priests are ready with the power of the Holy Spirit to bring the Lord's peace and joy to all those they can reach.

I know the Holy Spirit continues to reach so many others - lay men and women. The Holy Spirit helps them recognize the power of their vocations and calls them to bring the love of Jesus to their world through the Catholic Church. Now is the time for us all to pray to the Holy Spirit to transform our Catholic Church and lead us all to make our Church a loving family, transforming the people of God into a people of peace and love.



# Assignments to change for 14 priests

After prayerful consideration and consultation with the Priest Personnel Committee on April 24 & May 14, Bishop Terry R. LaValley announces the following assignment changes effective July 2.

• **Father Douglas A. Decker**, pastor of the Catholic Community of St. Peter and St. Mary and St. Hedwig in Lowville, Glenfield and Houseville, retires.

• **Father Robert L. Decker**, pastor of St. Cecilia's Church in Adams and Queen of Heaven Church in Henderson, retires.

• **Father Donald A. Robinson, VF**, pastor of The Roman Catholic Community of Brownville and Dexter and St. Andrew's Church in Sackets Harbor, retires. He will continue serving as dean of the Jefferson-Lewis Deanery.

• **Father Sony G. Pulickal**, pastor of St. James Major Church in Lake Pleasant and St. Ann's Church in Wells, becomes pastor of the Catholic Community of St. Peter and St. Mary and St. Hedwig in Lowville, Glenfield and Houseville.

• **Father James V. Teti**, pastor of St. Alphonsus-Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Tupper Lake, St. Henry's Church in Long Lake, and St. Therese Church in Newcomb, becomes pastor of St. James Major Church in Lake Pleasant and St. Ann's Church in Wells.

• **Father Albert J. Hauser**, pastor of the Catholic Community of Moriah in Port Henry and Mineville and Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Crown Point, becomes senior parochial vicar of The Roman Catholic Community of Brownville and Dexter, St. Andrew's Church in Sackets Harbor, St. Cecilia's Church in Adams, and Queen of Heaven



**Father Douglas A. Decker**



**Father Robert A. Decker**



**Father Donald A. Robinson, VF**



**Father Sony G. Pulickal**



**Father James V. Teti**



**Father Albert J. Hauser**



**Father Joseph W. Giroux**



**Father Severinus Torwoe**



**Father Bryan D. Stitt**



**Father Shane M. Lynch**



**Father Matthew S. Conger**



**Father Jude Nnadibuagha**

Church in Henderson.

• **Father Joseph W. Giroux**, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Potsdam and St. Patrick's Church in Colton, becomes pastor of the Catholic Community of Moriah in Port Henry and Mineville and Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Crown Point.

• **Father Severinus Torwoe**, administrator of Holy Angels Church in Altona and St. Ann's Church in Mooers Forks, becomes pastor of St. Al-

phonsus-Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Tupper Lake, St. Henry's Church in Long Lake, and St. Therese Church in Newcomb.

• **Father Bryan D. Stitt**, pastor of The Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary's in Canton, will assume additional duties as pastor of St. Mary's Church in Potsdam and St. Patrick's Church in Colton.

• **Father Shane M.**  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



**Father Jose John Kanyiankunnel**



**Father Scott A. Belina**

# Assignment changes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

**Lynch**, currently studying Canon Law, will become pastor of The Roman Catholic Community of Brownville and Dexter, St. Andrew's Church in Sackets Harbor, St. Cecilia's Church in Adams, and Queen of Heaven Church in Henderson.

• **Father Matthew S. Conger**, parochial vicar of Blessed Sacrament Parish in Watertown, will become parochial vicar of St. André Bessette Parish in Malone. He will remain diocesan associate director of Vocations.

• **Father Jude Nnadibuagha**, parochial vicar of Holy Cross Parish in Plattsburgh, will become parochial vicar of Blessed Sacrament Parish in Watertown.

• **Father Jose John Kanyiankunnel**, HGN, parochial vicar at St. André Bessette Parish in Malone, will become parochial vicar of Holy Cross Parish in Plattsburgh.

• **Father Scott A. Belina**, parochial vicar in The Roman Catholic Community of Brownville and Dexter, St. Andrew's Church in Sackets Harbor, St. Cecilia's Church in Adams, and Queen of Heaven Church in Henderson, will become parochial vicar of St. Mary's Church in Potsdam, St. Patrick's

Church in Colton and The Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary's in Canton.

**FATHER DOUGLAS A. DECKER**

Father Decker has served as pastor of pastor of The Catholic Community of St. Peter and St. Mary and St. Hedwig in Lowville, Glenfield and Houseville since 2022.

Prior to that assignment, he served as pastor of St. Alphonsus-Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Tupper Lake for 12 years, as pastor of St. Cecilia's Church in Adams from 1997-2010 and as a chaplain in the United States Air Force from 1988 to 1996.

Originally from Hammond, Father Decker, 74, was ordained a priest May 6, 1978, by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana. He served as assistant pastor at St. Patrick's in Watertown, St. Alexander's in Morristown, Notre Dame in Ogdensburg, St. Peter's in Lowville, and St. John's in Plattsburgh and Holy Family in Watertown before he entered the Air Force in 1986.

His twin brother is also a priest of the diocese, and he is also retiring.

**FATHER ROBERT L. DECKER**

After growing up in Hammond, Father Decker, 74, first attended Os-

wego State University, where he earned a degree in elementary education. Working as a teacher, he earned a master's degree in education from Potsdam State University.

He entered seminary at Wadhams Hall and also attended Christ the King seminary. He was ordained May 7, 1983, at St. Mary's Cathedral by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana.

Father Decker, pastor of St. Cecilia's Church in Adams and Queen of Heaven Church in Henderson, began his priesthood serving as a parochial vicar at Holy Family Church in Watertown, St. Mary's in Clayton, St. John the Evangelist in LaFargeville, Sacred Heart in Massena, and St. Agnes in Lake Placid before being named pastor at St. Therese Church Newcomb and St. Henry's in Long Lake in January 1995.

He has also served as pastor at St. Francis Solanus Church in Harrisville with St. Henry's Oratory in Natural Bridge; St. Hubert's Church in Star Lake with St. Michael's Oratory in Fine and St. Anthony of Padua Oratory in Newton Falls; St. Paul's Church in Black River and St. Rita's Church in Deferiet.

From 1998 to 2003, Father Decker served as a missionary for the Ogdensburg Peruvian Apostolate in Mollendo, Peru.

**FATHER DONALD A. ROBINSON**

Originally from Watertown, Father Robinson, 74, completed a bachelor's degree in social sciences and elementary education at SUNY Oswego and was completing a master's degree in reading education when he began studies for the priesthood.

He attended both Wadhams Hall and Christ the King (Diocese of Buffalo) seminaries. He was ordained in St. Mary's Ca-

thedral on May 30, 1980, by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana.

After beginning his priesthood with a temporary assignment as parochial vicar at St. Peter's Church in Lowville, Father Robinson served as a parochial vicar at Notre Dame Church in Malone.

Father Robinson then served as an instructor at Immaculate Heart Central in Watertown while serving as parochial vicar at St. Anthony's Church in Watertown. He also served on the faculty at Wadhams Hall and as diocesan Vocations director, director of seminarians.

In 1998, he was named pastor of St. Mary's Church in Champlain, a role he held until 2001, when he became pastor of St. Anthony's Church in Watertown. In 2009, he was given additional duties as administrator of St. Patrick's Church in Watertown. He was later named pastor of that church, as well.

From 2015-21, Father Robinson served as pastor at St. James Minor Church in Carthage and St. Mary's Church in Copenhagen.

**FATHER SONY G. PULICKAL**

A native of Kerpla, India, Father Pulickal, 68, completed his priestly studies in Banalore, India.

He was ordained April 14, 1983, and he was named was parochial vicar of St. Mary's Metropolitan Church in Changanacherry, Kerala.

In 1984, after studying Italian, he became parochial vicar of St. Ambrose Church in Segrate, Milan, Italy, and later served as parochial vicar of Immaculate Heart of Mary Basilica, Rome, Italy.

He returned to India for one year, when he was in charge of philosophy students, and then from

1991 to 1994, in charge of Theology Study House in Shilong, India.

Father Pulickal came to the United States in 1996 and has served the Diocese of Ogdensburg as parochial vicar at Sacred Heart Church in Massena, St. Peter's Church, Lowville, and also served at St. Augustine's Church, Peru.

In 2001, he was named pastor in West Leyden and Fish Creek. On July 23, 2003, Father Pulickal was incardinated into the Diocese of Ogdensburg. In 2004, he became pastor in Indian Lake and Blue Mountain Lake. In 2011, he was named pastor of St. Ann's Church in Wells and St. James Major Church in Lake Pleasant, a role he has held since.

**FATHER JAMES V. TETI**

A priest of the Archdiocese of Newark in New Jersey, Father Teti was ordained May 24, 1997, in that archdiocese. He is serving in the Diocese of Ogdensburg until 2028.

Prior to arriving in the Diocese of Ogdensburg, Father Teti, 54, served as parochial vicar of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Ridgefield Park, New Jersey for several months after ordination before relocating to Rome to study at the North American College.

After completing his studies in Rome, Father Teti served as parochial vicar of Our Lady of the Lake Parish in Verona, New Jersey; as assistant director of Vocations for the Archdiocese of Newark; in residence at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart and as the archbishop's secretary; as parochial vicar of Our Lady of the Lake Parish and St. Teresa of Avila Parish in Summit, New Jersey; as director of the Permanent Diaconate for the Archdiocese of Newark; as pastor of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

## JOB OPENING

### Assistant Director of Education

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Ogdensburg is seeking an **Assistant Director of Education**. The position provides leadership in curriculum development for Catholic Schools and planning, development and implementation of parish faith formation programs. Applicants must be a practicing Catholic with experience as a school administrator. Applicants should have a master's degree in education or School Administration. Salary: \$54,894 – \$67,743.

Submit letter of interest, resume and three professional references to: Human Resources Office  
Diocese of Ogdensburg,  
P.O. Box 369, Ogdensburg, NY 13669  
or e-mail: ksnover@rcdony.org.  
Deadline for application is June 13, 2025.



MAY 25, 2025

# Priest assignments

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Annunciation Parish in Paramus, New Jersey; and as administrator of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Mountainside, New Jersey.

When he arrived in the diocese in 2022, Father Teti was named administrator of St. Henry's in Long Lake and St. Therese in Newcomb. He was later named pastor of those churches and St. Alphonsus-Holy Name Parish in Tupper Lake.

## FATHER ALBERT J. HAUSER

Father Albert J. Hauser, 71, has served in his current role since 2014.

A Rochester native, Father Hauser graduated from LeMoyne College in Syracuse and studied for the priesthood at Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora (Diocese of Buffalo).

He was ordained to the priesthood May 2, 1981, by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana.

Early in his priesthood, Father Hauser served as a parochial vicar at St. Patrick's in Watertown and Notre Dame in Ogdensburg. He also served as associate chancellor and bishop's secretary from 1983 until 1988, when he went to Rome for advanced studies in biblical theology.

He was a member of the faculty of Wadhams Hall Seminary College from 1990 to 2002 and served as vice-president at the time of the seminary's closing.

He served as associate pastor and pastor of St. Lawrence Church in Louisville from 1992 through 1995.

From 2002 to 2006, he was pastor of Our Lady of Victory in Plattsburgh and St. Mary's of the Lake in Cumberland Head. He also served as pastor in Morristown, Hammond and Rossie from 2002 to 2006 and again from

2010 to 2012.

Father Hauser also served the diocese as director of the Department of Worship and as dean of the Essex Deanery.

## FATHER JOSEPH W. GIROUX

A native of Plattsburgh, Father Giroux, 50, studied for the priesthood at Wadhams Hall and the Pontifical North American College in Rome Italy before his ordination Aug. 12, 2000, by Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito.

After his ordination, he continued studies in Rome, earning a Licentiate in Sacramental Theology from the Pontifical Athenaeum of St. Anselm.

Father Giroux has served as parochial vicar at Notre Dame Church, Malone; St. Bernard's, Saranac Lake; St. Peter's, Lowville; Sacred Heart, Massena; and St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg. While in Ogdensburg, he also served as part-time chaplain at the Ogdensburg Correctional Facility. He also served as the first director of the diocesan Program for the Ongoing Formation of Newly Ordained Priests.

In 2021, Father Giroux completed his studies in Canon Law at St. Paul's University, Ottawa. Also that year, he was named pastor of St. Mary's Church in Potsdam and St. Patrick's Church in Colton, a role he holds until this new assignment becomes effective.

## FATHER SEVERINUS TORWOE

Father Torwoe, 55, was born in Hlefi, Ghana. He received a bachelor's degree in education at University of Cape Coast, Ghana, in 2008. He then studied philosophy and theology at Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut, where he obtained a master's degree in theology in 2017.

In 2018, he received a

post master's certificate in theology from Holy Apostles.

He was ordained by Bishop Terry R. LaValley on Aug. 1, 2020, at St. Mary's Cathedral, Ogdensburg.

He served as parochial vicar of St. Peter's Parish in Massena immediately after his ordination. In 2023, he was named parochial vicar at the Catholic Community of St. Peter and St. Mary and St. Hedwig in Lowville.

In 2024, he was named administrator of St. Ann's Church in Mooers Forks and Holy Angels Church in Altona, a role he'll hold until he begins his new assignment.

## FATHER BRYAN D. STITT

Originally from Crown Point, Father Stitt, 47, has served as pastor of St. Mary's Church in Canton and diocesan director of Worship since 2017.

He studied for the priesthood at Wadhams Hall Seminary College and the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

Father Stitt was ordained July 19, 2003, at St. Mary's Cathedral by Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito and then returned to Rome to complete a licentiate in spiritual theology.

Early in his priesthood, Father Stitt served as parochial vicar at St. Mary's Church in Ticonderoga, St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake and at St. Peter's in Plattsburgh, St. Patrick's Church in Rouses Point and St. Mary's Church in Champlain.

He was assigned for a time as special parochial vicar at St. Mary's Cathedral, administrator of St. Mary's Church in Clayton, St. John the Evangelist Church in LaFargeville, St. Mary's Church in Fort Covington, St. Joseph's Church in Bombay, St. Mary's Church and St. Joseph's Church in Mas-

sena, and St. Patrick's Church in Colton with its missions of St. Paul's Church (Colton) and St. Michael's Church (Parishville).

From 2007-2010, he served as bishop's secretary. In 2010, Father Stitt became diocesan Vocations director.

## FATHER SHANE M. LYNCH

Father Shane Lynch has concluded his studies in canon law at St. Paul University in Ottawa.

A Watertown native, Father Lynch, 53, graduated from Wadhams Hall and later St. John's Seminary School of Theology in Boston.

Father Lynch also completed a spirituality year program sponsored by St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Allentown, Pennsylvania. He was ordained by Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito May 12, 2001.

Early in his priesthood,

Father Lynch served as parochial vicar at St. Bernard's Church in Saranac Lake and St. John in the Wilderness Church in Lake Clear, at Notre Dame in Malone, at the Malone Catholic Parishes and at Holy Family Church in Watertown. He was also a temporary administrator at St. Stephen's Church in Croghan.

Father Lynch was appointed to serve in Wells and Lake Pleasant in 2007, first as administrator and then as pastor. He later served as pastor of St. Bartholomew's in Old Forge, and St. Anthony of Padua Parish of Inlet and Raquette Lake, in St. James Church in Gouverneur, Sacred Heart Church in Edwards and St. Hubert's in Star Lake, St. Paul's in Black River and St. Mary's in Evans Mills, and most recently in Church of the Visitation in Norfolk, St. An-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST

## REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

— PRAYER SUGGESTION —

O Jesus, Eternal High Priest, live in (name a priest), act in him, speak in and through him. Think your thoughts in his mind, love through his heart. Give him your own dispositions and feelings. Teach, lead and guide him always. Correct, enlighten and expand his thoughts and behavior. Possess his soul; take over his entire personality and life.

Replace him with yourself. Incline him to constant adoration and thanksgiving; pray in and through him. Let him live in you and keep him in this intimate union always. O Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (...)

Amen.

JUNE

2025

DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG, NY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
BISHOP TERRY R. LAVALLEY	1 REV. MEDENEL ANGRAND	2 MSGR. ROBERT H. AUCOIN	3 REV. SCOTT A. BELINA	4 REV. CORNELLE EKILA	5 REV. BOYEYE, MSC	6 REV. TIMOTHY G. CANAAN	7 REV. LEAGON J. CARLIN	8 OUR PASTOR	9 REV. CHRISTOPHER C. CARRARA	10 REV. TOJO CHACKO, HGN	11 REV. DANIEL L. CHAPIN
12 POPE LEO XVI	13 REV. THEODORE A. CROSBY	14 REV. PEDRO EDGARDO DE LA ROSA	15 REV. DOUGLAS A. DECKER	16 REV. MARTIN E. CLINE	17 REV. DOUGLAS L. DECKER	18 REV. DAVID DELUCA, MSC	19 REV. GUY F. EDWARDS	20 DECEASED PRIESTS	21 REV. RICHARD D. DEMERS	22 REV. JOHN M. DEMO	23 REV. RAYMOND DIESBOURG, MSC
24 REV. ALFRED H. FISH	25 REV. FRANCIS J. FLYNN	26 MSGR. DENNIS J. DUPREY	27 REV. GUY F. EDWARDS	28 REV. GUY F. EDWARDS	29 REV. GUY F. EDWARDS	30 REV. GUY F. EDWARDS	31 REV. GUY F. EDWARDS				

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

www.nvgocation.net

## Environmental Stewardship

## A time to celebrate

Millions around the world celebrate Laudato Si Week from May 25 to 31. May also marks the tenth anniversary of this encyclical, subtitled "On Care for our Common Home." The first social encyclical was written by Pope Leo XIII on the rights of workers. Pope Francis' encyclical is the first written about the environment. It is addressed to Catholics and to everyone on the planet.

The anniversary year theme is *Rising Hope: Bringing the light of Laudato Si' to all for a brighter future together*. Youth in our diocese respond to God's call to take care of the earth and bring light and hope to our world.

Trees absorb pollutants, provide habitat for wildlife, prevent soil erosion, improve air quality and help mitigate impacts of climate change.

In Watertown, Immaculate Heart Junior and Senior High Faith Community Service Program and Interact Club joined Tree Watertown and Watertown's Noon Rotary to plant 45 trees last fall and again this spring. They planted 90 trees of varying species at Starbuck Elementary School, in the neighborhood around it and at Thompson Park. Faculty advisor was Patricia Minter Powell.

In Adams, St. Cecilia's Christian Formation students each received a red maple seedling to plant and nurture at home with their family, as a way to care for God's creation. DRE is Laura Mallon.

In Lowville, the parishes of St. Peter's, St. Mary's and St. Hedwig's religious education classes planted trees to reduce carbon footprint by cleaning the air. DRE is Sarah Neddo.

We will continue to share with you the projects of the students who participated in this year's Pope Francis Green Apple Recognition Program, co-sponsored by Ogdensburg and Syracuse Dioceses. Participating schools and religious education programs receive certificates signed by Bishop LaValley and Bishop Lucia, a plaque and a token of thanks for each student who participated.

## Priests assignment

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

drew's Church in Norwood and St. Patrick's Church in Brasher Falls.

**FATHER MATTHEW S. CONGER**

Originally from Ogdensburg, Father Conger, 33, attended St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Pennsylvania and Christ the King Seminary in the Diocese of Buffalo.

He was ordained at St. Mary's Cathedral, Ogdensburg, by Bishop Terry R. LaValley on May 29, 2021.

## Protecting God's Children

**The Diocese of Ogdensburg** has scheduled Protecting God's Children training sessions. This required training addresses child abuse, the methods and means by which abusers commit abuse, and the five steps to prevent abuse from occurring and stop it from continuing. Pre-registration is encouraged at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org). Upcoming sessions:

**June 5** – 9:15 a.m. – Holy Cross Parish, Plattsburgh

**June 25** – 5 p.m. – St. Peter's Parish, Massena

## 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](mailto:terriannyanulavich@yahoo.com); Phone: 518-569-0612; or Father Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy; [ccarrara@rcdony.org](mailto: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](http://www.ReportBishopAbuse.org)

His first assignment was as parochial vicar at Blessed Sacrament Parish, Watertown.

**Father Jude Nnadibuagha**

Born in Ideato North Local Government Area, Imo State, Nigeria, Father Jude Nnadibuagha, 41, was ordained by Bishop Terry R. LaValley on Aug. 1, 2020, at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Father Nnadibuagha obtained a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Dominican Institute of Philosophy and Theology in Samonda Ibadan, Nigeria in 2013 and a bachelor's degree in theology

## Bishop's Public Schedule

**May 28** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**May 29** – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**May 30** – 9:45 a.m. – Episcopal Council Meeting at Bishop's Residence followed by Lunch

**May 31** – 6:30 p.m. – Confirmation at The Catholic Community of Constable, Westville and Trout River along with the Catholic Community of Burke and Chateaugay and St. Mary's Church in Fort Covington

**June 1** – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

**June 2** – 10:30 a.m. – Pontifical Mission Society Board meeting at Bishop's Residence

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

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

6 p.m. – Confirmation at The Roman Catholic Community of St. Alexander and St. Joseph in Morrisville along with St. James Church in Cadyville and St. Augustine's Church in Peru

from Collegio Pontificio Teologico Internazionale in Rome, Italy in 2017.

His first assignment after ordination was as parochial vicar of the Catholic Community of St. Peter and St. Mary and St. Hedwig in Lowville, Glenfield and Houseville. In 2021, he began serving as parochial vicar at St. Mary's Cathedral Parish.

**FATHER JOSE JOHN KANYIANKUNNEL, HGN**

From Kerala State in India, Father Kanyiankunnel, 45, made his first profession with the Heralds of Good News in May of 2001. He made his final profession in July of 2004, and was ordained in May of the following year.

Father Kanyiankunnel's first assignment was at a retreat center that focused on the Heralds' ministry of preaching retreats. Father Kanyiankunnel then earned his master's degree in theology. Moved to Italy in 2009, he served various parishes there for six years before returning to India.

Father Kanyiankunnel has served as headmaster and teacher in a parish school. He was later appointed to a house of the HGN in his home state of Kerala to promote vocations, continue the work of preaching and oversee construction.

He arrived in the United States in February of

2024 and has served as parochial vicar at St. André Bessette Parish in Malone since his arrival.

**FATHER SCOTT A.**

**BELINA**

Born in Germany, Father Belina, 40, grew up in Watertown.

He received a bachelor's degree from Clarkson University before attending St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Pennsylvania.

Bishop Terry R. LaValley ordained Deacon Scott Anthony Belina to the priesthood Saturday, May 25, 2013, at St. Mary's Cathedral.

His first assignment after ordination was as parochial vicar at St. Mary's Cathedral with additional responsibilities in the Chancery Office, assisting Bishop LaValley. He also served as parochial vicar at St. André Bessette Parish in Malone and St. Peter's Parish in Massena.

He then served as administrator of the Catholic Community of St. Peter and St. Mary and St. Hedwig in Lowville, Glenfield and Houseville, later serving as pastor in those communities.

He was appointed parochial vicar in The Roman Catholic Community of Brownville and Dexter, St. Andrew's Church in Sackets Harbor, St. Cecilia's Church in Adams, and Queen of Heaven Church in Henderson in late 2024.

## Rest in Peace

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

**May 29** – Rev. Hervé Racette, O.M.I., 1948

**May 30** – Rev. J. Heliodore Valois, 1952

**May 31** – Rev. John J. Dean, 1930; Rev. Eugene T. Desnoyers, 1993

**June 1** – Rev. Tobias M. Glenn, 1907; Rev. Charles B. Cotter, 2001

**June 2** – Rev. Antoine Buch, O.F.M., 1927; Msgr. John L. Plunkett, 1950; Deacon Richard T. Larche, 1989

**June 3** – Rev. Auriemma Veronneau, O.M.I., 1962; His Holiness, Blessed John XXIII, Pope, 1963; Rev. Franz P. Romuald Reiter, 1971; Rev. Bernard W. Desnoyers, 1987



# Trump administration slashes funds for Catholic Relief Services food aid

By Tyler Arnold  
Catholic News Agency

President Donald Trump's administration is ending federal funds for nearly a dozen projects operated by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to provide free school meals to children internationally.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) ended funding for 11 of the 13 projects CRS operates through the McGovern-Dole Food for Education Program, which was created with bipartisan support in the early 2000s. The funds support international school feeding and maternal and child nutrition projects with American agriculture commodities, according to the USDA.

According to CRS, the termination of these funds will affect more than 780,000 school-aged children in 11 countries. The funding will end this July.

"This decision isn't just a policy shift — it's a life-altering blow to hundreds of thousands of children who rely on these meals to stay healthy, stay in school, and stay hopeful about their future," CRS President and CEO Sean Callahan said in a statement.

CRS contends that, in some impoverished countries, this program provides children with their only reliable meal daily. In a news release, CRS also maintained that the programs strengthen local communities and that terminating these contracts will threaten food security and economic stability in the affected nations.

"Ending a program that provides a child's only meal is deeply troubling and goes against our values as a nation and as people of faith," Callahan said. "We have a moral responsibility to ensure vulnerable children have access to the nourishment they need to learn, grow, and build a better future."

A spokesperson for the USDA confirmed the termination of these funds and told CNA the decision was part of an effort to ensure the programs "align with the president's agenda to make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous."

"We look forward to ensuring USDA

foreign aid is spent implementing existing projects as well as any new projects that continue to put American agriculture at the forefront and align with the president's agenda," the spokesperson said.

According to the spokesperson, the USDA ended 17 McGovern-Dole program agreements in total, 11 of which were operated by CRS. The USDA continues to fund 30 projects through that program, two of which CRS operates. The remaining programs serve 22 countries.

Additionally, the spokesperson said the USDA ended funding for 27 Food for Progress program agreements that were also "not in alignment with the foreign assistance objectives of the Trump administration." The other 14 Food for Progress agreements, which serve 17 countries, will still be funded.

"It is important to note that all U.S. agricultural producers have received payment for commodities for which invoices have been received," the spokesperson said. "Those projects which were terminated received a 30-day notification. During this time partners are required to deliver any commodity to its final destination, in accordance with the agreement, to ensure no product goes to waste."

Callahan, alternatively, said the success of its programs is "undeniable," adding that he has seen firsthand "the remarkable contributions of the community and local government" in one of the countries, Honduras.

"I spoke with young children who endure nearly two-hour walks to school each day — driven by the hope of receiving both a meal and an education," he said. "It is un-American to stand by and not provide assistance while hunger robs children of their chance to learn and thrive."

Callahan requested that the administration "reconsider its decision and restore funding for these life-affirming programs," saying a reversal would "ensure children continue to have access to daily meals in school and invest in their future, their health, and their ability to break the cycle of poverty."

## CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

### Life advocates criticize Canada's loss of disabilities minister

The Canadian government's abolishment of a government ministry for disabled citizens underscores the government's "demeaning attitude" toward disabled people, advocates say, particularly after the country opted to expand the national euthanasia program to include those with disabilities. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, the Liberal Party leader who assumed office in March, unveiled his new cabinet. Notably missing from the cabinet, however, was any minister charged directly with administering to the needs of disabled Canadians. The position was held most recently by Kamal Khara, who served as the country's minister of diversity, inclusion, and persons with disabilities until March before she became the Canadian minister of health. Following Khara's departure, the position was consolidated under the minister of jobs and families.

### Catholic health system to pay \$3.3 million for violations

A Catholic health care system in New York state has agreed to pay a multimillion-dollar settlement over allegations that it violated federal Medicare reporting laws. The U.S. attorney's office for the western district of New York said in a press release that Catholic Health Systems agreed to pay nearly \$3.3 million in order to resolve allegations that the network "knowingly submitted or caused to be submitted false claims to the Medicare program" in violation of federal law. The government had alleged that the Catholic hospital system violated the Stark Law, a federal rule that prohibits health care entities from receiving Medicare payments for services referred by a physician with "a financial relationship to the health care entity." The prosecutor's office claimed that the Catholic health provider "had financial relationships with nonemployee physicians" who "referred health services, such as laboratory testing, hospital services, or medical supplies, to CHS and its affiliated hospitals." The payout does not establish the guilt of the hospital, the government said.

### AG: Law doesn't require brain-dead woman be kept alive

In response to national outcry over the case of Adriana Smith, a brain-dead pregnant woman on life support, Georgia attorney general's office released a statement clarifying that the state's heartbeat law, which prohibits abortions after detection of a fetal heartbeat, does not require Smith be kept alive. "There is nothing in the LIFE act that requires medical professionals to keep a woman on life support after brain death," said the statement, issued by Attorney General Chris Carr's office last week. Quoting the law itself, the statement continued: "Removing life support is not an action 'with the purpose to terminate a pregnancy.'" Doctors at Emory University Hospital declared Smith, who was nine weeks pregnant at the time, brain dead in February. According to Smith's mother, April Newkirk, doctors told her that Georgia's law protecting unborn children with a heartbeat required that they keep Smith on life support until her child could be safely delivered.

## ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

## 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, all 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 Family Rate.

**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!

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

## CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

## SPRING STUDY SERIES

Ellenburg Center — Join Our Lady of the Adirondacks for nine sessions using Father Michael Gaitley's book "Divine Mercy in the Second Greatest Story Ever Told".

**Date:** May 30 to June 27

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. to 8

**Features:** Video presentations of the material and discussion encourage participants to enter a fuller understanding of God's astounding love and forgiveness. Light refreshments included. While donations are appreciated, materials for this series are free.

**Contact:** Sarah Anderson at 518-534-9976 to register for classes.

## ANNUAL CAR SHOW

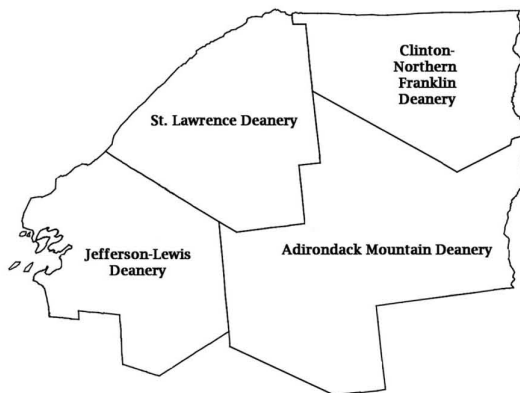
Mooers Forks — St. Ann's to have their 7th Annual Car Show.

**Date:** June 1

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

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

**Features:** Kids Power Wheels



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

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,

Ogdensburg, NY 13669

e-mail [news@northcountrycatholic.org](mailto:news@northcountrycatholic.org).

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

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.

## 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.

## CHARISMATIC MASS

Malone — Join us in this Jubilee Year of Hope for a Charismatic Mass.

**Date:** June 8

**Time:** 2 p.m.; praise and worship Prelude beginning at 1:45 p.m.

**Place:** Notre Dame Church

## SOAKING PRAYER SESSIONS

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

**Date:** June 19, July 17, Aug. 21

**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 and being immersed in receiving an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. A short introduction is followed by a 30-minutes of praise and worship. The remainder of the time is spent in soaking prayer, witness/group sharing, lunch (bring your own bagged lunch), and recitation of the Rosary.

**Contact:** [evemcgill16@charter.net](mailto:evemcgill16@charter.net) or call 518-645-2648

## GOLF TOURNAMENT

Plattsburgh — Heartwell Homestead's 2nd Annual Golf Tournament to be held.

**Date:** Aug. 22

**Place:** The Barracks Golf Course

**Contact:** For more information and details go to <https://www.HeartWellHomestead.org>

## SAVE THE DATE, LAY MINISTERS

Plattsburgh — Eastern Region Commissioned Lay Ministers are invited to celebrate with Bishop Terry LaValley a 2025 Year of Hope Pilgrimage.

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

**Date:** Sept. 14

**Time:** 2 p.m.

**Contact:** For more information call 518-563-0730 or e-mail [PlattsburghSEC@rcdony.org](mailto:PlattsburghSEC@rcdony.org)

## HOT DINNERS

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

**Date:** Every Wednesday

**Time:** 4 p.m. to 5

**Place:** St. André Outreach Center

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

## JEFFERSON-LEWIS

## HOLY HOUR AND DIVINE MERCY

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

**Date:** 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, Pan-

cakes, French Toast, Ham, Sausage, Baked Goods, Juice, and Coffee

**Contact:** For more information call 315-493-3224

## HEALING MASS

Clayton — Come to St. Mary's Church in Clayton for our Annual Healing Mass, St. Mary's is designated as a Pilgrimage Site for the Jubilee Year of Hope, receive the Jubilee plenary indulgence through pilgrimage and prayer.

**Date:** June 14

**Time:** 11 a.m.

**Features:** The Sacrament of the Sick will be offered during Mass and after Mass, Prayer Teams for individual needs, and a reception in the Parish Center.

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

## 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.

## DIOCESAN EVENTS

## DOVS RAFFLE

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocation Society (DOVS) is having its only fundraiser, a raffle.

**Date:** Tickets on sale June 1 and drawing date is July 9

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

**Features:** First prize is \$500, second is a quilt, third is a birdhouse with stand, fourth is \$100 in gift cards (\$50 Stewart's, \$25 Visa Gift Card and \$25 WalMart).

**Contact:** Connie Randall at 315-783-0574 or email [connierandall47@yahoo.com](mailto:connierandall47@yahoo.com)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



# Faith-based streaming platform to launch

By Francesca Pollio Fenton  
Catholic News Agency

A new global streaming platform for faith-driven content will launch worldwide on May 28 and serve as the exclusive streaming home of "Carlo Acutis: Roadmap to Reality," the top-grossing faith-based documentary of the year at the box office.

CREDO, founded by Tim Moriarty, CEO and founder of Castletown Media, is also on track to stream Castletown's newest project, "Leo XIV: A Pontiff's Path," later this year.

The platform will allow filmmakers to showcase their work, connect directly with audiences, and earn fair compensation while viewers enjoy on-demand,

a la carte rentals with no subscriptions or recurring fees. Content will be able to be viewed on computers, mobile devices, and on smart TVs.

Castletown Media's newest project, "Leo XIV: A Pontiff's Path," will follow the journey of the new Holy Father — from his Chicago roots through his theological formation and missionary service. The film will weave together interviews with those who knew him and offer an immersive portrait of his missionary work in Peru, tracing his vocational journey from a humble Augustinian friar to the supreme pontiff.

The film invites viewers to meet the man behind the title — how his Chicago roots, Augustinian formation, and missionary zeal will shape his ministry as vicar of Christ, Moriarty told CNA in an exclusive interview.

"Within hours of his first appearance on the loggia, our cameras were rolling in Rome and Chicago, and this week our team is in Peru, uncovering the experiences that prepared him to shepherd the global Church," he said.

On CREDO, starting on May 28, viewers will be able to watch "Carlo Acutis: Roadmap to Reality," which explores the life of Acutis and the lessons he offers young people regarding the challenges of the digital world. It features Acutis' family and friends sharing their firsthand experiences of the soon-to-be

saint and his impact on their lives, in addition to well-known voices in the Catholic Church and technology experts who offer a model for young people to engage in the digital world.

"Catholic audiences shouldn't have to settle for anything less than artistic excellence," Moriarty said. "With CREDO, rigorous curation meets state-of-the-art streaming, so families can hit play knowing they'll experience beautifully crafted, spiritually sound films. It's only fitting that our launch title is 'Carlo Acutis: Roadmap to Reality,' which explores the life of the first millennial saint who used digital media to spread the Gospel. His story perfectly encapsulates everything CREDO stands for."

## Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

### 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](http://www.rcdony.org/youth/camp)

To inquire about financial aid please email Jeannie Grizzuto at [jgrizzuto@rcdony.org](mailto: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. Celebrate Christ's presence in your lives through liturgy and special prayer services. 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/>



Financial assistance is available. For more information, contact Steve Tartaglia at 315-393-2920 or [startaglia@rcdony.org](mailto:startaglia@rcdony.org).

### AFTERNOON OF MUSIC & ART

Saranac Lake — Recognizing sacred music's ability to foster Hope and desiring an opportunity for musicians throughout the diocese to come together for a communal expression of hope and prayer, the Diocese of Ogdensburg will host an arts festival, "The Look, Feel, & Sound of Hope."

**Date:** Aug. 24

**Time:** 3 p.m. to 5

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

**Features:** The event is part of the diocese's 2025 Jubilee Year Celebration and aims to bring a greater share of hope and prayer to our lives, our communities and our world. Artists and musicians,

stay tuned for details how to participate in this festival. Entry details and registration will be available soon

### WOMENS HEALING RETREAT

Ogdensburg — The Our Lady of the Rosary Healing Retreat Committee is offering a Women's Healing Retreat with the theme "From Eve to Mary, A Journey of Hope and

Healing"

**Date:** Oct. 9 – 12

**Place:** Wadhams Hall

**Cost:** \$275 includes accommodations and meals

**Features:** Presenters will be Father Michael Jablonski and Father Douglas Schirmer

**Contact:** to register and for more information go to <https://www.rcdony.org/ourlady>

### MONASTERY CARD SHOP

**Cards for All Occasions**

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SATURDAY 9 AM - 12 PM

400 PRATT ST., WATERTOWN

315-788-1669

[www.sisterspreciousblood.org](http://www.sisterspreciousblood.org)

### Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocations Society Raffle

Drawing Date: July 9, 2025

**1st Prize - \$500**

**2nd Prize - Quilt**

**3rd Prize - Birdhouse**

**4th Prize - \$100 in Gift Cards**

\$50 Gift Card to Stewarts

\$25 Visa Gift Card

\$25 Gift Card to Walmart

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Tickets: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to:  
Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocations Society  
Cut and return this ticket with payment and mail to:  
Connie Randall, 125 Lenny Rd., Potsdam, NY 13676

## SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

## Don't forget to RSVP

The USPS has an email service called "Informed Delivery." Each day between 7:30 and 8 a.m., I get an email from the postal service with images of the mail that I will be getting that day. Usually the pieces are familiar: bills, catalogs, newspapers, but then there are the envelopes with a return address, sometimes known, sometimes not. With the unfamiliar, I wonder what's in the envelope just like one would when picking up the mail. Is it a cleverly hidden ad, perhaps an invitation, maybe a complaint, or a question or a thank-you. Lots of possibilities. The

envelope tells a message, but the full message is found only inside.

Well, believe it or not, we have informed delivery in today's Gospel. Jesus gives a message, an invitation. What we hear is part of his farewell speech to his apostles. The words are clear, but only in time, after they have unwrapped them, will they understand more fully the message. Basically, Jesus' message is an RSVP - one that requires a response on our part even though we don't know what will happen after we accept the invitation. It's like an invitation to a party from



Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin

June 1

Seventh Sunday of Easter

READINGS

Acts 7:55-60

Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20

John 17:20-26

someone we do not know, but we accept just the same.

In the first reading, Stephen had accepted the invitation from Christ. However, this dedicated follower ended up losing his life and suffering. Being a disciple of Jesus can mean suffering for our faith. In fact, I recently heard a statement that there have been more martyrs for Christianity in the 20th century than there were in the first 100 years of the

Church. Martyrdom and suffering did not end in the early Church. It has continued and continues to this very day. People suffer merely because they are Christians. We may think that Christian suffering occurs only elsewhere, but it occurs even in our own country. Our Catholic values are challenged on a regular basis. Some Catholics will stand up for what we believe, but others just give in and go with the flow.

Think again about the invitation from Christ. The invitation asks us to make Christ present and visible in our lives and in our society. That invitation means that we teach our children the faith, that we share what we have, that we reach out

to those in need, and that we forgive even when we have been wronged. We cannot fulfill this invitation if we are not nourishing our lives with prayer, with the celebration of the Eucharist. Without those elements, especially the Eucharist, we will not have food for the journey. We will not be able to see the world and ourselves as does Jesus.

Jesus sends each one of us an invitation to make him present. Invitations come to us in envelopes that we must open. For Jesus, we need to open our hearts to see, hear and accept the invitation. When Jesus calls, make sure that you send an enthusiastic affirmative RSVP to that invitation.

## CALLED TO SERVE

## Committed to the salvation of souls

"Thank you, Father." "Have a nice day, Father."

In these cases, "Father" is really a deacon. We deacons have all had a similar experience. The person addressing us incorrectly might have a slip of the tongue or is used to saying "Father" to anyone dressed in ceremonial garb at church or just does not know how else to address a deacon.

"Deacon" is correct. In the United States "deacon" is correct either verbally or in addressing a letter or mailing.

A deacon is a deacon, whether we label him permanent or transitional.

Three men, Dennis Ombongi, Tyler Fitzgerald and Michelet Boncoeur were ordained May 24, 2025, as deacons by Bishop LaValley. They are considered "transi-

tional" because they will eventually be ordained priests.

God willing, six men will be ordained to the diaconate by Bishop LaValley on August 9, 2025. They are Gordon Burdo, James Law, Garry Stevens, JB Kavanaugh, Francis Sczerzenie, and Nicholas Tsibulski. They will be considered "permanent."

All nine will be deacons for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

At their ordination, each deacon pledges loyalty and fidelity to the local bishop. In this case, Bishop Terry R. LaValley.

At the celebration of Mass on the final day of the recent deacon as-

sembly, the men stood and repeated the pledge they acknowledged at their ordination. Bishop LaValley read each paragraph to which the deacon responded, "I am."



Deacon Kevin Mastellon

Are you resolved as a faithful co-worker with the Order of Bishops, to continue to serve the Lord's flock?

Are you resolved to continue to assist at the Lord's Altar devoutly and faithfully, in keeping with the tradition of the Church, to the praise of God and for the sanctification of the Christian people?

Are you resolved to continue to carry out the ministry of the Word, worthily and wisely, in preaching the Gospel

and explaining the Catholic faith?

Are you resolved to unite yourself everyday more intimately with Christ, who offered himself to his Father as a victim for us, and consecrate yourself with him for the salvation of souls?

May the Lord keep us all in his charity and lead all of us, shepherd, and flock, to eternal life. Amen.

At the annual Chrism Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg, priests of the diocese repeat similar promises from their ordination as presbyters.

Congratulations to the newly ordained.

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

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# Mission in the Congo

"I entered the city... with a feeling of joy and hope in light of the election of Pope Leo XIV. I seemed to sense this feeling in the people I met, even though the reality remained the same," reports a missionary, anonymous for security reasons, from Bukavu, the capital of South Kivu, in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, which was taken over by the M23 militia on February 16. Since then, the city has been in a state of limbo, suspended between the lack of services guaranteed by state institutions that are no longer present and insecurity reigns.

"An 8-year-old boy in a school uniform sat on a pipe by the side of the road with a notebook on his lap. 'How come you are on the street at this time and not at school?' I asked him. 'They sent

me away because I did not pay for the school year. My brother stayed, my parents paid for him yesterday, but they could not pay for me. I will wait for him until he finishes and then we will go home together.' His sadness infected me. 'It is not your fault or your parents' fault. Children have the right to learn for free. It is the country that is not working...' He nodded, and I continued on my way," the report continues. "A few days ago, a poor man walking through the narrow streets of his neighborhood at 7 a.m. on his way to work encountered some armed men who accused him of being a thief and immediately shot him... There are no investigations, and it is often unknown who killed during the night: an M23 fighter? A thief taking advantage of weapons abandoned



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

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Sister Mary Ellen Brett, SSJ, Director

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by fleeing Congolese soldiers? A former convict among the more than 2,000 released shortly before the M23's arrival on February 16? Revenge and settling of scores? To eliminate someone, it is enough to accuse them of being a thief, a soldier or one of the Wazalendo...," the missionary laments. "Or was it a group of people plagued by insecurity and hunger?"

"In these last weeks of the year, the children who suffer most are those who are expelled from school, as if the trauma they have been suffering for weeks

from constant shelling were not enough. They, too, are often witnesses to violence: 'What is being sown in their hearts when they should be dreaming of beautiful things?'" she asks herself. "People fill the churches, clinging with all their might to the God they believe in, who knows how to listen to the oppressed, but from a human perspective, they see no way out. Dis- tant authorities who do not even offer a word of compassion, great powers pursuing their own interests... People go so far as to say: 'Let them take away all our miner-

als, but let us live..." reports the missionary.

"Life in eastern Congo is like experiencing a prolonged agony. And the tenacity of the people to smile, the courage to show solidarity, to marry. Giving birth and thanking God every day that he is still there is like a caress that seeks to revive hope," the missionary concludes. "Today a mother from one of the vibrant congregations, called 'Shrika,' who takes turns bringing food to the General Hospital, testifies to this: 'Yesterday it was our Shrika's turn to do the apostolate at the hospital. There was enough food for the sick and their caregivers; the night nurses, the maintenance and security staff also benefited.'"

*Article from FIDES missionary news service of the Pontifical Mission Societies.*

## OBITUARIES

**Alexandria Bay** — Sylvia Ann (Hall) Gahsel, 76; Graveside Services June 22, 2025 at St. Cyril's Cemetery.

**Black River** — Virginia Rose (Dilello) Martin, 91; Mass of Christian Burial May 22, 2025 at St. Paul's Church; burial in Felts Mills Cemetery.

**Cape Vincent** — Geraldine S. Petroff, 87; Mass of Christian Burial May 17, 2025 at St. Vincent of Paul Church; burial in St. Vincent of Paul Cemetery.

**Carthage** — Patrick Michael McKenna, 65; Funeral Services May 17, 2025 at Bezanilla-McGraw Funeral Home.

**Chasm Falls** — Alice Marie (Disotelle) Gillette, 82; Private services.

**Croghan** — Thomas "Jigger" Gerow, 79; Mass of Christian Burial

May 19, 2025 at St. Stephen's Church; burial in St. Stephen's Cemetery.

**Gouverneur** — Nancy J. (Hall) Cappellino, 89; Mass of Christian Burial May 19, 2025 at St. James Church; burial in the New St. James Cemetery.

**Harrisville** — Bonnie L. (McCumber) Tebo, 78; Funeral Services May 21, 2025 at the Scanlon Funeral Home.

**Henderson** — Carrie Cecilia O'Connor Kenney, 100; Mass of Christian Burial May 28, 2025 at Queen of Heaven Church; burial in St. Lawrence Union Cemetery.

**Lake Placid** — Leondas "Jimmy" Hadjis, 89; Funeral Services May 23, 2025 at M.B. Clark Funeral Home; burial in North Elba Cemetery.

**Lake Placid** — Jayne E. (Farley) Sorensen, 79; Graveside Services May 22, 2025 at St. Agnes Cemetery.

**Massena** — Rita (Cline) Treers, 88; Mass of Christian Burial May 22, 2025 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

**Norfolk** — Kenneth J. Plumb Sr., 84; Mass of Christian Burial May 28, 2025 at Church of the Visitation; burial in Brookdale Cemetery.

**Peru** — Joan M. (Kupiec) Garrow, 86; Mass of Christian Burial May 21, 2025 at St. Augustine's Church; burial in parish columbarium.

**Peru** — Frederick Joseph Hicks, 81; Mass of Christian Burial June 10, 2025 at St. Augustine's Church; burial in parish cemetery.

**Potsdam** — Mark Josephs, 69; Mass of Christian Burial May 23,

2025 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

**Saranac Lake** — John Nels, 78; Mass of Christian Burial May 31, 2025 at St. Bernard's Church; burial in St. Bernard's Cemetery.

**Ticonderoga** — Gregory Dennis John, 79; Private services to be held.

**Watertown** — Peter J. Ligamari, 94; Mass of Christian Burial

May 23, 2025 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

**Watertown** — Stephanie Marie McIntyre, 33; Memorial Mass May 23, 2025 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church.

**Watertown** — Jerry J. Vecchio Sr., 66; Mass of Christian Burial May 26, 2025 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

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## Massena pastor honored for military service

Father Mark R. Reilly, pastor of St. Peter's Parish in Massena and dean of the St. Lawrence Deanery, was recently awarded the LeMoyne College Ignatian Award, Daniel J. Mulhauser, S.J., Veterans Service.

The award recognizes exceptional support to the veteran and/or military community.

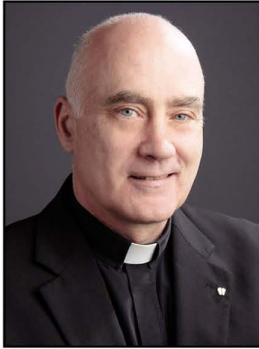
The college highlighted Father Reilly having "dedicated his life to service, both to his country and to the Church."

The college went on to explain why Father Reilly, a 1985 graduate of the school, received the award.

"A native of Syracuse, Father Reilly enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps while beginning his studies at Le Moyne. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant and served in active duty from 1986 to 1992 as a helicopter pilot, including combat service during the first Gulf War.

Answering a new calling, Father Reilly entered Mount St. Mary's Seminary and was ordained a Catholic priest in August 1997. His ministry began at St. Bernard's in Saranac Lake, New York, as parochial vicar and assistant pastor, before moving on to serve as a teacher and spiritual director at Immaculate Heart Central Junior/Senior High School in Watertown, New York.

His deep commitment to faith and country endured, and



**Father Mark R. Reilly**

in 2005 he was recalled to active duty, serving with the Marine Corp as a Navy chaplain at forward operating bases in Iraq during the second Gulf War. In 2012, he again answered the call of service as a Navy chaplain at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, Africa. In 2014, Father Reilly officially retired from military service. His military decorations reflect a distinguished career, including the Combat Action Ribbon, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the Iraq Campaign Medal, among others. In his diocesan ministry, Father Reilly has led several parishes and was appointed pastor of St. Peter's Parish in Massena, New York, in 2018. Since 2019, he has also served as dean of the St. Lawrence Deanery, promoting and coordinating pastoral work across the Diocese of Ogdensburg. He is a member of the board of directors for Operation Grateful Nation, which supports Veterans in Northern New York."

## Mercy Care to host forum

PAUL SMITHS — Mercy Care for the Adirondacks will hold its annual Educational Forum co-hosted by Paul Smith's College on June 18 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. The 2025 Forum will focus on the topic of "Age-Friendly Communities Growing up, Growing Older, and Living Well."

There is a \$30 registration fee, which includes the networking lunch. Registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. To register for the Forum, please visit Mercy Care's website at [www.adkmercy.org](http://www.adkmercy.org) or contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Director of Programs and Mission Integration at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or call her at 518-523-5446.

Three expert keynote speakers will present:



**KEYNOTE PRESENTER: JEANETTE LEARDI**  
*Social Gerontologist, Community Educator and Author of "Aging Sideways: Changing Our Perspectives on Getting Older"*

Jeanette Leardi is a social gerontologist, community educator, writer, public speaker, and aging wellness leader who has a passion for empowering older adults and helping them identify and share their wisdom with others. Her decade of experience as a caregiver to her parents inspired her encore career goals of changing perceptions about the aging process and promoting awareness of elders' inherent dignity, wisdom, and

unique value as mentors and catalysts for social change. Leardi's efforts include giving engaging in-person and virtual presentations, workshops, and classes to people of all ages; writing articles for Next Avenue, 3rd Act Magazine, and other publications; and appearing on national broadcasts. Her editorial experiences include positions at Newsweek, Life, People, Condé Nast Traveler, Sesame Street magazines, and The Charlotte Observer. She has a M.A. with honors in English from Rutgers University and a gerontology graduate certificate from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.



**KEYNOTE PRESENTER: GREG OLSEN**  
*Director, NYS Office for the Aging*

Working with public and private partners at the state and local level, Greg is leading the effort to combat ageism, generalizations, and stereotypes about what aging is and demonstrating value in addressing social determinants of health and their role in helping older adults maintain their independence with dignity. Greg has more than 30 years of experience serving older New Yorkers and their families. He served previously as Chief of Staff and Legislative and Policy Director for a former chair of the Assembly Standing Committee on Aging, was the

first Executive Director of the New York State Alliance for Retired Americans, and served as Executive Director of the New York State Coalition for the Aging. Greg speaks regularly across the nation about how New York frames aging and the way New York serves older New Yorkers.



**KEYNOTE PRESENTER: JULIA HOTZ**  
*Journalist and Author of "The Connection Cure," "The Prescriptive Power of Movement, Nature, Art, Service and Belonging"*

Julia Hotz is a solutions-focused journalist based in New York. Her stories have appeared in The New York Times, WIRED, Scientific American, The Boston Globe, Time, and more. She helps other journalists report on the big new ideas changing the world at the Solutions Journalism Network. For her insights on social prescribing, she has been invited to advise health and community organizations, teach in medical schools, deliver talks at TEDx, university symposiums, and international conferences, and write editorials for publications including The Wall Street Journal, Slate, and more. She proudly serves on the board of Walk with a Doc, and as an advisor to Social Prescribing USA.

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks is deeply grateful to Mother Cabrini Health Foundation for supporting, in part, this educational forum.