

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Picnic to celebrate
young ministry
volunteers | Page 5

Lawsuits filed over
NY, Illinois suicide
laws | Page 10

The Diocese of Ogdensburg Volume 81 Number 12

NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

JUNE 17, 2026

NEW DEACON ORDAINED



PHOTO BY JESSE SOVIE/
NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC
Deacon Kevin McCullough was ordained by Bishop Terry R. LaValley on June 6 at Church of the Holy Family in Watertown. A Watertown native, Deacon McCullough will return to St. Vincent's Seminary in LaTrobe in the fall to complete his studies in preparation for the priesthood. Read Bishop LaValley's homily from the Mass on Page 3. See additional photos on Pages 8 & 9.

No NCC next week

The *North Country Catholic* is now on summer schedule. There will be no newspaper next week. The next edition will be dated July 1.

2026 TOP GRADUATES



Immaculate Heart Central (IHC) and Seton Catholic, the two Catholic high schools in the diocese, announce their top graduates. (Left) Stacia Barber is the valedictorian of IHC's Class of 2026, and (right) Abigail "Abby" Schaub is valedictorian of Seton's graduating class.

SEE STORIES ON PAGES 4 & 6

Bishops consecrate nation to Sacred Heart

By Gigi Duncan
EWTN News

ORLANDO, Florida — The U.S. bishops consecrated the nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 11, entrusting the United States to Christ's merciful love during a solemn Mass as part of their spring plenary assembly.

"We gather not first to celebrate ourselves, but to consecrate, to entrust... and to place our whole nation into the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ," Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore said in his homily.

The liturgy took place on the final day of the U.S. Conference

of Catholic Bishops' spring plenary meeting, during the nation's 250th anniversary year.

In his homily, Lori placed the consecration within the broader moral and spiritual tensions of Church and national life, framing it as an act of trust rather than achievement.

"To love as Christ loves is the true measure of Christian discipleship, and it is the true measure of our humanity," he said.

He acknowledged that this measure has often not been lived out. "Indeed, it has sometimes obscured it almost beyond recognition," he said, noting the reality of division, sin,

and failure alongside moments of grace.

Lori said the act of entrustment is not an assertion of strength but an admission of dependence on mercy. "We cannot come to the heart of Christ while pretending we have no need of his mercy," he said.

The future, he emphasized, cannot ultimately be secured by human systems or planning. "The future belongs to God, not to political movements, economic forces, or human plans," he said.

He then described the Sacred Heart as the source of reconciliation itself, not merely a devotional image but a living reality

that reshapes those who turn to it.

"The Sacred Heart does not divide, it reconciles," he said. "It does not harden hearts, it transforms them. It does not simply invite us to receive love; it sends us forth to share it."

Reflecting on the Gospel, he described Christ as fully entering the human condition with "a heart that has known joy and sorrow, friendship and betrayal, suffering and sacrifice."

"The Sacred Heart reveals a savior who desires not merely our obedience, but our friendship," he said. "Not simply our service, but our communion with him."

NORTH
COUNTRY
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The missing person

I was missing from my own column.

We hear about Artificial Intelligence (AI) everywhere these days, even in papal encyclicals. Writing is one of the tasks for which many people are using AI. Inspired by a dear friend, I thought it would be fun to see how AI would do writing a column for this space.

I spent a week giving AI glimpses of my life. I asked ChatGPT questions and gave it information about my weightlifting, diet, swimming, travel plans, prayer life, favorite books and movies, short-term goals... basically everything I could think of ex-

cept family (some things should stay private).

Then, at the end of that week, I gave ChatGPT the link to the archive of my old columns and the prompt, "using the information you know about me and the samples here as a guide for style and tone, write me a column for this week."

**Darcy L. Fargo**

In just a few seconds, text started appearing on the screen. ChatGPT wrote me a column about not having an idea for a column. While I've written a column on that topic before, it didn't look like this version. In fact, I thoroughly disliked the AI column.

First, it had lines I would

absolutely never use. Example: "I used to think inspiration came first and effort followed. That the 'good columns' arrived fully formed, polished, ready to print."

I have never used "polished" to describe me or anything I've created. "Polished" is the opposite of who I am. I am far more likely to describe myself as "conductor of the Hot Mess Express."

But it was less about what AI said that made me dislike its version of my column and more about what it didn't say. The AI column didn't have any quirky phrasing at all - no "eleventy billion" or "conductor of the Hot Mess Express" or any other silly description.

AI could include lots of details about me in the col-

umn, but it can't put the actual me in the column.

And that's part of what Pope Leo talked about in *Magnifica Humanitas* - keeping the human element.

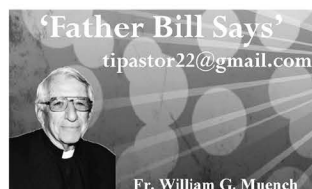
"In the era of artificial intelligence, when human dignity is threatened by new forms of dehumanization, ours is the pressing duty to remain profoundly human," he writes. "We must lovingly safeguard the grandeur of humanity bestowed upon us and revealed in its fullness in Christ, the splendor of which no machine can ever replace."

God made me and gave me a love of quirky descriptions and silly sayings. I think I'll stick with that, and I'll keep writing my own columns.

Celebrating the Body of Christ

Recently, our Catholic Church celebrated "Corpus Christi" - now we call it, "The Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ." Each year, this feast day celebrates the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. On that Sunday, I decided to center my homily on the many rituals that are part of the liturgy of the Mass. Our Catholic Mass has many liturgical rites.

I began my homily that Sunday by stating that no one comes to participate at Mass as an individual. Each of us lives our spiritual life and participates at Mass as part of Christ's Church. At Mass, we are united together as members of the Church - a part of a parish community. So, each time I attend Mass, I join together with my people, my family with the Lord God. I come as a member of the Church - united with Catholics throughout the world. I pray with them, I pray for them, I believe that they are praying for me. They're praying with

**Fr. William G. Muench**

and for the whole Church, and that includes me.

The Second Vatican Council spoke of us Catholics as a pilgrim Church. We are a people joined together with our God journeying together, praying and working together - searching for God's peace and happiness. As Church, we support each other person. So, at Mass, I pray for the Church throughout all the world and remember Catholics in every part of this planet - all the People of God.

At each Mass, the liturgy begins with a penitential rite. I recognize my sinfulness, and I turn to the people of the Church seeking support in my repentance. I ask the people of my Church to pray for me as I seek forgiveness from

my God. I turn to God for the grace to be transform myself that I may live well as a disciple of Jesus.

The Mass continues as we, the people of God, go to the altar of the Lord for the Eucharist. We are all united in gratitude as our celebrant consecrates the bread and wine to the Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Then we receive the Body and Blood of our Lord in Holy Communion. Through the power of this magnificent sacrament, the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, I become a new person. Jesus leads me to discover all that the Lord expects me to be. I believe that each person who comes to participate at Mass leaves Mass a new person - a different person - as we go out into the world. I have spent time with Jesus; I have received the Lord in Holy Communion. I must have changed. I must have been touched by the power of the Lord Jesus.

At Mass, just before the

distribution of Communion, the liturgy asks is to recognize each other by exchanging the Sign of Peace. This is an important moment. We acknowledge ourselves as members of the Catholic Church. We show our respect for each other. As Church, we care about each other, and we truly show our love for each other.

Today, let us consider also the Closing ritual of the Mass. The deacon announces to us, "Ite, Missa est." - that is, "Go, the Mass is ended." Our emphasis is on "Go." You are sent; it's time to go back into this world. You have spent time with God, you have received the Body and Blood of Jesus. You have so much to do now - today. Our God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - is calling you to take the Lord into the world, to show others how to live as Jesus prepared each of us, members of the Church. Now, we are to lead others to God's love, peace and happiness.

FOLLOW ME

'Embody the Deacon Jesus Christ'

The following is Bishop Terry R. LaValley's homily from the Ordination Mass celebrated June 6 at Church of the Holy Family in Watertown. Deacon Kevin McCullough, a Watertown native, was ordained.

My sisters and brothers, we know that being a Catholic Christian does not mean merely being subject to a whole lot of dos and don'ts.

No, by the virtue of our baptism, we enter into a unique relationship where we immerse ourselves into the center of the love that comes to us from God, through Jesus, to live our way into a relationship – an intimate relationship – with him through whom many demands and joys in everyday life are encountered.

The dynamic of this relationship is such that God's true faithful son became visible in Jesus Christ, who devotes himself to us all. He, the very son of God, became our deacon. And this is a central aspect of the mystery of Jesus Christ. The fact that the Lord of us all is deacon – a servant who goes around and serves us and reveals to us the mystery of God's love. The greatness of the diaconal ministry that you now receive, Kevin, consists in the fact that you are commissioned to make the Deacon Jesus Christ present in these challenging times of our world and of our Church.

Making the Deacon Jesus Christ present means becoming a co-



PHOTO BY JESSE SOVIE/NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

Bishop Terry R. LaValley delivers his homily at the ordination of Deacon Kevin McCullough on June 6 in Watertown. Bishop LaValley is pictured with Deacon Brian Dwyer and Deacon Donald Wilder. See additional images from the ordination on page 8.

worker in his mission of love in the Church. That's why the first and foremost duty imposed on you is simply to give witness to the love of Jesus Christ. Care for the sick and suffering. Visit them and the lonely, the abandoned. Give them what no artificial intelligence, no medicine is capable of giving them, the presence of Jesus' compassion and tender care. Help the hurting to believe in God's love even in their suffering.

Precisely because you will embody the Deacon Jesus Christ, the service of the word is entrusted to you. As you embrace Jesus and radiate the joy of the Gospel, the love of Jesus Christ will shine through your servant ministry wherever you find yourself.

All service of the word must ultimately be anchored in these words: God loves all people; God wants everyone to be saved.

Being a deacon means having the privilege of making the deacon Jesus Christ present in the life of the Church. And in this graced hour, we're all praying for you, Kevin. You have persevered. No, you've joyfully embraced the sometimes difficult path of preparation for holy orders.

And I tell you, the Church is richly blessed. And I'm grateful.

The foremost ministry of the deacon servant is to pray for others. Pray without ceasing means that the depths of our soul are perpetually immersed in God, that, at the bottom of our hearts, we always come into contact with him and are always in an intimate exchange with him and that, in this way, we are truly praying with all our being.

Only when we come into contact with God at this depth can it also give strength and fruitfulness to the words

of our prayer. The distinctive character of the activity of the ordained must proceed from the fact that we are men who pray for others. You are to be a master of prayer. That can only happen if you personally are unceasingly tending to your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Kevin, you are being called to holy celibacy. Be firmly rooted and grounded in faith and show yourself chaste and beyond reproach before God and neighbor. Never, never allow yourself to be turned away from the hope offered by the Gospel. Now you are not only a hearer of this Gospel but also its minister. Hold the mystery of faith with a clear

conscience. Express by your actions the word of God which your lips proclaim so that God's people brought to life by the spirit may be a pure offering accepted by God.

Then on the last day, when you go out to meet your Lord, you will be able to hear Christ say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord." That's our prayer for you this day of your ordination to the diaconate.

We want to thank the Lord for the faith witness of your parents, their strong support and deep love of Christ and of his body, the Church. For what's happening here today, may God be praised forever. May God be praised.

REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

— PRAYER SUGGESTION —

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

(With ecclesiastical approval)

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

Or whatever the Lord
inspires you to offer Him



Precious
Blood

JULY

2026

DIOCESE OF
OGDENSBURG, NY

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

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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: Diocese of Ogdensburg Vocations Society www.mprpostate.com

Barber, Delaney, Smith lead IHC grads

The Academic leaders of the Immaculate Heart Central (Watertown) Class of 2026 are Stacia Barber, valedictorian; Julianna Delaney, salutatorian and vocational leader; and Brenden Smith, vocational leader.

VALEDICTORIAN

The valedictorian of Immaculate Heart Central School Class of 2026 is Stacia Barber, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Harold and Shannon Barber. She will graduate with a New York State Regents Diploma with a cumulative grade point average of 98.87.

Stacia was selected as vice president of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapter of the National Honor Society, participated in the IHC Faith Community Service Program, has been on the High Honor Roll for all four years of high school and was a member of Whiz Quiz for three years.

Stacia has enjoyed many of her classes at IHC, particularly her science classes, with anatomy and physiology coming in at the top spot. She has received many awards during her time at IHC including, a Tri-County Art Award, NY State Comptrollers Award, the Walter Zapf Jr. Class of 1951 Memorial Scholarship, the Friedline Cavalier Good Character Tuition Scholarship, the Sister Jeanne Baptiste History Tuition Scholarship, the Donald and Bernice Gardner Memorial Scholarship, the Ellen G. Sboro Memorial Scholarship, the Sisters of St. Joseph's Science Award, a NYS Scholarship for Academic Excellence, the Rotary Annual Science and Math Award, along with the Lemoyne College Heights Award, the Clarkson Achievement Award, and the RIT Science and Math Award.

Stacia is a four-year Frontier League scholar athlete who has played varsity soccer since eighth grade and has served as team captain for the last three years. She has also played lacrosse for three years and recently joined the golf team. This year, she has been awarded the prestigious Joe Macsu-



Stacia Barber

ga Memorial Coaches' Award.

This fall, Stacia plans to attend Siena College, where she intends to major in health science. She plans to become a physician's assistant.

SALUTATORIAN

Julianna Delaney, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Jr. and Jodie Delaney; granddaughter of Mr. & Mrs. Michael & Lori Delaney and Mr. & Mrs. John and Carolyn VanBrocklin, is this year's salutatorian. She will graduate with a New York State Advanced Regents Diploma with Science and CTE Endorsements and a cumulative grade point average of 98.43. Julianna was selected as the president of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapter of the National Honor Society and remained on the High Honor Roll throughout high school.

Julianna is also a vocational leader in the New Visions program, has been named Student of the Quarter, and has been inducted into the National Technical Honor Society. She has appreciated the real-world applications she has experienced through the program. She is not just a student active in school; she is also a dedicated member of her community and a volunteer for our Faith Community Service Program. She is the President of the Rotary Interact Club, where she oversaw the organization of the Stem Cell Registry, this year's Capstone Project.

Julianna is a Frontier League scholar-athlete who served

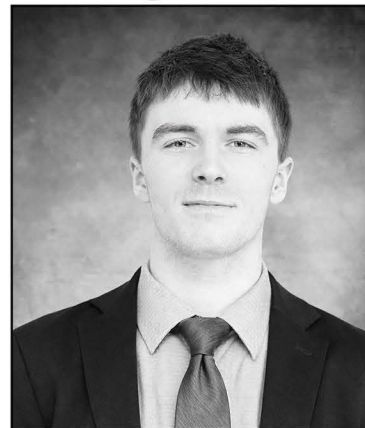


Julianna Delaney

as team captain for multiple years and earned varsity letters in soccer, basketball and lacrosse. She began playing varsity soccer in eighth grade and was named honorable mention in tenth, second team in eleventh, and first team her senior year. This year, she was awarded the Clarence "Boots" Gaffney Award for her athletic accomplishments.

Throughout her four years of high school, Julianna has served in various roles as part of student government and is a member of the Whiz Quiz team. Julianna has won many awards at IHC, including Sisters of St. Joseph Awards in English, History, and Mathematics, the Bausch and Lomb Honorary Science Award, the Clarkson Leadership Award, and the RIT Women in STEM Award. She has also been awarded several scholarships, including the Sr. Hortense Cavanaugh English Tuition Scholarship, the Robert and Jane Dermady Memorial Tuition Scholarship, the Alice Jane Coughlin Memorial Scholarship, and the Margaret Wiley Memorial Health Sciences Scholarship. Julianna has also been named a 7 News Academic All-Star and has received a NYS Scholarship for Academic Excellence.

This fall, Julianna will attend Suffolk University, where she plans to major in biology through the honors program. Her plan is to become a medical doctor and work in emer-



Brendan Smith

gency medicine.

VOCATIONAL LEADER

Brenden Smith, son of Peter Vandeusen and Lyn Smith, is this year's outstanding vocational leader for the Immaculate Heart Central Class of 2026. Brenden has a cumulative average of 83.5. Additionally, he has achieved a cumulative average of 95 in the Welding program, has been named Student of the Quarter twice, and has recently been inducted into the National Technical Honor Society.

Brenden plays varsity basketball and was a past member of the varsity lacrosse team. He is a member of the Mystery Play and has dedicated many hours to practicing and performing with the group as they traveled around the state. He was awarded the Air Force Technology Education Award, the Jrecks Sub Winning Attitude Award, and the Richard Doe Tuition Scholarship for his positive attitude, contributions to the school community, and achievements in academics and athletics.

Brenden has enjoyed his welding classes so much that he will advance his studies in welding at Onondaga Community College and plans to pursue welding as his career.

The Immaculate Heart Central School and surrounding community are extremely proud of all three students and their accomplishments. Congratulations and good luck in your future endeavors.



Members of the First Communion Class at St. Mary's in Constableville lead a Eucharistic procession after celebrating the sacrament at Mass.

Celebrating the Body of Christ in Constableville

The faithful of St. Mary's Church gathered on Sunday, June 7, for a beautiful celebration of the Holy Eucharist as several young parishioners received their First Holy Communion and later participated in a Eucharistic Procession led by Deacon Mike Lieber.

The day marked a significant milestone in the lives of the First Communicants, who received Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time. Following Mass, the children took a special role in the parish's Eucharistic Procession, helping to honor the Blessed Sacrament they had just received.

Carrying lighted candles and assisting with the incense used during the procession, the First Communicants accompanied the Blessed Sacrament as it was carried in a monstrance by Deacon Lieber. Family members, parishioners, and visitors joined in prayer and song as they processed together in a public witness of faith.

The procession was held in observance of Corpus Christi, the feast that celebrates the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. For Catholics, a Eucharistic Procession is both an act of wor-

ship and a proclamation of faith, expressing the Church's belief that Christ remains truly present among His people in the Blessed Sacrament.

"The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life," teaches the Catholic Church. Through Eucharistic processions, the faithful bring their devotion beyond the walls of the church, asking God's blessing upon their parish, their community, and the world.

The participation of the First Communicants made the celebration especially meaningful. Having just received their First Holy Communion, the children were able to take an active role in honoring Christ in the Eucharist. Their candle-bearing and assistance with the incense reflected the reverence and joy of the occasion while highlighting the importance of passing on Eucharistic devotion to future generations.

The procession concluded with Benediction, during which the Blessed Sacrament was used to bless those gathered. The parish then joined in prayers for the needs of the Church, the local community, and all who seek the presence and peace of Christ.

Picnic to celebrate young parish ministry volunteers

By Deacon Garry Stevens
Diocesan Vocations Coordinator

The Diocese of Ogdensburg will host a Youth Service Picnic on Saturday, July 18, from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Camp Guggenheim, honoring the young people who serve faithfully in parish ministries across the North Country.

The day will begin with a cookout lunch at noon, followed by an afternoon of games, activities, music and a Vocation Panel.

It will conclude with Mass celebrated by Bishop Terry R. LaValley.

This diocesan gathering is designed to celebrate the many youth who give of themselves as altar servers, lectors, musicians, greeters and parish helpers.

Their quiet, steady service strengthens parish life week after week and forms habits of leadership, responsibility and faith that shape their futures.

"Youth who serve at the altar or in any parish ministry learn early that their gifts matter," said diocesan leaders involved in planning the event. "They discover that the Church trusts them, needs them, and believes they can make a difference. That experience stays with them for life."

SERVICE THAT FORMS DISCIPLES

Parish ministries offer young people more than a role on Sunday. They teach:

- Confidence - standing before the community, reading Scripture, or assisting at the altar helps youth grow comfortable using their voices and talents.
- Commitment - showing up, preparing well, and serving consistently builds reliability and maturity.
- Belonging - ministry con-



nects youth to their parish family, giving them a place where they are known, needed, and encouraged.

• Faith Ownership - serving draws young people deeper into the liturgy and the life of the Church, helping them understand their faith not only as something received, but as something lived.

These experiences often become seeds for future vocations, whether to marriage, priesthood, religious life or generous lay leadership in the Church and community.

CELEBRATE AND ENCOURAGE

The Youth Service Picnic is meant to be both a thank you and an invitation: a thank-you for the countless ways young people already serve and an invitation to continue growing as disciples who bring their gifts into the world.

The afternoon's Vocation Panel will feature lay ministers and clergy who will share how service in their youth shaped their sense of purpose and direction.

The day will close with 4 p.m. Mass with Bishop LaValley, giving thanks for the young people who help animate parish life throughout the Diocese.

All youth who serve in parish ministries - and their families - are warmly invited to attend.

For registration, visit: www.rcdony.org/ya or use the QR code published on this page.

Environmental Stewardship

AI & data centers

People have many concerns about AI. Many individuals focus primarily on AI's extreme memory and computational power that could challenge human decisions. But there are also environmental concerns. In developing and supporting this platform, a vast amount of resources are used, and that comes with a high environmental price tag.

Data centers that process the information and functions required by AI use large quantities of electricity. In communities where data centers have been built, they may consume as much as 20% of the area's total electric usage. This can strain the electric grid of a region, and that can increase electric costs for all users.

Heat is radiated as a byproduct and must be removed using water. A data center can use thousands of gallons of water daily for cooling.

In his encyclical, *Magnificent Humanity*, Pope Leo states "As their complexity increases, especially in the case of large language models, the need for computing power and storage capacity grows too, which requires an extensive network of machines, cables, data centers and energy-intensive infrastructures. For this reason, it is essential to develop more sustainable technological solutions that reduce environmental impact and help protect our common home." (MH101)

It is hard to decide what to do regarding AI. Certainly, we can support those who voice concerns. We can communicate with elected representatives to inform them of the risks AI presents to the environment and to the society. We also must pray for guidance as to how to respond to this technology and pray for those making policy decisions and for those already impacted AI.

As the Holy Father stated in his document, we must realize that AI is like any other tool. It can be used for betterment or destruction.

Bishop's Public Schedule

June 17 – 9:30 a.m. – Mass at the Adirondack Correctional Facility in Raybrook

10:30 a.m. – Meeting with the International Priests at Camp Guggenheim in Saranac Lake

5 p.m. – Annual Banquet for the Staff of Our Lady of Outreach Ministry at Martin Field Club in Ogdensburg

June 18 – 9:45 a.m. – Episcopal Council Meeting at Bishop's Residence

6 p.m. – Confirmation at St. Mary's Church in Constableville along with St. John's Church in Lyons Falls, St. Martin's Church in Port Leyden and St. Mary's Nativity Church in West Leyden

June 19 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

June 20 – 1 p.m. – Graduation Ceremony for Seton Catholic Seniors at Hawkins Hall (SUNY Plattsburgh) in Plattsburgh

June 21 – 8 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

11 a.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

June 23 – 10:30 a.m. – Diocesan Finance Council Meeting at Bishop's Residence

June 24 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

5 p.m. – Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Stephen's Church in Croghan followed by Parish Picnic

June 26 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

5:30 p.m. – Annual Knight of the Year Banquet at Martin Field Club in Ogdensburg

June 27 – 10:30 a.m. – Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting - Location TBD

4 p.m. – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

June 28 – 9:30 a.m. – Confirmation at St. Mary's Church in Waddington along with St. John the Baptist Church in Madrid

June 29 – Noon – Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral

June 30 – 2 p.m. – Mass at the Altona Correctional Facility in Altona

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 lshoen@rcdony.org



Abigail "Abby" Schaub



Lydia Wahba

Plattsburgh's Seton Catholic honors top grads

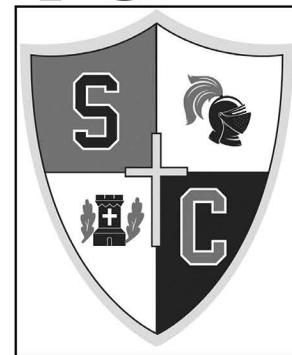
Seton Catholic School in Plattsburgh congratulates its top graduates, Valedictorian Abigail "Abby" Schaub and Salutatorian Lydia Wahba.

Abby, who will graduate with a 98.1 GPA, will attend the University of Notre Dame to study business analytics.

An AP Scholar and National Honor Society Treasurer, Abby has earned Highest Honor Roll recognition throughout high school. She is a dedicated leader as Key Club President and an engaged participant in various volunteer activities throughout the community.

Abby also excels in competitive Irish dancing and serves as a coach, sharing her talents with the community. A varsity cross country runner, she is admired for her balance of academics, leadership and service, as well as her humility, character and commitment to excellence.

Lydia Wahba graduates from Seton Catholic this June as salutatorian with a 97.7 GPA.



She will attend McGill University to pursue pre-med studies.

Lydia has distinguished herself through rigorous coursework, including multiple Advanced Placement classes, and participation in the competitive New Visions Medical Program. Lydia is committed to service, volunteering at CVPH Hospital and gaining hands-on experience through medical camps and physician shadowing.

A scholar-athlete and dedicated leader, she founded Seton's French Club and serves in several roles, including Student Council vice president and Key Club officer.

Rest in Peace

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

June 17 – Rev. Thomas J. Thotumkal, 1992

June 19 – Rev. Gerard Chouinard, O.M.I., 1955; Deacon David F. Moltz, 2011

June 20 – Rev. James O'Hara, 1949

June 21 – Rev. Joseph T. Moriarty, O.S.A., 1905; Msgr. Joseph F. Luker, 1972

June 23 – Rev. Edward Chevalier, O.M.I., 1894; Rev. Donat Morrisette, O.M.I., 1976

June 24 – Rev. John Simard, 1943; Msgr. Timothy P. Holland, 1948; Rev. Joseph P. Ryan, 1968; Rev. W. Cyril Rapin, 2006

June 25 – Rev. J. Rodrigue Lauzon, 1944

June 26 – Rev. Charles F. Turgeon, 1888; Rev. Jean Baptiste Frigon, O.M.I., 1930; Rev. Arthur St. Cyr, O.M.I., 1957

June 27 – Rev. Auguste A. Brunet, O.M.I., 1866; Rev. Francis X. Charbonneau, 1928

June 28 – Rev. John J. Regnery, O.S.A., 1954

June 29 – Rev. Pierre Huet de la Valiniere, 1806; Rev. Adonat L. Dufresne, 1940; Rev. Gilbert J. Faucher, 1981; Deacon Francis E. LeRoux, 1996

June 30 – Rev. George F. Maroun, 2016

Funeral celebrated for Lorraine Giardino

A Funeral Mass for Lorraine Giardino was celebrated on Friday, June 12, 2026, at St. Hubert's Church in Star Lake.

Lorraine was born on March 29, 1950, at Huntington Hospital on Long Island, to her parents, Walter Eric Sandberg and Margaret Albino Sandberg, now deceased. She was raised in the village of Northport, NY. She graduated from St. Philip Neri Elementary School and Northport Public High School in 1967. She graduated from Nancy Taylor Business Institute and immediately worked at Sports-A-Field Magazine in Manhattan, NY, until her marriage to Philip F. Giardino in 1970 at St. Philip Neri Church, Northport.

She met Philip on a blind date. His mother met Lorraine and found that their birthdays were on the same day. She thought this was unique. Reluctantly at first, Phil went on a date with Lorraine, and they continued dating until their marriage on Oct. 24, 1970.

They moved to Brooklyn, NY, where Phil first taught. After three years with a young son, they moved to Star Lake, NY.

They raised a son, Philip Walter, a daughter, Elizabeth, and a daughter, Laura Leary, starting at 12 years old when Laura's father passed away. They also took in Lorraine's father, Walter, for the last 10 years of his life.

Lorraine retired from Community Bank in Star Lake after 18 years as a Loan Officer and Customer Service Representative.

Lorraine offered piano lessons to the young people for decades. She opened a fabric shop, "Patches and Stitches", when her children were too young to go to school. She was a member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Knights of Columbus and the assistant music liturgist with Jean Pomerville at every Sunday Mass for decades. She encouraged and permitted her husband to be



Lorraine Giardino

ordained a deacon, supporting him in all his commitments. Lorraine started the "Christmas Bazaar" with the help of others. This one-day sale took a whole year of preparation, and Lorraine invited everyone to be involved. Similarly, Lorraine ran the "Holiday Elves" in conjunction with Toys for Tots, ensuring every child in the Clifton-Fine area had gifts at the holidays. Lorraine loved Christmas and went overboard in her family celebra-

tions. She also loved and took pride in her flower garden, insisting on planting perennials. She loved musicals of all sorts and especially Gershwin.

Lorraine is survived by her loving husband, Deacon Philip Francis Giardino; a sister, Helen Jones and her husband, William Jones of Tucson, Arizona, and her son Scott Jakobs of Modesto, California; Lorraine's son, Philip Walter Giardino and his wife Katrina Neijstrom Giardino, and their children, Cody and Lucas Giardino; Lorraine's daughter, Elizabeth Cooper and her husband, Christopher Cooper, and their children, Darryl, Caleb, and Adalynn Cooper; Lorraine's daughter, Laura Leary McRoberts and her children, Connor and Brianna McRoberts and their father Chris McRoberts; as well as a large, loving, extended family.

In place of flowers, please make donations to the St. Hubert's Church Christmas Bazaar.

NY bishops criticize gender-neutral language law

By Amira Abuzeid
EWTN News

The New York state Legislature passed a bill that replaces the words "mother" and "father" in some state laws with gender-neutral language, a move that New York's bishops say will further "muddy what is true and good."

The bill, passed by the state Assembly in March and by the state Senate on June 2, now heads to Gov. Kathy Hochul to be signed into law.

Under the new law, "mother" would be replaced with "gestating parent," and "father" would be "non-gestating parent." The words "paternity" and "filiation" would be replaced

with "parentage."

The New York State Catholic Conference issued a memorandum on June 10 noting the bishops' opposition to the new law, calling it "politically charged" and "unnecessary."

"The truth is that mothers are mothers, and fathers are fathers," the bishops wrote. "Words matter, and serious changes to our governing language serve only to wash away the importance of these roles in our society."

"The yearslong push in our state for abortion on demand and up until birth, the endless millions of dollars funneled to Planned Parenthood, and the legalization of com-

mmercial surrogacy have reduced women to vessels and babies to disposable commodities," they said.

"The Legislature's final twist of the knife is now apparently remov-

ing the term 'mother' altogether," they wrote. "We must reverse course and recognize the importance of both mothers and fathers and pursue changes that truly support

women and families."

The legislation (Senate Bill S9316/Assembly Bill A8382A) targets parts of the Family Court Act and laws having to do with, among

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



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NEW DEACON ORDAINED

Photos by Matthew Dwyer and Jesse Sovie





Lawsuits filed over NY, Illinois suicide laws

By Daniel Payne
EWTN News

Multiple lawsuits filed in federal courts on June 11 allege that permissive assisted suicide laws in New York and Illinois are threatening the life and well-being of individuals with disabilities in those states.

Several individual plaintiffs and patients' rights groups filed the suits in two U.S. district courts arguing against the states' respective laws that permit doctors to intentionally cause the death of patients deemed terminally ill, a process known as "medical aid in dying," a term used in state law.

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker signed the state's assisted suicide bill into law in December 2025, while New York Gov. Kathy Hochul signed her own state's bill in February of this year. Both measures have been ardently opposed by Catholic leaders.

The Illinois suit — brought by two plaintiffs and several groups including the Institute

for Patients' Rights and the National Council on Independent Living — argues that the state's law removes the "ethical obligation of every physician to do no harm," nullifying a doctor's requirement to, in part, "actively prevent the patient from ... suicide."

The state is offering suicide as a "reasonable option" for medical patients, the suit argues, and permits suicide to be "encouraged by physicians."

The New York law, meanwhile — which is scheduled to go into effect in August — presents a "looming threat" to individuals with disabilities, the lawsuit in that state says, in part because it does not require medical officials to "consider a patient's psychiatric or psychological condition or how that may affect their suicidality" when they ask for help in dying.

The New York suit argues that the law will allow patients to obtain suicide assistance even if they are not suffering from terminal conditions; it further alleges that the law would allow patients to "make

themselves eligible" for suicide by "declining available medical treatment."

Both suits argue that the respective suicide regimes violate state and federal laws, including disability protection laws; the suits further claim that the rules violate equal-protection provisions under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Matt Vallière, president and executive director of the Institute for Patients' Rights, which is a party in both suits, said in a June 11 press release that the laws "create a separate and unequal system in which people with life-threatening disabilities are offered death instead of the support programs everyone else gets."

The lawsuits "are about affirming that every person has inestimable value and dignity, regardless of age, disability, or prognosis, and ensuring that no one is treated as disposable under the law," he said.

The filings are the fourth and fifth lawsuits filed as part of a national effort by the initiative End Assisted Suicide, a

coalition group targeting state suicide laws on behalf of people with disabilities.

Catholic leaders in both states have sharply criticized the assisted suicide laws. New York Archbishop Ronald Hicks said this month that the state's law would usher in a "new and frightening era" there.

"How long before this so-called 'compassion' for the terminally ill evolves from a 'choice' into an expectation to kill oneself for all sorts of vulnerable individuals, including those with disabilities, the elderly, and those in impoverished and medically underserved communities?" the prelate said.

The Illinois bishops, meanwhile, described their state's assisted suicide law as a "dangerous and heartbreaking path."

"Rather than investing in real end-of-life support such as palliative and hospice care, pain management, and family-centered accompaniment, our state has chosen to normalize killing oneself," the bishops said.

Gender-neutral language law

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

others, domestic relations, social services, vehicle and traffic, alcoholic beverage control, child support statutes, and education law.

On June 3, Hochul said she was unfamiliar with the specifics of the bill and would familiarize herself with them before commenting.

"I have until the end of the year to review them and make a decision," she said, though according to New York state law, now that the Legislature is adjourned, she has 30 days to sign it. If she does not, the bill is automatically pocket-vetoed (it dies and does

not become law).

New York's bishops urged Hochul "to veto this upsetting legislation and uphold the importance of both mothers and fathers in our state," saying the bill's "wholesale effect will be to mock the foundation of the family."

The bishops accused legislators of "political pandering and appeasing a small group of very loud advocates."

"Erasing the terms 'mother' and 'father' from our laws will not help struggling New Yorkers afford groceries, access healthcare, or find housing, but it will further muddy what is true and good,"

they wrote.

All 38 Senate Democrats who voted supported the measure, while all 22 Republicans voted against it. One Democrat also voted no, joining the unanimous Republican opposition. The bill had previously passed the Assembly 91-46 on March 19, with almost all Democrats voting for it and almost all Republicans against.

According to reporting by Fox5 New York, the state Senate bill passed quickly and with no debate, "shocking" some lawmakers.

While there was a short floor speech last week by Republican

State Sen. Dean Murray opposing the bill, the overall process was rushed as the legislative session wrapped up June 10.

"These terms matter," Murray said. "'Mother' is one of the most sacred titles you can have. As is 'father,' 'grandmother,' grand-father.'"

He continued: "In fact ... the term mother is so important, we have a special day named after it," referring to Mother's Day.

"Of course, now maybe we change that to Gestating Parent's Day ... and Father's Day, just change it to Parent's Day."

Republican Rep. Claudia Tenney, a U.S. Congresswoman who previously served in the New York State Assembly from 2011 to 2016, issued a strong rebuke on social media, stating: "The party that can't define a woman is now rewriting New York law to erase mothers and fathers. Only in Albany could 'mom' and 'dad' become too controversial."

Proponents argue the new language is more inclusive and takes into account special cases that occur when there is no clear biological parent, such as in surrogacy and adoption situations.

Poll: Social acceptance of birth control decreases

By Tyler Arnold
EWTN News

Although most Americans view birth control and having children outside of marriage as morally acceptable behaviors, that support saw a significant drop according to Gallup's 2026 Value and Beliefs poll.

The annual survey tracks American views about 20 subjects with moral implications. The issues that saw the largest decreases in support in 2026 were birth control, having children outside of marriage, sex between teenagers, gambling, and cloning animals.

Pollsters surveyed 1,001 adults from May 1-17. The report has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points. Pollsters asked whether the person finds the behaviors "morally acceptable" or "morally wrong."

Joseph Meaney, senior ethicist at the National Catholic Bioethics Center, told EWTN News ethics cannot be measured by polling because "what is right is not necessarily popular," but these polls "help us understand how effectively ethical conduct is being taught and perceived."

"It is hopeful to see clear moral violations like using birth control and out-of-wedlock pregnancy losing support in American society," he said.

The issue that saw the largest drop of societal support from 2025 to 2026 was having children outside of marriage, with the poll finding 58% of Americans believing this is morally acceptable and 35% saying it is morally wrong — a nine-point drop in acceptance from last year.

Pollsters found a partisan divide on the subject, with 76% of Democrats viewing it as morally acceptable, along with 56% of independents and 44% of Republicans.

For birth control, 83% of Americans called it acceptable and 11% called it morally wrong, which shows a seven-point drop in acceptance from the previous year. It found a slight partisan divide here as well, with 92% of Democrats accepting it, along with 81% of independents and 79% of Republicans.

As gambling becomes more widespread through websites and mobile applications, the societal acceptance dropped down to 57%, with disapproval rising to 35%. This is a six-point drop from the previous year. It has acceptance from 66% of Democrats, 55% of Republicans, and 53% of independents.

Societal acceptance of sex between

teenagers has consistently been low, but it decreased by an additional six points in 2026 from 41% acceptance to 35% acceptance, with disapproval at 57%. It's accepted by 54% of Democrats, 35% of independents, and 16% of Republicans.

Cloning animals has also been consistently unpopular, but acceptance went down from 34% to 27%, with 64% disapproving. This did not have a significant partisan divide: 29% of independents, 27% of Democrats, and 25% of Republicans view it as acceptable.

Pollsters also asked other ethical questions related to subjects such as abortion and other life issues, gender, human sexuality, and marriage but did not see a major shift from 2025 through 2026.

A majority of people, 52%, believe the death penalty is morally acceptable while 39% say it is not. A plurality of people believe abortion and doctor-assisted suicide are morally acceptable, with 49% approving on both questions. It found 41% say abortion is morally wrong and 45% of people say doctor-assisted suicide is morally wrong.

There was a partisan divide here with Republicans being more likely to view the death penalty as morally acceptable and Democrats being more likely to view abortion and doctor-assisted suicide as morally acceptable.

The poll found societal acceptance for divorce at 74%, for premarital sex at 65%, and for gay and lesbian relationships at 62%. Alternatively, only 38% said it is morally acceptable to change one's gender.

The poll showed that support for same-sex marriage is below its 2021 and 2022 peak of 71%, sitting now at 65%. This is slightly lower than the 68% of people who said they supported same-sex marriage in 2025. The decline mostly comes from Republicans, with only 35% supporting same-sex marriage, down from 38% in 2025 and significantly down from its 2022 peak of 56%.

Societal acceptance for extramarital affairs was found to be 7%, for cloning humans at 9%, for polygamy at 19%, and for pornography 31%.

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, senior ethicist at the National Catholic Bioethics Center, said these polls "help remind us of the importance of being in dialogue, and actively discussing critical moral issues in an open society, so as to contribute to the formation of human consciences in truth and light."

CATHOLIC WORLD AT A GLANCE

Papal nuncio urges U.S. bishops to deepen communion

ORLANDO, Florida — In his first address to the U.S. bishops since becoming apostolic nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Gabriele Caccia called for deeper communion within the Church and presented Pope Leo XIV's pontificate as a moment of renewal rooted in continuity with the vision of Pope Francis. Speaking June 10 at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' spring plenary assembly in Orlando, Florida, Caccia emphasized themes of peace, communion, and mission, describing them as essential both to the Church's public witness and to the ministry of bishops themselves. "I wish to be present among you as a brother bishop who journeys with you," Caccia told the assembly. "My service here is one of listening, trust, and shared discernment within the Church that we are all serving together." The address marked Caccia's first appearance before the full body of U.S. bishops since Pope Leo appointed him nuncio in March, succeeding Cardinal Christophe Pierre, who retired after reaching the Vatican's age limit. Caccia began by conveying greetings and a blessing from Pope Leo, telling the bishops that the Holy Father remains close to them in their ministry and prays that the Lord will strengthen them in their vocation. The nuncio also paid tribute to Pierre, thanking his predecessor for years of service to the Church in the United States and noting his efforts to travel widely throughout the country to better understand local Churches.

European Court: Governments cannot ban evangelization

On June 9, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruled that Bulgaria violated freedom protections after authorities used an overly broad and vaguely-worded ban on "religious propaganda" to prevent Jehovah's Witnesses from engaging in door-to-door evangelization. Such religious outreach was banned while other forms of canvassing were permitted. The case was brought by members of the group, who argued that local authorities had unlawfully prevented them from carrying out their missionary work. Judges found that regulations adopted by the city of Shumen unlawfully restricted religious activity and failed to clearly define what constituted prohibited religious propaganda. The ruling concluded that the ban violated Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which protects freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. Nicolas Bauer, a doctor of law and advocacy director at the European Centre for Law and Justice, which intervened in the case as a third party, said the judgment reaffirms a fundamental principle of religious liberty. "Evangelizing is often viewed with suspicion in a secularized Europe," Bauer told EWTN News. "The ECHR ruling reaffirms a basic requirement of religious freedom for believers: the right to the same freedom of expression as everyone else." At the center of the dispute was what the court viewed as unequal treatment of religious speech. Under Shumen city regulations, residents and organizations were permitted to go door-to-door for commercial and political purposes, but religious outreach alone was prohibited.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

BROWNBAG DISCUSSION

Join us online to read and discuss Pope Leo's Encyclical Letter Magnifica Humanitas.

Date: Wednesdays, June 24, July 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29

Time: Noon

Place: Online

Contact: Register at www.rcdony.org/brownbag. A link will be sent to participants. The document can be downloaded from the registration site. For more information, contact Marika Donders at mdonders@rcdony.org

ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN

RETIREMENT RECEPTION

Olmstedville — Come honor Father Philip Allen who is celebrating 67 years of priesthood and 15 years of devoted care for the parishioners of St. Joseph's Church.

Date: June 21

Time: 1 p.m. to 4

Place: Minerva Community Center

Contact: Food served will be potluck. Please contact Jan Hogan at 518-242-0890 to share a dish.

RETREAT DAY

Saranac Lake — The Sisters of St. Joseph Justice Promoter/Faith and Ecology Committee are inviting you to a retreat day.

Date: June 19 or July 25

Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; registration begins at 9:30

Place: Guggenheim Lodge

Cost: \$25

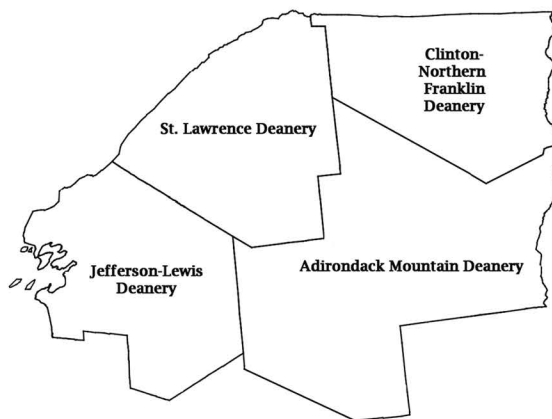
Features: An invitation to come aside amid the beauty of the Adirondack Mts. and Saranac Lake to ponder the mystery of God's creation and our role in His Plan. Facilitator: Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ

Contact: Wanda Kavanaugh sewmom59@gmail.com, 315-489-6733 Space is limited; Deadline to register is June 14. For more information, Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, srbethssj@gmail.com

CLINTON NORTHERN FRANKLIN

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Peru — The Peru Knights of Colum-



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

Parishioners are invited to send information about activities to:

North Country Catholic, PO Box 326,
Ogdensburg, NY 13669

e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.

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

bus Council #7273 will have the Bill McBride Jr. Memorial Charity Golf Tournament.

Date: June 19

Time: Shotgun start at 10 a.m.

Place: Adirondack Golf and Country Club

Cost: \$300 for a 4 person team
Contact: Obtain entry forms and information from Greg Lombard at 518-593-2652, or email zeroturn364@gmail.com or Scarlett McBride at 518-572-8790 or email scar6064@charter.net

FIRST FRIDAY

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

Date: July 3

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

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Malone — Chip in for charity at St. André's Parish Golf Tournament.

Date: July 24

Time: 12 p.m.

Place: 79 Golf Course Road

Cost: MGC Members \$65 / Non-Members \$100; Includes: green fees, Cart, Dinner & Prizes

Features: Fundraiser for St. André's Outreach Center. Men, Women, Mixed Divisions

Contact: Call Sue at St. André's

Church Office at 518-483-1300 or malonemb@rcdony.org.

SOAKING PRAYERS SESSIONS

Come enjoy a relaxing prayer opportunity at two different locations.

Plattsburgh: Newman Center, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30; July 6 Aug. 3 Sept. 14, Oct. 5, Nov. 2 and Dec. 7

Ellenburg Center: Our Lady of the Adirondacks House of Prayer, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (please bring a bag lunch); July 9, Aug. 13, Sept. 10, Oct. 8; session includes recitation of the rosary.

Features: Soaking Prayer is done in a relaxed spiritual atmosphere wherein you surrender yourself to receive an outpouring and infilling of the Holy Spirit enabling you to be immersed in God's love, mercy, healing, compassion and peace. Each session begins with a short introduction followed by praise, worship and soaking prayer for an extended period of time as guided by the Holy Spirit. Remainder of time is spent listening to scripture readings and remaining receptive to receive healing at any level: emotional, psychological, mental, physical, spiritual or generational.

Contact: All sessions are facilitated by Eve McGill, Living Waters Healing Ministry 518-645-2648, evemcgill16@charter.net

JEFFERSON-LEWIS

SPAGHETTI DINNER

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

Date: June 25

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

MOUNT CARMEL FEST

Watertown — St. Anthony's to have their 108th Mount Carmel Festival.

Schedule: June 26, 5 p.m. to 10; June 27 1 p.m. to 10; June 28, 1 p.m. to 10. Religious Procession at 5 p.m. and giant fireworks at 9:30 p.m.

ST. JAMES FAIR

Carthage — St. James to have their 52nd annual fair.

Date: June 25 & 26, 5 p.m. to 9; June 27, noon to 9 p.m.

Features: Games of Chance, Black Jack, Big Six Wheel, Pull Tabs, Raffle Tickets, Raffle Ticket Prizes: 1st Place - \$1000, 2nd Place (5) - \$200; Seller of 1st place winning ticket - \$100 Ticket price: 1 for \$5 or 5 for \$20; Drawing Saturday June 27th. Entertainment: Reptiles Forever, Forest City Farms Petting Zoo, DJ's, Fire Department and much more! Rides provided by Ontario Amusement Rides, purchase a wrist band for \$20 and get unlimited rides for 4 hours, Thurs and Fri 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Sat. 12 p.m. to 4 or 5 p.m. to 9. Food will include: Italian, American, Specialty, Bob's Burgers, Clams, Salt Potatoes, Fried Dough, Ice Cream and a Beer & Wine Tent.

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: July 5

Time: Following 11 a.m. Mass

Place: St. Hedwig's Church

Contact: 315-348-6260

ST. LAWRENCE

ROSARY WITH DEVOTIONS

Ogdensburg — The Legion of Mary will pray the rosary with devotions for First Saturday.

Date: July 4

Time: 8 a.m.

Place: Notre Dame Church, Ogdensburg

Features: Rosary with devotions

FIRST SATURDAY ROSARY

Massena — Sacred Heart Church to have first Saturday Rosary Devotion.

Date: July 4

Time: 3:15 p.m.

Features: First Saturday Rosary Devotion to OUR Lady of Fatima. Confessions will be available. Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 p.m.

MENS GROUP

Massena — Men's group to meet the first Saturday of every month.

Date: July 4

Time: 9 a.m. Mass with meeting to follow

Place: Sacred Heart Church

MONTHLY BRUNCH

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

Date: July 12 (Second Sunday of each month)

Time: 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Place: Father Amyot Parish Center

Cost: Adults, \$10; under 12, \$5; under 5, Free; Omelets, add \$3; Take-outs available

Contact: For more information contact Grand Knight Gil Gonthier 315-212-5166.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

GUGGENHEIM REGISTRATION

Camp Guggenheim registration and new staff application season is now open.

Dates: July 5 - July 10 for 11-13 year olds; July 12 - July 17 for 12-15 year olds; July 19 - July 24 for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

Pope Leo XIV shares lesson from soccer

By Diego López Marina
EWTN News

With the FIFA World Cup kicking off, during his apostolic visit to Spain Pope Leo XIV shared a reflection regarding soccer, highlighting the importance of learning teamwork as a lesson for life.

"Soccer also helps us remember something very important: that life is not a race to be run in solitude; it is something played as a team, and we must learn to run together," the pon-

tiff observed during a meeting with members of diocesan charitable and assistance organizations at the Church of St. Augustine in Barcelona.

"Someone who could be a star but never passes the ball — doesn't let the others get into the game — will probably lose," the pontiff added while answering questions from Renzo, a 6-year-old boy who wanted to know if the Holy Father liked soccer.

At the outset of his remarks on the subject, the Holy Father

mentioned that he currently plays tennis but used to play American football in his youth.

He also recalled his time as a missionary in Peru and the love for sports that he shared with seminarians there. "When I was in Trujillo, I played soccer — on defense, if you want to know; I wasn't a big goal-scorer," he recounted.

"A little sport is good for everyone; one has to find ways to — let's say — maintain and enjoy good health: body, mind, and soul. So, that has indeed

been a part of my life," he continued.

Finally, he connected the topic of sports to the social work carried out by Church communities in Barcelona, describing them as a team working in unity. "I want to acknowledge and commend everything you are doing here," he concluded.

This story was first published by ACI Prensa, the Spanish-language sister service of EWTN News. It has been translated and adapted by EWTN News English.

Around the diocese

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

12-15 year olds; July 26 - July 31 for 12-15 year olds; Aug 2 - Aug 7 for 16-18 year olds (waitlist only for week 5)

Cost: \$450 per week

Contact: Register for camp at <https://www.rcdony.org/youth/camp/registration>

LIFE GIVING WOUNDS RETREAT

Utica - The Life-Giving Wounds retreat, for adults whose parents separated or divorced to be held.

Date: June 26-28

Place: Good News Center

Cost: \$80-150 for commuter, shared room or single room. Retreat price includes overnight lodging, meals, and all retreat materials.

Contact: Register now at <https://solgw26.eventbrite.com/> If you have any questions, contact Steve Tartaglia at startaglia@rcdony.org or 315-393-2920.

YOUTH SERVICE PICNIC

Saranac Lake - The Diocesan Youth Service Picnic to be held for all youth in parish ministry.

Date: July 18

Time: Noon to 5 p.m.

Place: Camp Guggenheim

Features: Join us for a diocesan wide celebration of the

young people who serve our parishes as altar servers, musicians, lectors, greeters, and more. Enjoy an afternoon at Camp Guggenheim with great food, high energy activities, music, time with peers from across the Diocese, and Mass with Bishop LaValley. A joyful summer gathering to honor the youth who help lead our parish communities.

Contact: Register at <https://rcdony.org/ya>

DYING WITH CHRIST, LIVING WITH HOPE

Plattsburgh - When we make a commitment to die with Christ, we can truly live with hope. Learn about the new Physician Assisted Suicide law and how MAID has progressed throughout Canada.

Date: Sept. 29

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Place: St. Peter's Emmaus Room

Cost: \$10 donation, includes lunch

Features: Discussions feature theologians and healthcare professionals giving perspectives on suffering, grief, dying and our Christian duty to care. The day will include guest speaker Jessica Rodgers, coalition director of Patients Rights Action Fund.

Contact: Registration online at: <https://www.rcdony.org/liv->

[ingwithhope](https://www.rcdony.org/liv-) For more information contact cminer@rcdony.org

RACHELS VINEYARD

Saranac Lake - Are you or a friend suffering after abortion? You aren't alone. Join others for a week-end of hope and healing.

Date: Oct. 9-11

Place: Guggenheim Lodge

Cost: \$150 includes lodging, food and all retreat materials. Scholarships available.

Contact: Confidential online registration at www.rcdony.org/pro-life/rv-retreat For more information: Colleen Miner Email: cminer@rcdony.org Phone Number: 518-524-0774

HEALING RETREAT

Ogdensburg - This year's Annual Our Lady of the Rosary Healing Retreat will have the theme of Love Heals.

Date: Oct. 8 - 11

Place: Wadhams Hall

Features: The Presenter will be Sonja Corbitt. Do not waste another day. Stop the pain. Love heals. John Paul the Great said, "Suffering unleashes love," because we only ever find Jesus and His love in our wounds. Sonja Corbitt has been teaching people how to acknowledge and open their woundedness to God's love for over 17 years as a leader in the Catholic Church and Scripture teaching space. You may know her as the Catholic Evangelista through her speaking, writing, and podcasting.

Contact: Space is limited and Register today: <https://www.rcdony.org/ourlady>. For more information contact Kathleen Nichols kmsnichols1163@gmail.com

To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint

of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact Victim Assistance Coordinator, Terrianne Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC, 5050 Route 374, Merrill, NY 12955; terrianneyanulavich@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



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315-608-7556
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SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURE

'Jesus transformed suffering'

Cookouts and get-togethers, graduation parties, family reunions, the upcoming July 4 celebration, parish and community festivals, time with friends and family in the backyard are all hallmarks of the summer here in the North Country. However, we come to church amid this relaxed atmosphere and hear words like these from Sacred Scripture: "Terror on every side!" "Let us denounce him." "We can take our vengeance on him."

Summer may be the happy time of the year, especially here in the North Country, but the stark reality of daily living will force us to recognize turmoil and suffering in our own lives or in the lives of others. We face external forces over which we have no con-

trol, the difficult boss, the crazy driver in front of us, social unrest and a list too long to list here. Even when we speak against such evils as abortion, transgenderism, promiscuity, the redefinition of marriage, we are accused of hate speech because many do not accept life the way God designed it.

Some people face bodily harm, like the early martyrs of the Church and the current martyrs who are being slaughtered in certain countries for the mere fact that they are followers of Jesus Christ. In fact, statistics tell us that more people have been martyred for being Christian in the 20th and 21st centuries than in all the previous centuries.

Some people wrongly believe that Jesus is like helicopter parents of to-

June 21

Twelfth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

READINGS

Jeremiah 20:10-13

Romans 5:12-15

Matthew 10:26-33

day who try to eradicate all obstacles from the life of a child rather than teaching children how to face the difficulties of life. You may have heard some fervent, perhaps over-zealous preachers, affirm that if we believe hard enough in Jesus, he will take away our suffering. Tell me where Jesus said that!! Jesus did say not to be afraid of those who could kill the body, but he never said that people would not try to hurt us or that no one could succeed in doing so. If fact, full disclosure tells us that Jesus did instruct us to take up our cross and follow him. As Christians, we love

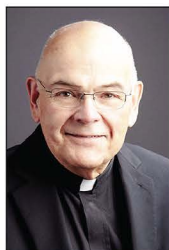
to dwell on the reality of the resurrection, but, likewise as Christians, we must embrace the reality of the cross as did Jesus. So, being a disciple of Jesus will not save us from suffering in this life, but being a disciple of Jesus will teach us how to face suffering in this life.

So, why would Jesus allow us to suffer? After all, did Jesus not come to save us? Doesn't saving mean keeping us from all harm? Well, the Bible tells us that suffering entered the world because of sin. It is true that Jesus saved us from sin, but he does not take away our freedom, a freedom that can cause pain and suffering. Jesus did not remove suffering. Rather his lesson transformed suffering into a means of grace. Witness what he did with his suffering. Being faithful to God even when facing personal tragedy means that we can take that

tragedy and turn it into something beautiful just as Jesus did with his own suffering. His crucifixion led to his resurrection. Jesus did not remove suffering. Rather, Jesus transformed suffering into a channel of grace.

A crucifix reminds us about the crucifixion of Jesus. Some see the cross or crucifix as a lovely piece of jewelry. We should take the many crucifixes that we see in our world to remind us that we can unite our sufferings with those of Jesus to transform not only our lives, but the lives of others. Is that not what Jesus meant when he said to take up our cross? Taking up the cross transformed the life of Jesus. Taking up the cross will transform our lives, too.

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Msgr. Robert
H. Aucoin

CALLED TO SERVE

The realities of aging

It can't be age? Or is it?

A doctor recently had the audacity to note in her records that I was in my 80th decade. I was just 50 the other day. That can't be right.

My friends are all getting parts replaced. A shoulder for a couple of folks. Knees, hips, even ankles have been replaced or realigned by acquaintances.

Another friend brushed his thinning hair and cautioned that I would experience the same things when I reached his age.

The reality is I passed his age a while

ago and my hair line is receding and my hair has thinned. I am starting to look like my grandfather.

I remember when a buddy who was an optician used to tell me, "I'll get you when you are 40." I was 42 when I bought my first eyeglasses from him.

When older folks gather, they talk about the pills they are taking or the parts that have been surgically addressed. Gone are the days of boasting about "our kids" or "our pets." Now, when we are not reveling in our medical history, we are talking

about the grandkids.

My mother-in-law, in her 90s, would tell us, "there are a lot of old people here." She was referring to the nursing home she lived in with my father-in-law in Connecticut.

Some folks I know are having heart surgery, cancer treatments, stones removed or dissolved. My wife is in the hospital as I write this. She is being treated for pneumonia.

God bless the doctors and nurses who have seen it all before

yet treat each patient as a new case, as an individual. The patient has anxiety, uncertainty and fear. A caring professional allays those fears but gently explains to the patient and loved ones what is happening.

Deacon
Kevin Mastellon

Occasionally a friend dies. It prompts me, at 77, to say, "he was so young."

I thank God for my health today, but I know I too am slowing down.

It is the cycle of life. The days of our sun-

set are hard to imagine when we are young and invincible.

Strength comes from God. The prophet Isaiah says, "Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak. Say to those whose hearts are frightened: be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; With divine recompense he comes to save you."

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

'Why are you here' Part 3

This is part 3 of the story of Father Stephen Kim SeongHueon, a Korean missionary in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

When he spoke about his life, he often returned, smiling, to that period when "he decided to take a step back from the mission and withdraw for a time and spent four years in a ger in the countryside." There, in the typical Mongolian tent used as a dwelling, he discovered "the joy of a simple life." He collected horse manure for the stove, fetched water, and shared the daily life of the shepherds. Comparing "the two lifestyles—that of the frenetic city, where there are a thousand things to buy, and that of the simplicity of the countryside—one seemed clearly better to me than the other."

From that experience



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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info@rcdony.org

also came one of his most powerful images: "In the gers, in the countryside, and even in Ulaanbaatar, there is no running water, and you have to go and fetch it... People know what it means to find fresh water. That is why we must be present, so that they can find wells of fresh water in our churches." We are there, he said, "to speak of the Kingdom of God and of salvation," to offer "the Good News that will set them free. Free from what? From the slavery of sin and the feeling of guilt." This liberation is "very concrete, almost physical: it's like

pouring buckets of heavy water onto the ground." "We don't follow Jesus to offer a life full of success, but a full life, truly full, that fills us from within with that living water."

This is the true happiness he hoped Mongolian Christians would one day recognize: "The day will come when Mongolian Christians have enough experience to compare the lifestyles before them, and perhaps then they will utter that missionary 'ah' I mentioned earlier: 'Ah... I prefer this kind of happiness.'" "The turning point will come. When? I don't know. But

one day they will recognize where true happiness lies and say: 'This is what I've been searching for all my life.' And we will be there to welcome them, with the door wide open. In fact, we are already there."

The mark that Stephen Kim left in Mongolia remains alive, especially among the young people, now adults, who remember his dedication to youth ministry, his closeness, and his passion for life. In 2024, the Diocese of Daejeon, together with the *Korea Catholic Times*, produced a film entitled "Wind of the Prairie - The Last Lecture of a Mongolian Missionary," which helped to raise awareness of his life and work. In 2025, the *Korea Cath-*

olic Times also released a new documentary entitled "Who Is a Priest?", co-produced with the Korean Prado Priests Association, which recounts his life and mission in Mongolia. As the Apostolic Prefecture of Ulaanbaatar prepares, as it does every year, to celebrate Mass at his tomb on May 26, the question that permeated Father Stephen's entire life continues to resonate, addressed to each of us: "Why are you here?" "Missionaries proclaim the Gospel in many ways, but the most powerful is the witness of their own lives: 'Why are you here?' It is a very powerful question."

Article by Marie-Lucile Kubacki courtesy of FI-DES News Agency.

OBITUARIES

Chaumont – Carl E. Rippe, 77; Memorial Mass June 19, 2026 at All Saints Church.

Constableville – Roger A. Smith, 75; Graveside services June 13, 2026 at St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Deferiet – Jeanne L. (Hebert) Young, 89; Services to be held at a later date.

Lowville – Donald W. Chambers, 79; Graveside services June 13, 2026 at West Lowville Rural Cemetery.

Lowville – Theresa (Sgro) Magno DiBari, 91; Mass of Christian Burial June 12, 2026 at St. Peter's Church; burial in St. Charles Cemetery, East Farmingdale.

Malone – Christy Lynn (Carlin) Finley, 50; Mass of Christian Burial May 29, 2026 at Notre Dame Church.

Malone – Pauline M. (Santamore) Fleury, 96; Mass of Christian Burial June 8, 2026 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Mooers Forks – Gerald "Jay" G. Gonyo, 86; Mass of Christian Burial June 11, 2026 at St. Ann's Church; burial in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

Norfolk – Helen I. (Gang) Henderson, 101; Graveside services June 10, 2026 at the Visitation Cemetery.

Plattsburgh – Suzanne (Dietz) Irwin, 84; Mass of Christian Burial June 13, 2026 at St. Peter's Church.

Plattsburgh – Gloria M. (Desso) LaMotte, 88; Funeral Services June 10, 2026 at Brown Funeral Home.

Potsdam – Ruth Agnes (LaValley) Hayes, 69; Mass of Christian Burial June 12, 2026 at St. Mary's Church; burial in St. Mary's Cemetery.

Rouses Point – Doris B. (Trombley) Neale, 95; Mass of Christian Burial June 10 at St. Patrick's Church; burial in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Watertown – Edward F. Prevost, 94; Mass of Christian Burial June 11, 2026 at St. Anthony's Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

West Chazy – Phyllis Margaret (LaBarge) Parker, 86; Mass of Christian Burial June 13, 2026 at St. Joseph's Church; burial in parish cemetery.



Support And Pray
For Vocations



State Street • Carthage
June 25th, 26th & 27th
Thursday and Friday 5 pm - 9 pm
Saturday 12:00 pm - 9 pm

Games of Chance

*Black Jack *Big Six Wheel *Pull Tabs *Raffle Tickets

Raffle Ticket Prizes:

1st Place - \$1000, 2nd Place (5) - \$200
Seller of 1st place winning ticket - \$100
Ticket price: 1 for \$5 or 5 for \$20
\$\$\$ Drawing Saturday June 27th \$\$\$

Entertainment:
Reptiles Forever,

Forest City Farms Petting Zoo, DJ's,
Fire Department and much more!

Ontario Amusement Rides

Purchase a wrist band for \$20 and get unlimited rides for 4 hours
Thurs: 5pm-9pm, Fri: 5pm-9pm, Sat: 12pm-4pm or 5pm-9pm

FOOD

Italian ~ American ~ Specialty ~ Bob's Burgers
•Clams •Salt Potatoes •Fried Dough •Ice Cream •Beer & Wine Tent

Meet the Camp Guggenheim Staff

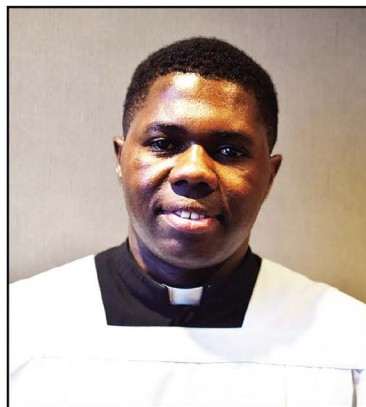
It's almost time for the start of the Camp Guggenheim season! Session 1 (ages 11-13) starts July 5! Week 2 (ages 12-15) and Week 5 (ages 16-18) are waiting list only, and other weeks are filling fast. Register today at rcdony.org/youth/camp/registration to secure a spot for your child/grandchild! The following is the second installment of our annual "Meet the Camp Guggenheim Staff" series. Additional 2026 camp staffers will be featured in future editions.



Angela Dwyer
Counselor

Hometown: Chateaugay

Bio/Welcome: Hey, My name is Angela Dwyer! I'm so excited for my second year on staff this summer! I'm a junior at Plattsburgh state studying speech pathology! I've known Guggenheim my entire life, and I just want everyone to experience a week here at a camp! We do so many fun things at camp, there's something for everyone! At the heart of it all it will strengthen your faith and bring you closer to God, and you get to do it all surrounded by the amazing friends you'll meet here! Praying for you all as we prepare for an amazing summer!



Ladouceur Flarissaint
Counselor & Seminarian

Hometown: Lowville/Originally from Haiti

Bio/Welcome: Hello, everyone! My name is Ladouceur Flarissaint, and I am a seminarian for the Diocese of Ogdensburg. I currently live in Lowville, NY, and I am originally from Petit-Goâve, Haiti. This will be my first summer serving on staff and my first time at a camp in the United States. Last year, I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from Divine Word College Seminary in Epworth, Iowa. I am currently completing a pastoral year at St. Peter's Church in Lowville, NY, and I will begin my theological studies at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio, this coming August. Since this will be my first time at camp, I cannot yet share my favorite parts, but I am very excited to serve as a staff member and to experience and explore the summer camp this year. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of this community. May our time together be filled with faith, joy, and mutual encouragement. All of you are in my prayers and may God bless you!



Faith Leader
Counselor

Hometown: Gouverneur

Bio/Welcome: Hello!! I'm Faith Leader and I'm so stoked to be coming back to camp for a second year on staff! I am currently a sophomore biology student at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. Although originally from Gouverneur, NY. I've been coming to camp for a long time and I'm very excited to be thrown back into the fun and joy of our camp community. I am praying for you all as we prepare to let God work in us this summer, see you all so soon! God Bless, and PB&J (Peace, Blessings and Joy)!



Brendan Reilly
Counselor

Hometown: Thousand Oaks, CA

Bio/Welcome: Hi! My name is Brendan, and I'm excited to be returning for my third year on staff this summer! I'm currently working to become an electrical technician by trade, and I also coach a high school robotics team. Some of my hobbies include playing board games with friends, playing guitar, reading comics, and 3D printing. Some of my favorite parts of camp are afternoon activities, the bonfire, and Reconciliation. I can't wait to see you all this summer, and to be a part of your camp experience! God bless, and see you soon!



Logan Branch
Counselor

Hometown: Saranac Lake, NY

Bio/Welcome: Hey everyone! My name is Logan Branch, I am so excited to be given the opportunity to come back to camp this summer. This will be my 4th summer as a volunteer/ part time counselor. And my 8th summer at camp! In my free time I love to go fishing, swimming, camping, and playing guitar. My absolute favorite parts of camp are, mass, adoration, song practice, the dance and the bonfire. See you all soon!