God promises the ‘impossible’

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Hope is not built on people's predictions, assurances or line of reasoning, Pope Francis said.

Real Christian hope "is not based on our word, but on God's Word" and promises of salvation and eternal life, the pope said during his general audience in St. Peter's Square March 29.

Continuing a series of reflections on how the Apostle Paul describes the nature of Christian hope, the pope looked at how Abraham's faith is held up as a model for everyone in the apostle's Letter to the Romans (4:16-25).

Despite all logic -- Abraham was old and his wife infertile -- Abraham "believed, hoping against hope that he would become 'the father of many nations,'" which shows how faith is so closely connected to hope, the pope said.

"Our hope is not based on human reasoning, predictions and assurances," he said; real hope arises "where there is no more hope, where there is nothing left to hope for."

Bishop's Fund meets 2016 goal

Bishop LaValley has announced that, with contributions from over 9,400 households in the Diocese of Ogdensburg, the 2016 Bishop's Fund Appeal has reached its goal of $1,280,000.

At this time, the Bishop's Fund has collected $1,288,074.69 in gifts received with $62,265.83 remaining in promised pledges.

Those who have made a pledge to the appeal, are encouraged to complete the pledge before June 15.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

God bless our teachers

As registration for the next school year continues, long time teachers tell why they love Catholic schools

FULL STORY, PAGE 8-9

CHRISM MASS: To be held April 6 at 11 a.m. at St. Mary’s Cathedral
EDITOR'S NOTE

Rest in peace, Father Lamore

“A sweet and gentle man who spent many years of his priesthood in one of the most difficult ministries in the diocese.” That’s how a fellow prison chaplain remembers Father Victor Lamore who died last week in Arizona.

After 20 years in North Country parishes, Father Lamore began his ministry to prisoners at the Adirondack Correctional Facility in Ray Brook and then, at Clinton Correctional in Dannemora.

At the maximum security prison, Father Lamore did everything he could do make the lives of the inmates a little easier, a goal that could cause tension with the guards and prison administration.

His chaplain friend remembers how animated Father Lamore would become when talking about his job during regional chaplain gatherings. He really loved the men he worked with and spent 14 years of his life as their advocate.

A Canadian native, Father Lamore served parishes in all parts of the diocese – in Saranac Lake, Canton, Plattsburgh, Malone, Indian Lake, Blue Mountain Lake and West Leyden – after Bishop Brzana ordained him to the priesthood in 1980.

His service as a priest followed service to the country, as a sailor in the Navy during the Vietnam War.

This Thursday, the priests Father Lamore leaves behind will renew their vows to the priesthood during the annual Chrism Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral.

Among the questions Bishop LaValley will ask is this: “Are you resolved to be faithful stewards of the mysteries of God in the Holy Eucharist and the other liturgical rites and to discharge faithfully the sacred office of teaching, following Christ the Head and Shepherd, not seeking any gain, but moved only by zeal for souls?”

It’s safe to say that Father Lamore lived up to these promises in parishes and prisons for all 37 years of his priesthood.

We extend our sympathy to his family, including two sisters who traveled from Canada to Arizona to be with their brother as he made his final journey home.

And we say farewell to this brother of ours. Well done, good and faithful servant.

FATHER MUECH SAYS

Jesus and the people of the Passion

This week I would like to take a moment to consider with you some of the people who were part of the Passion of Jesus. We read about them each year on Palm Sunday and also on Good Friday.

This story of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus was so important to those early Christians that it was the first message they used to bring the message of Jesus to those who were just learning about Jesus.

I have always wondered about Judas. I think Judas was truly committed to the Kingdom of Jesus and just couldn’t understand or accept why the plan had fallen apart. He is terribly upset when the Hebrew leaders turned on Jesus, so, he lost his faith in Jesus; he even decides to make a profit from this new situation.

However, when he realizes how violent they are with Jesus, he completely despairs on the way he turned on Jesus. He takes his own life.

Even after his betrayal Judas could not even consider for a moment that he might reconcile himself with the other apostles – or that he might be forgiven. He takes his own life.

I have always wondered how Peter had the strength of will to stay faithful to the Lord – even after his denial of Jesus. Peter denies that he even knew Jesus after he had boasted that he would even be ready to die with Jesus.

Peter was with Jesus in the Garden of Olives and saw Jesus’ agony. Peter even tried to interfere with the soldiers when they arrested him. Then he becomes afraid – he denies him. Yet, he stays faithful to the Lord and remains close to the other apostles. He believes in the future of Christ’s Kingdom. For this, he becomes a saint, a great saint – our first Pope, our leader and the very foundation of our Church.

Peter never loses his trust and confidence in Jesus.

There are so many others that I would like to know more about – like Pontius Pilate, those soldiers who crucified Jesus, those High Priests, Annas and Caiaphas. For centuries, authors and historians have written books trying to explain to us who all the important people would have been and what they were like.

I would still like to meet them one day to see for myself.

Finally, there is you and me. Each year we are invited to walk with Jesus through his Passion and Death during Holy Week. The days of Holy Week, the ceremonies of the Great Triduum of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday – leading up to Easter Sunday are our moments when we walk with Jesus and truly experience what he experienced.

On Holy Thursday, we are at the Last Supper with Jesus and the apostles. On Good Friday, we stand with Mary at the foot of Christ’s cross. At the Easter Vigil, we celebrate life, our life, sharing even now in the Resurrection of Jesus. On Easter Sunday, we joyfully end our Lenten time of mortification – and rejoice in new life in Jesus’ Resurrection.
2016 Bishop’s Fund Appeal reaches $1.28 million goal

By Valerie Mathews
Diocesan director, Bishop’s Fund Appeal

With gratitude, Bishop Terry R. LaValley has announced that, with generous contributions from over 9,400 households, the 2016 Bishop’s Fund Appeal has reached its goal of $1,280,000.

Bishop LaValley said, “I join my prayers of gratitude with those of the many individuals and families of our North Country who have benefited from such generosity through the many ministries the Bishop’s Fund Appeal supports.

“I am particularly appreciative of the strong leadership of our pastors who support this critical appeal each year,” he said.

At this time, the Bishop’s Fund Appeal has collected $1,288,074.69 in gifts received with $62,265.83 remaining in promised pledges. Those who have made a pledge to the 2016-2017 Bishop’s Fund Appeal, are encouraged to complete the pledge before June 15, 2017.

Any funds received over this year’s goal will be designated to the Bishop’s Good Samaritan Fund.

The Bishop’s Good Samaritan Fund is a ministry of the Bishop’s Fund Appeal which provides grants to individuals and families who are facing unexpected emergencies such as illnesses in the family, loss of homes to fires and flooding and job loss.

The Bishop’s Good Samaritan Fund also provides assistance to food pantries across the North Country so that they may continue to help families in need.

Support of the Bishop’s Fund Appeal truly allows the Diocese of Ogdensburg to be Mercy In Motion by providing spiritual, educational and charitable support to all of our brothers and sisters in the North Country.

Those who have not yet made a gift to the Appeal, may mail donations to The Bishop’s Fund Appeal, PO Box 150, Ogdensburg, NY 13669 or donate online at www.rcdony.org/bishop-s-fund-appeal.

Fr. Lamore, 75, dies in Arizona

The diocese has received word of the death of Father Victor E. Lamore, 75, a retired priest of the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

He died in Arizona with his two sisters from Canada at his side.

Father Lamore was born July 12, 1941, in Britt, Ontario. He entered the Franciscan Atonement Friars as a brother in 1960 and joined the Navy in 1969.

After serving in Vietnam, he was discharged in 1973, and began studies for the priesthood.

He graduated from Holy Apostles Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut; and Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora, New York, before his ordination May 3, 1980, by Bishop Stanislaus J. Brzana.

Father Lamore served as an associate pastor at St. Bernard’s in Saranac Lake, St. Mary’s in Canton, Our Lady of Victory in Plattsburgh; and Notre Dame in Malone.

In 1986, he was named administrator in Rosiere and, two years later, pastor in Indian Lake and Blue Mountain Lake.

In 1997, Father Lamore was appointed pastor in West Leyden.

The priest served for many years in prison ministry as a chaplain at the Adirondack Correctional Facility and at Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora.

He retired in 2015 and moved to Arizona.

(A reflection on his life and ministry appears on page 2.)

LENTEN FAMILY GATHERING

PHOTO BY JAMIE BURNS
St. Mary’s Parish in Canton held a Lenten Family Gathering March 12 during which families prayed and walked the Stations of the Cross together, as well as created Resurrection Gardens. Each family received a “Bringing Lent in the Home with St. Teresa of Calcutta” book for daily reading through the season. Shown above is the McDonough family, Sarah, Grace, Joe, Ellie and William.

The Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary
66 Court Street, Canton, New York
www.cantoncatholics.com

invites you to participate in Holy Week and Easter Services

Palm Sunday - April 9
5:00 p.m. (Sat) Vigil Mass with Solemn Entrance
8:00 a.m. Mass with Simple Entrance
9:30 a.m. Ecumenical Palm Sunday Procession in Village Park
11:15 a.m. Mass with Solemn Entrance
5:00 p.m. Mass with Simple Entrance

Holy Thursday - April 13
7:00 p.m. Mass of the Lord’s Supper
8:30 p.m. Time of Quiet Prayer in Chapel (Confessions until 9:30 p.m.)
10:00 p.m. Night Prayer

Good Friday - April 14
12:10 p.m. Good Friday Liturgy
1:30 p.m. Time of Quiet Prayer in Church (Confessions until 3:00 p.m.)
3:00 p.m. Divine Mercy Chaplet & Novena Prayers
5:15 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday - April 15
8:00 p.m. Easter Vigil (No Confessions or 5 p.m. Mass)

Easter Sunday - April 16
7:30 a.m. Easter Mass
9:00 a.m. Easter Mass
11:15 a.m. Easter Mass
Please note: There is no 5 p.m. Mass Easter Sunday.

May the joy of the Risen Lord fill your heart with peace this Easter.
Parish honors altar servers

CLAYTON - St. Mary’s Church and St. John’s in Lafargeville honored their altar servers March 26 at 9 a.m. Mass with a special blessing from their pastor, Father Arthur LaBaff.

Sixteen young people participated in the Mass and processed in as a group.

Father LaBaff talked about the importance and dedication of the servers and thanked the parents for their support of this important ministry.

Many, if not all the servers, have family members who are involved in many parish ministries, emphasizing the importance of family.

Neil Fuller, a deacon candidate who was recently installed as an acolyte, serves as altar server coordinator. He said that the servers are the future of the Church and others should answer their calling and serve their parishes communities in various ministries.

The servers who participated were Payton Morse, Walter Patrick Cummings, Maria Foisy, Madeline Jones, Andrew Klosner, Rebecca Leonard, Katie Oliver, Caryse Oliver, Madelon Frailey, Connor Dillenback, Claire Ward, Samantha Wahl, Liam Wahl, Macey Cooper and Sophia Nemergut.
OGDENSBURG - Bishop Terry R. LaValley will preside at a special Mass of Healing April 23 at 3 p.m. at St. Mary's Cathedral for those hurt by the Catholic Church in any way.

This celebration on Divine Mercy Sunday has been planned to acknowledge the pain caused by some pastoral leaders or workers in the Church and to apologize for the conduct that caused such grief.

"This crisis has impacted all of us in the Church, and we need to ask God's help for those hurt by the clergy, religious, and laity, is an pastoral leaders or workers in pain caused by some people," Bishop LaValley said.

The entire diocesan family, clergy, religious, and laity, is invited to participate in this Eucharistic celebration to continue to ask God's help for healing and reconciliation. Additionally, Bishop LaValley invites those seeking to rebuild their lives amidst such anguish to come and continue the process of healing and moving forward.

The Mass was planned as the church completed the Jubilee Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis.

"The Year of Mercy has focused us on our sinfulness and the need for God's mercy," Bishop LaValley said.

"The sin and scandal of clerical sexual abuse still wounds us and causes us pain. The Year of Mercy would not be complete without acknowledging the pain of the victims of clerical sexual abuse and extending to them our apology and help.

"While the church has made documented progress in protecting children and young people and raising awareness of child sexual abuse, Bishop LaValley says that those victimized by this sin must never be forgotten.

"We have done much to create a safe environment for children and young people in our church," the bishop said, "especially since the implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People: zero tolerance for guilty clergy, full cooperation with law enforcement, comprehensive child safety education for all involved in ministry or service to children and young people, background checks of those involved in ministries with children, and outreach and assistance offered to the victims." "Yet, the year in which we celebrate the healing mercy of God calls on us to once again apologize for this scandal and to offer reconciliation and healing to victims," Bishop LaValley said. "We need to offer more compassion and help to victims.

"While we cannot make victims whole or make up for the suffering they have endured, we have consistently tried to acknowledge their pain and alleviate their suffering by offering counseling and any support possible," he said. "The Year of Mercy called us to continue to seek reconciliation and healing for victims of clergy sex abuse. Despite our efforts, there is still need for reconciliation and healing: there is more we can do.

"Many victims are in pain and looking for more compassion from the church," said Bishop LaValley. "To those people, I am reaching out. I invite them to come forward and to allow us the opportunity to help them heal."

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**Call And Visit The Catholic School Nearest You.**

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2 Powers St. • 315-386-3572
Website: www.stmaryscantony.com
stmarysc@twcny.rr.com

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AUGUSTINIAN ACADEMY
317 West St. • 315-493-1301
Website: www.caugustinian.org
smacollinss@yahoo.com

**Gouverneur**
ST. JAMES
20 South Gordon St. • 315-287-0130
Website: www.stjames-6.org
principal@stjames-6.org

**Lake Placid**
ST. AGNES
2322 Saranac Ave • 518-523-3771
Website: www.stagneslp.org
Admin@stagneslp.org

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23 St. Charles St. • 518-825-7386
Website: www.setonacademy.net
sisterhelen@setonacademy.net

**Saranac Lake**
ST. BERNARD'S
63 River St. • 518-891-2830
Website: www.stbernardsschool.org
principal@stbernardsschool.org

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64 Amherst Ave. • 518-585-7433
Website: www.stmarysschoolticond.org
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122 Winthrop St. • 315-788-7011
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gary.west@ihcschools.org

**IMMACULATE HEART CENTRAL**
733 S. Masses St. • 315-788-3935
Website: www.ihcschools.org
Annette.Connolly@ihcschools.org

**IMMACULATE HEART CENTRAL**
JR./SR. HIGH
1316 Ives St. • 315-788-4670
Website: www.ihcschools.org
lisa.parsons@ihcschools.org

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**A Card of Thanks from the Family of Deacon David Wells**

The family of Deacon David P. Wells would like to express our deep appreciation for all the kindness, love and support shown to us at the time of his sickness and death.

We are so grateful for the compassionate care given to our beloved husband, father and grandfather by the Ogdensburg Volunteer Rescue Squad and the First Responders of Heuvelton and then by the staffs of Claxton Hepburn Medical Center in Ogdensburg and St. Joseph’s Hospital in Syracuse.

We will never forget the wonderful staff of Fox and Murray Funeral Home - Patty and Dave Murray and Diane Fifeid - who did so much to help us through this difficult time. We are so thankful for their kindness, generosity and professionalism.

Our family was also overwhelmed by the love shown to us by our Catholic family of faith. Priests and Dave’s brother deacons came from all over the diocese to participate in the funeral Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral. In particular, we want to thank Father Kevin O’Brien, our pastor, who continues to reach out to help us in this time of sorrow; Father Jay Seymour, our former pastor who encouraged Dave to become a deacon; and Dave’s closest deacon friends: Deacon Tony Pastizzo who delivered the beautiful homily at the funeral Mass and Deacon Guy Javaron from Watertown.

Dave loved being a deacon and was so proud to call his fellow deacons his brothers. A day didn’t go by that he didn’t talk about something that happened in the deacon classes at Wadham Hall or mention that he saw one of the deacons somewhere. All the deacons were God’s gift to him.

Finally, we want to thank all our family and friends for the cards, gifts, donations, Masses and food that we received in the days and weeks after Dave’s death. All the kind words and heartfelt gifts have provided great comfort during this very difficult time in our lives. Our hearts are broken but we have the courage to move forward because of the love and faith shown to us by so many people who loved Dave too.

God bless you all.

Dot, Jan, Cory, Amber, Katin, Julie, Leavie, Bobby, Chelsea, David, Alison, Emma, Hunter, Calvin and Jude
Catholic Charities offers senior volunteer programs

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Ogdensburg is inviting senior citizens to become involved in two volunteer programs.

RSVP in Franklin County

The Franklin County Retired Senior Volunteer Program serves senior citizens age 55 and older who wish to apply the skills and wisdom they have acquired throughout their life to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

The interests and skills of potential volunteers are assessed and matched with community agencies and organizations.

“Without the assistance and dedication of RSVP volunteers, these agencies and organizations would be unable to continue many of their services, and the needs of people in our county would go unmet,” said Melissa Howards of the Tupper Lake Catholic Charities office.

“RSVP volunteers can make new friends, keep active, do meaningful work and learn new skills while helping others,” she said.

Volunteers can choose the days and times that they would like to volunteer. Volunteers also get a reimbursement of 40 cents per mile to get to their volunteer station.

Those interested in joining RSVP should contact Melissa Howard at 518-359-7688

Foster Grandparents

The Foster Grandparent Program of Northern New York, also hosted by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Ogdensburg, provides opportunities for low income persons aged 55 and older, to provide person to person services in health, education, and the welfare of children ages 21 and younger.

Foster Grandparents are placed in a classroom setting with a child or children who are in need of emotional support, development of basic learning skills, to provide friendship, companionship, encouragement, individual attention, and unhurried help.

The Foster Grandparent also receives a small non-taxable stipend bi-weekly that cannot be held against any current benefits they may already have.

Benefits include mileage expenses and paid holidays, vacations, sick and personal leave.

The program currently has 40 volunteers and serves more than 100 children per year.

Those interested in becoming a Foster Grandparents should contact Melissa Howard at 518-359-7688.

Rest in Peace

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

April 5 – Rev. Florence McCarthy, 1901; Rev. Amedee Lacasse, M.S.C., 1941; Msgr. Francis P. Devan, 1992


April 7 – Rev. Fabien Barnabe, 1883; Rev. Benjamin Grom, M.S.C., 1893; Rev. Francois Greg-mars, 1902; Rev. James E. Duffy, 1914

April 8 – Rev. Patrick Carr, O.S.A., 1901

April 10 – Rev. Maurice Morin, M.S.C., 1976


Follow Pope Francis on Twitter!

www.twitter.com/Pontifex

#Pontifex

Franklin County Retired Senior Volunteer Program

hosted by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Ogdensburg

- Serves Senior Citizens over 55
- Share your skills to make a positive difference in others lives.
- Choose the days and times you volunteer
- 40 cents per mile reimbursement to get to volunteer station

If you know anyone that would benefit from our program or would like to join, contact: Melissa Howard at 518-359-7688

Environmental Stewardship

Praying for the environment

Pray: Start the day by putting yourself in God’s presence and recite this prayer:

“Lord, look upon us and hear our prayer. By the penance and good works you inspire, help us to discipline our appetites and to be renewed in spirit. So that we may be better stewards of creation, help us to live simply even when our desires are great. And help us to love greatly, even when we are not loved. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.” (Adapted from the Divine Office.)

- Throughout the day, pray the Rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, or the Divine Office.
- Read Scripture, especially those passages referring to Creation Stewardship and Environmental Justice.
- Take part in a Mass or holy hour in your parish, asking to incorporate “the urgent solution of the climate change crisis” as a prayer intention.
- What do I pray for?
  - For the urgent solution of the climate change crisis.
  - For the grace to grow in virtue, which helps us be better stewards of creation.
  - For easing the suffering of the poor and those affected by disease and severe weather.
  - For the Church, that it may use its prophetic voice to help solve the environmental problems we face.

Share

You can fast from food during at least one meal or an entire day. We also encourage doing a “Carbon Fast,” trying to avoid activities that produce carbon dioxide and other wastes (by reducing your use of fossil fuels, electricity, plastic, paper, and toxins).

Remember to be careful and don’t compromise your health; everyone sacrifices in different ways based on their age, physical strengths, and limitations.

As we fast, we will pray for our own ecological conversion and for bold action by our gove

Water is life. Together we can fast for bold action to solve the climate change crisis and its life-threatening impact on water.
‘Pepper finds her way’

By Shan Moore
Staff Writer

We were mildly alarmed when our black Labrador retriever, Pepper, lost her appetite. When the vet diagnosed diabetes and prescribed twice-a-day insulin shots, we felt a bit stressed.

And we radiated even more stress when our pup’s blood sugar just would not settle at a safe figure.

Glucoma, a common diabetic side effect, added to our anxiety; and turned out it was warranted. We — my husband, Bryan, daughter Shelby and I — paced the floor and prayed as Pepper underwent surgery to remove her right eye.

Then we worried, more and more, as her left eye had recurring bouts of blindness as treatment for the glaucoma failed.

In great distress, we sat on the kitchen floor with our dog, all petting her as we struggled over whether to go with a last-ditch operation that might — but probably wouldn’t — save the sight in that eye.

The other option was to relieve her pain for good by having that one removed, too, leaving her blind.

The vet said dogs tend to adapt pretty well to being blind — but what if she didn’t, what if we were condemning her to walking into walls, doors, closets for the rest of her life?

It was a nightmare, those weeks and weeks of ever-ramping angst.

For us, Pepper’s people, that is.

What did our dog do as we stressed and worried and agonized over her medical issues?

Pepper wagged her tail, wagged her tail, wagged her tail ...

Out dog already knew more about acceptance than we ever will.

Lesson in fortitude

But at least we paid attention. Our pup was pretty inspiring, we marveled again and again as she endured that final surgery that left her blind for good, wearing the dreaded “cone of shame” for weeks and, as we’d feared, walked into walls, doors, closets ...

But always wagging her tail.

And before long, she figured it out, using nose, ears, whiskers to guide her, along with cues from us — step up, step down, right, left, CAREFUL (as she headed toward a wall, door, closet ...).

We should share Pepper’s lesson in fortitude with others somehow, Bryan said one day. Shelby and I agreed.

And so we did.

Over the past year, Pepper has been petted by thousands of kids at schools, libraries and other places as part of her Blind Pup Project and as mascot of the Plattsburgh Lions Club. She promotes the club’s vision and diabetes-awareness programs and shares her two mottos: When life gets “ruff” keep wagging your tail, and I’m not my disability, I’m ME.

Shelby and I wrote a children’s book that I also illustrated, “Pepper Finds Her Way,” that we read to the kids; Pepper’s tail is wagging on every page.

God’s presence

Every single presentation leaves us with full hearts and a deep sense of gratitude that we have been entrusted with this dog and with the privilege of sharing her with others.

We see flashes of God’s presence in the bond that quickly unites kids and canines.

And in the innocence and sweetness that comes of that interaction.

At each presentation, I tell the children several things about Pepper — that she snores, bites her nails, loves carrots, swimming and playing tug ...

Then I say, almost as an aside, that she’s blind.

“Do you know why I didn’t tell you that first?” I ask, working up to the “I’m not my disability” message.

“Because you don’t want to hurt her feelings?” a little voice will ask.

“Can Peppa come play with us?” a 4-year-old girl asked after a recent story time at Paine Memorial Library in Plattsburgh.

At a school for children who are developmentally disabled a few weeks ago, a teenage boy who is deaf “heard” Pepper’s story from a woman who signed the words to him.

And as we were leaving, he looked down at the dog, his fingers working.

He was signing to Pepper, I realized with a pang. “See you later,” he told her.

Acceptance

One time, a girl had been petting Pepper and talking to her for at least 15 minutes when she suddenly asked, “Where are her eyes?”

We explained Pepper didn’t have them anymore, and the child recoiled.

But within seconds, it clearly didn’t matter anymore, as the girl resumed her petting.

She got it! Pepper’s blindness isn’t who she is! Most children take it completely in stride.

“She got no eyes,” one 3-year-old observed conversationally at a library story hour.

Some feel sad about it, which is when we remind them about Pepper’s wagging tail.

“Don’t feel sorry for me,” we translate for them. “I’m just fine.”

Again, it’s about acceptance.

As a woman at a mental-health support group session in Plattsburgh observed during a Blind Pup visit, “If you can’t be completely healed, you can live where you are.”

But there’s more to it. Our dog did run into doors, walls, find herself in the closet instead of the living room — adjusting to blindness wasn’t simply flipping sensor switches from eyes to nose and ears.

But still wagging her tail, Pepper didn’t give up.

She’s a dogged dog, her storybook says. And she mastered a new way to see that even allows her to go down stairs by herself.

Which she does every morning, taking herself into the kitchen beside her dog dish, where she barks for breakfast.

Just like any other dog.

How blessed we are to have her.

(The views expressed in this column are not necessarily the views of the Plattsburgh Lions Club.)
God bless our teachers

Longtime teachers reflect on the joys and challenges of teaching in Catholic schools

Teaching at Seton: a gift

PLATTSBURGH - At the encouragement of her mother, Susan Bleeker applied to St. Peter’s School in Plattsburgh in 1984.

“At that time, I really had no thought of teaching in a Catholic school,” she said. “Public school jobs were not easily available at that time. I didn’t enjoy working as a substitute, so I thought this was a good place to start.

“Little did I know that my place to start would become my life’s work, as well as the heart of who I am,” Ms. Bleeker said.

“During my years in Catholic schools, (St. Peter’s and Seton Academy) my faith has grown more than I should admit,” she said.

Over the past 32 years, she has taught students in grades two, three, four and five and also worked as the school’s librarian and technology teacher.

The years have been filled with both joys and challenges. “I’ve had the privilege of working with hundreds of amazing students and their families,” she said. “It is the students and their families that keep me energized, and wanting to continue to teach.”

“The concerns I have are few, but serious,” Ms. Bleeker said. “With each Catholic school that closes, a choice to be a Catholic school teacher. These years have been a gift I would not exchange for anything.”

‘I love coming to work every day’

My name is Shannon Margrey. I am currently finishing my 16th year at Augustinian Academy in Carthage. For the first 12 years I taught seventh and eighth grade ELA (English Language Arts), social studies, and health, and seventh grade religion. For the last four years I have taught grades five through eight ELA, seventh grade religion, and seventh and eighth grade health.

I applied to teach at Augustinian Academy because I loved the school. As a graduate of CAA and then IHC, I felt a strong desire to share my positive experiences with the students in a Catholic school. Augustinian feels like a family and you can definitely feel that the minute you walk into the building. I wanted an opportunity to work in a smaller setting and really get to know my students and their families.

Augustinian feels like a family and you can definitely feel that the minute you walk into the building.

Getting to know them outside of the classroom through various extracurricular activities helps develop stronger relationships which then translates to stronger performance in the classroom. When they see how much extra time the teachers are willing to put in, it inspires them to greater effort. I also enjoy sharing my faith and watching my students mature into strong members of their parish.

I have stayed at a Catholic school simply because I love coming to work every day. Even though the members of the faculty are very different from each other, we get along and create a great support system for each other. Whether it is the veteran teachers who just need to know you can help if they need you, or a new teacher feeling overwhelmed by entering a new environment, the entire faculty is there to support you.

I especially enjoy sharing my faith and watching my students mature into strong members of their parish.

I especially enjoy sharing my faith and watching my students mature into strong members of their parish.

We work hard to keep up on current changes in education and devise new ways to implement more challenging curriculum in our middle school classrooms. We are always looking for new programs to add that will keep us competitive with area public schools and entice parents to choose Augustinian Academy for their students.

My greatest joys as a Catholic school teacher are many. I love watching my students learn and mature, eventually leaving us to become leaders in their high schools and beyond. I especially enjoy hearing from them about...
‘I truly believe Trinity is where God needs me’

By Heather Doe
Trinity Catholic School, Massena

I chose to apply at a Catholic School because I firmly believe in not only the quality of education that is offered but in the opportunity to partner with families to help build a strong faith filled foundation for each child.

Our mission at Trinity Catholic School in Massena is to promote spiritual, academic and personal growth in an environment of Christian love. I truly believe that Trinity is where God needs me to be. I believe in this mission 100% and strive each day to do my part in making it a reality.

The children I have had the privilege of teaching and getting to know over the years have been one of my greatest rewards in life. I hope that I have taught them as much as they have taught me over the years!

I am also truly blessed that my own children had the opportunity to benefit from a Catholic school education. Their teachers (also my coworkers) did an amazing job fostering a love of not only learning academics but a deeper understanding and love for their God while they attended TCS. I will be forever grateful to each and every one of them.

My greatest joys throughout the years have been seeing my students achieve their personal best while they are in my classroom. One of my fondest memories, is when one of my students a few years ago was able to read a copy of a children’s prayer that I had hanging in my classroom.

When he first came to me in September, he was reading well below the level that he should be reading at. On a very hot day in June, while all of the other children were sitting in front of the windows and fans trying to cool off, this little guy stood in front of the poster in the back of my room. When I went over to see what he was doing, he told me that he was “trying real hard to read the words.”

It wasn’t easy for him to do, and there was a lot of sounding out and looks of reassurance, but he did read that prayer with minimal help from me. The smile on his face when he was finished was priceless; I am just so glad that I had the opportunity to share that moment with him.

I began my teaching career in 1996 teaching at St. Mary’s School, in Canton. My first year there, I taught fifth and sixth grade social studies, sixth grade ELA and as Well as pre-kindergarten in the afternoons on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It was a challenging first year, but I loved it. The next two years, I taught sixth grade and then finally ending my time there teaching second.

In 2000, I was hired at Trinity Catholic School, in Massena for a first grade position and have been loving it ever since!

After 16 years, St. Mary’s has ‘become a family to me’

CANTON — After teaching fifth graders at St. Mary’s School in Canton for 16 years, Cindy Niles says that the “school has become like a family to me.”

“When I first decided to pursue my career as a teacher, I prayed to God for guidance,” she said. “I have always wanted to teach in a small and family oriented school. God guided me to St. Mary’s School.”

“I was a substitute teacher in a public school for many years, but the atmosphere of friendliness was not the same,” Ms. Niles said. “At St. Mary’s I am allowed to practice my faith and I am able to share that faith with my students. I believe teaching at a Catholic School is my calling.”

During her career at St. Mary’s, she has found that her greatest joys have been the students.

“The eagerness to learn and the expression on their faces when they have mastered a concept is priceless,” she said. “I feel proud and elated when I see my students’ names on the honor roll or high honor roll as they continue their education after leaving our school.”

“One of my concerns is how people do not always recognize the importance of our faith and how our faith is integrated into our daily lives,” she said.

In addition to her work with fifth graders, she also teaches religion to the sixth grade students.

“I enjoy their questions about the Catholic faith,” she said. “And, I also feel blessed that they feel comfortable with me to ask questions about topics they might not understand.”

“Teaching at a Catholic School has made me stronger in my own faith as I learn along with my students,” she said.

“Believing in God’s Divine Providence led me to St. Mary’s School,” she said.
A message from the papal nuncio to the United States:

‘Pay close attention to pope's words, actions’

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) - Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the papal nuncio to the United States, gets plenty of questions about Pope Francis.

A March 27 discussion at Georgetown University, sponsored by the university's Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life, was no exception. The nuncio, who sat onstage with John Carr, the initiative's director, was asked about the pope's key issues and his impact in the four years since his election.

Instead of emphasizing the pope's special qualities or accomplishments, Archbishop Pierre, who has been in the Vatican diplomatic corps for almost 40 years, stressed how Catholics are called to view the pope and essentially work with him in the mission of spreading the Gospel.

He told the audience, nearly filling a campus auditorium, that it is not a question of whether the pope is good or bad or if one agrees with him or not. The issue, for Catholics, is to discern what the Holy Spirit is saying through the pope.

"We have to pay a lot of attention to the person of the pope and to his message and to his testimony because the pope is not just words but he is also actions and actions that are powerful words," the nuncio said.

Archbishop Pierre, who was appointed to the U.S. post by Pope Francis last April, would not comment on the pope's approval ratings compared to politicians nor would he address the current political climate, but he stressed that one's personal faith can't be separated from daily life and that people need to use discernment in civic duties like voting.

When asked about care for migrants in today's world, he said Christians should be the "soul of this country" and Catholics should follow the example of Pope Francis who goes out to the borders and reaches out to those who are broken and those who suffer.

"The church is in the business of evangelization," he added, saying this works best when the church "goes outside herself" to meet people where they are. And in a pointed statement to this effect, he added: If America is the center of the world then it has "a huge responsibility to help others."

When the nuncio was joined on stage by other panelists, they reiterated the importance of the pope's message that has come across just as much from his actions as his words.

To sum up the pope's message to Catholics today, Ken Hackett, former U.S. ambassador to the Holy See and former president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services, looks to the example of the pope's visit to the United States in 2015 where the pope's presence, in front of Congress and with the poor, and his words at each stop made Catholics proud of their faith.

Kim Daniels, a member of the Vatican's Secretariat for Communications, said the pope's message has resonated not just with Catholics but also with those who have heard him even through social media. She said he has made the call to live out one's faith "something that's concrete and not abstract" and something "we can do right here, right now, where we are."

For Maria Teresa Gaston, managing director of the Foundations of Christian Leadership Program at the Duke Divinity School in Durham, N.C., the pope has been clearest on his message of community, telling people, including "those who are undocumented: You are loved and valued."

She also points to his message to youths at World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro in 2013 as something that still resonates with her. He told the crowd "not to be afraid, to take risks and to be courageous" stressing they should prepare for "courageous and prophetic action in solidarity with the earth and with the poor."
Recent popes have had a special affection for Our Lady of Fatima, but no pope’s connection can match that of St. John Paul II.

“We cannot forget that he was saved by Our Lady of Fatima from the assassination attempt here in St. Peter’s. This is fundamental and central. It is never forgotten,” Portuguese Cardinal Jose Saraiva Martins, former prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes, told Catholic News Service March 29.

Mehmet Ali Agca, a Turk, shot Pope John Paul at close range as the pope was greeting a crowd in St. Peter’s Square on the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, May 13, 1981. Two bullets pierced the pope’s abdomen, but no major organs were struck; a bullet had missed his heart and aorta by a few inches. John Paul would later say, “It was a mother’s hand that guided the bullet’s path.”

That miracle, the cardinal said, is key in “understanding well Pope John Paul’s devotion to Our Lady of Fatima.”

Given the date of the assassination attempt, the pope credited Our Lady of Fatima with his miraculous survival and recovery. Several months later, he visited the site of the apparitions, the first of three visits he would make as pope to Fatima.

For St. John Paul, Cardinal Saraiva Martins said, “Our Lady of Fatima was everything,” and his three visits to the Portuguese town were those of a grateful son to the mother who saved his life.

“I still remember — I’ll never forget it — when he arrived at the little chapel of the apparitions where (the statue of) Our Lady of Fatima was,” Cardinal Saraiva Martins recalled. St. John Paul was holding one of the bullets that had struck him and slowly approached the statue, finally placing the bullet in her crown, he said. “It is still in the crown today. I witnessed these gestures, how he expressed his devotion to Our Lady. He would just walk closer and closer to Our Lady and would repeat: ‘You saved me, you saved me.’

As the prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes from 1998 to 2008, Cardinal Saraiva Martins also oversaw the process leading to the beatification by St. John Paul of Jacinta and Francisco Marto, two of the three young shepherd children, who saw Mary at Fatima.

The cardinal also shared a personal friendship with the third seer, Carmelite Sister Lucia dos Santos, who died in 2005.

Devotion to Our Lady of Fatima is emblematic of the popes of the last century who have ‘always recognized’ the relevance of Mary’s message, particularly its emphasis on faith, conversion, hope and peace.

Pope Benedict, the cardinal added, was a “great devotee” of Our Lady of Fatima, even before his election to the papacy.

Interviewed in his apartment near St. Peter’s Square, Cardinal Saraiva Martins grabbed a copy of part of the interview then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger did in 1985 with Vittorio Messori, an Italian journalist.

“Before becoming pope, he said: ‘A stern warning has been launched from that place ... a summons to the seriousness of life, of history, to the perils that threaten humanity,’ ” the cardinal read.

The special papal bond with Our Lady of Fatima continues today with Pope Francis, who as archbishop of Buenos Aires, was a frequent visitor to a shrine in the Argentine city devoted to her, Cardinal Saraiva Martins said. Pope Francis will visit Fatima May 12-13 to mark the 100th anniversary of the apparitions.

The cardinal recalled Pope Francis’ “beautiful” words to Portuguese-speaking pilgrims on May 13, 2015, the 98th anniversary of the apparitions: “Entrust to her all that you are, all that you have, and in that way you will be able to become an instrument of the mercy and tenderness of God to your family, neighbors and friends.

“This is an example of the words of Pope Francis, so he is a great devotee of Fatima,” the cardinal said. “And for this reason, he will go to Fatima. For him, it will be an extraordinary day in which he will fulfill this great desire that has been expressed in so many ways.”

Devotion to Our Lady of Fatima is emblematic of the popes of the last century who have “always recognized” the relevance of Mary’s message, particularly its emphasis on faith, conversion, hope and peace, the cardinal said.

“Today we need faith, to be closer to God and our brothers and sisters — not hate each other but love one another — and seek hope and we need peace,” Cardinal Saraiva Martins said. “In short, the message of Fatima given 100 years ago is of extreme relevance.”

By Junno Arocho
Esteves Catholic News Service
Scripture Reflections

Entering the holiest week of the year

The waving of palm branches and the cries of “Hosanna to the King!” usher in the holiest week of the year. The full drama begins with the crowd’s fickle acclaim of Jesus as King for a day. It is a foreshadowing of the blasphemous mockery the soldiers will hurl at our thorn-crowned Saviour a few days later.

And yet, for a few hours we can raise our voices joyfully with the crowd, linking the honor given him, especially by the children, with His ultimate victory beyond the grave. We wonder and rejoice as the veil is raised to permit a glimpse of Jesus, the Messiah-King and liberator.

But then, as the Palm Sunday Mass proceeds, the horrors of the Passion are proclaimed and we must, with reluctance, raise our voices with the crowd clamoring “Crucify Him!”

Today’s events were all foretold thousands of years ago. The first reading from Isaiah, one of the four Suffering Servant oracles written at the time of the Babylonian captivity, speaks of a courageous and obedient messiah-figure who says, “I have set my face like flint” against the beatings and scourging that lie ahead, “knowing that I shall not be put to shame”.

The second reading from Philippians reminds us of Jesus’ total emptying out of his divinity in order that he might identify Himself with the lowest criminal being led to his execution, “obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

The Church is a master of drama in the liturgies of this week. Through the use of lay readers for the Passion and the voices of the congregation, we all become part of the action. Most feel embarrassed to cry “Crucify Him” with the palm branches still in their hands. It reminds us of our own fickle response and our lack of courage in responding to His love and truth. Yet we know that it was the sins of us all which brought Jesus to Calvary.

The Passion narrative of Matthew emphasizes the great humility of Jesus, the King. It’s the only Gospel to tell us in detail of what happened in Jerusalem at the hour Jesus gave up His Spirit — the sanctuary veil torn in two, the earth quaking, rocks split, and dead saints rising from their graves and entering Jerusalem.

It’s the fulfillment of all the prophecies of thousands of years before. It also tells us more fully of the betrayal by Judas, the denial of Peter, the hearings before Caiaphas and Pilot — the awful scourging by the Roman soldiers, the thorny crown jammed upon His weary head, the whip cutting slashes into His flesh, the blood running down His shoulders and back, the cursing by the crowd, the nails tearing through His hands, the thud of the cross into the ground.

As He hangs on the Cross, He cries, “I thirst!”. How that cry echoes down the centuries as a reminder of His search for our love. The forces of darkness were never more vicious in their attempt to terminate the Mission of Jesus on this earth. That the religious leaders of the day were made instruments of evil is a tragic lesson to all religions, even to the present day. That these leaders scandalized their own people, making them agents of falsehood, is another warning to those of unwary and careless piety. How easily the righteous can be lulled into blind activity that can do harm!

We wonder if any of the many that Jesus healed in His journeys were among those crying out against Him. The Passion narrative is the most powerful story ever written about the sacrifice of innocence to evil, and the blind consent of crowds to those in power.

Holy Week is all about Jesus suffering for our inadequacies and for our very real sins. Holy Week is a time for us to realize what we’re really like, and to find that the only remedy for our pains and fears is love. Are we ready to join our own pains and fears to the Master’s, and to add as much love as we can possibly muster to His limitless love?

Standing against... physician assisted suicide

This is the second in a series of articles on issues of Catholic teaching as explained by the New York State Catholic Conference.

The conference was founded to translate Catholic teachings into action in the public policy arena.

These teachings, which are centered on the innate dignity of every human person made in the image and likeness of God, form the basis of the Conference’s legislative agenda.

This week’s issue is opposition to physician assisted suicide

Background

Since the 2014 death of former Californiaan and brain cancer patient Brittany Maynard, at least 29 states have seriously considered the legalization of doctor-assisted suicide. It has been authorized in only five states and the District of Columbia.

The vast majority of states, and professional medical associations, continue to reject physician-assisted suicide.

New York State has specifically been targeted by the assisted suicide advocacy group Compassion & Choices as fertile ground for legalization, and the organization is aggressively pushing its legislation, S.3151 Savino/A.2383 Paulin.

Messages

• Legalizing assisted suicide will lead to psychological, financial and other pressures for vulnerable persons to end their lives. Elderly persons, depressed persons, low-income persons, and persons with disabilities will be most at risk of undue pressure, coercion and abuses under the law.

• It will undermine the physician’s role as healer, forever alter the doctor-patient relationship, and lessen the quality of care provided to patients at the end of life. Both the American Medical Association and the Medical Society of the State of New York hold policy positions against physician-assisted suicide.

• It will blur longstanding medical, moral and legal distinctions between withdrawing extraordinary medical assistance and taking active steps to destroy human life. The former removes burdensome or useless treatments, allowing nature to take its course, and allowing the patient to either live or die. The latter is the deliberate and direct act of taking a patient’s life.

• Rather than assisting suicide, government should be consistent in its efforts to prevent suicide. It is illogical for the state to promote/facilitate suicide for one group of persons — calling the suicides of those with a terminal illness and a specific prognosis “dignified and humane,” while recognizing suicide as a serious statewide public health concern in all other circumstances.

• The legislation contains many flaws, for example, there is no required mental health evaluation, no witness or physician required at the time of death, no proper disposal procedures for unused lethal barbiturates, and no safeguards from coercion and abuse at the time the drugs are ingested.

Make Your Voice Heard

Visit nycatholic.org
Sign up for Catholic Action Network

Pursuing Justice

April 9

Palm Sunday of the Passion

READINGS

At the Procession of the Palms:
Matthew 21:1-11
Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11

At Mass:
Matthew 26:14-27:66

APRIL 5, 2017
“Ghost in the Shell” (Paramount), director Rupert Sanders’ murky, boring adaptation of a series of comics by Masamune Shirow, offers little beyond glitzy futuristic cityscapes. This live-action version of Shirow’s sci-fi-themed manga - first published in 1989 and previously the inspiration for two animated features - is also somewhat exploitative.

Its heroine, Major (Scarlett Johansson), a hybrid warrior whose human brain has been implanted into the body of a robot, has a fondness for fighting in the nude that must have gone down well when the film was being pitched, but puts it off-limits for kids.

The fact that Major’s synthetic skin is something between a patchwork of eggshells and a smoothed over version of Johansson’s physique does tamp down the voyeurism factor for grown-ups, however. They may be more distracted by the seemingly endless mayhem with which the movie is packed.

Gunplay, explosions and martial arts bravado attend Major’s duel with Kuze (Michael Pitt), an elusive killer who wants to bring down the Hanka Corporation, the company that produced her. She gets backup in her battles from gruff comrade Batou (Pilou Asbaek) and, during her down time, draws emotional support from Dr. Ouelet (Juliette Binoche), the physician who supervised her creation.

The dialogue occasionally explores the nature of humanity under the threat of encroaching technology. But the script gets muddled by its own materialism, identifying the soul (or “ghost”), for instance, exclusively with the brain.

A vaguely sensual get-together with a woman who may or may not be a street-walker, the flesh of whose face Major enviously examines, might be meant to show us Major’s alienation from her new “shell.” On the other hand, since an encounter of a more intimate nature might be surmised to follow the scene, though nothing of the sort is actually depicted, this might be of a piece with Major’s tendency to shimmy out of her clothes.

Screenwriters Jamie Moss, William Wheeler and Ehren Kruger take a stab at an anti-war message by way of the tension between Hanka executive Cutter (Peter Ferdinando), who sees Major strictly as a weapon, and Ouelet, who insists she amounts to more than just a killing machine. The peace theme fails to hit home, though, if only because the tumultuous action consuming most of the film is so completely at odds with it.

Similarly, the implicit critique of capitalism underlying the friction between profit-driven Cutter and the more responsible figure of Aramaki (Takeshi Kitano), the head of the anti-terrorism squad for which Major works, amounts to no more than a feint. In dealing with all these subjects, Moss and company serve up lines that are meant to sound like pearls of wisdom but land instead like lumps of lead.

The film contains pervasive stylized violence with little gore, torture, a suicide, occasional rear and upper as well as a glimpse of full female nudity in a nonsexual context, crude and crass language, and an obscene gesture. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned.

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CLINTON

PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST
Lyon Mountain - All you can eat breakfast to be held on Palm Sunday.
Date: April 9
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Place: American Fire Station
Cost: Adults, $8; Children 6-12, $5; under 5, Free
Features: 50/50 tickets on sale. Take-out will be available.

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY RIGHT TO LIFE
Plattsburgh - The next meeting for Champlain Valley Right to Life is set
Date: April 6
Time: 8-45 a.m.
Place: Cafeteria of OLV Parish Center
Features: Discussion on ways to promote a greater respect for human life.
The Good Friday Prayer Service in front of Planned Parenthood will be discussed.
Meetings last no more than one hour.

GOOD FRIDAY PRO-LIFE PRAYER
Plattsburgh - Good Friday Prayer service to be held.
Date: April 14
Time: 10 a.m.
Place: In front of Planned Parenthood
Features: All are welcome to join in peaceful prayer for the sanctity of life.

PAINT AND SIP
Chazy - Paint and sip party to be sponsored by Sacred Heart Church.
Date: April 5
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: Sacred Heart Parish Center
Cost: $10 payable at the door includes all instruction and supplies, snacks and non-alcoholic beverages.

LENTENADORATION
Plattsburgh - St. Peter’s Church will offer Adoration of The Blessed Sacrament during Lent on Mondays and Tuesdays.
Time: 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Features: Concludes April 11 with Benediction at 7 p.m.

ERCLA RETREAT AND WORKSHOP
Plattsburgh - The Eastern Region Commissioned Lay Ministers’ Association (ERCLA) is sponsoring a Spring Retreat/Workshop.
Date: April 29
Cost: $10
Contact: Register on-line at RCONLY.org.

FRANKLIN

SUGAR ON SNOW BRUNCH
Cham Falls - The third annual Sugar on Snow brunch to be held.

The North County 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; fax, 1-866-314-7296; e-mail news@northcountrycatholic.org.
Items must be received in the NCC office by the Thursday before publication.

To locate the registration page, go to “Offices”, then “Formation for Ministry”. On the lower left part of the page is registration link for the Spring Event. For more information, contact St. Peter’s Church at (518) 483-1300.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY
Malone - St. Andre Bessette Parish will celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday.
Date: April 23
Schedule: Opens with 11 a.m. Mass at Notre Dame Church. From noon to 3 p.m., the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for individual adoration. Confessions will be heard beginning at 1 p.m. and continue until 2:30 p.m. At 3 p.m. Devotions for Divine Mercy Sunday will begin. The Chaplet of the Divine Mercy will be sung and there will be Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

BACKGROUND: On April 30, 2000 Pope John Paul II stated that henceforth in the Universal Church the 2nd Sunday of Easter will be called Divine Mercy Sunday. This feast is intended to celebrate and proclaim God’s tender mercy, which is available to all who turn to Him with trust. The floodgates of God’s mercy are open. God in His great mercy is giving us all the chance to start again.
Contact: Father Joseph Giroux, at the St. André’s Parish Office, (518) 483-1300.

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST
Malone - On Palm Sunday, Saint André Bessette Parish will present “The Seven Last Words of Christ.”
Date: April 9
Time: 4 p.m.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY
Watertown - Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church will hold a Divine Mercy Sunday Celebration.
Schedule: Beginning Good Friday April 14 at 3 p.m. the Divine Mercy novena will begin by praying in the Chaplet in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Divine Mercy Sunday will be celebrated April 23 at 3 p.m., there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Singing of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, confession & a procession. You may bring your own Divine Mercy picture to be blessed specially.
Contact: call Judy at 315-783-7349 or visit www.thedivinemercy.org.

SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALL DINNER
Evan Mills - Spaghetti and Meatball dinner to be held to benefit the Indian River Knights of Columbus.
Date: April 8
Time: 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Place: St. Mary’s Parish Center
Cost: Adults, $7; Seniors, $6; Children under 12, $5; under 5, Free

FRANCISCAN MYSTERY PLAY
Clayton - Franciscan Mystery players to present “The Way of the Cross.”
Date: April 14
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: St. Mary’s Church
Features: A dramatic multi-media presentation of the Passion and Death of the Lord, through the use of special lighting, inspirational music, drama, and soul searching meditations, it becomes a prayerful vehicle for the Lord’s spirit to forgive, heal, and renew. Free to attend, although donations will be accepted to support the Mystery Players ministry.
Contact: 315-668-3938.

SPAGHETTI SUPPER
Watertown - St. Anthony’s Altar Rosary Society to have a spaghetti dinner.
Date: April 27
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Take-out begins at 4 p.m., bring your own containers
Place: Msgr. Sechi Hall
Cost: Adults, $8; Children, $4; Children under 3, Free; Sauce, $.50 per quart; Meatballs, $.75 each

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE
Springtime: new beginning

By Molly M. Ryan
Diocesan Mission Office

April is here. April brings the showers that bring the flowers. The warmer, longer days are finally upon us. Rejoice! You survived another winter that seemed to never end, like so many that have come before it. Soon, our schools will be on their spring break.

This is a time for children to have a break from the daily responsibilities of school, homework, sports and clubs. It is also time for parents to get quality time with their children possibly on a trip or excursion.

Last but not least, the educators, teachers, administrators and their hard-working staffs get to regroup, rest and enjoy a well-deserved break from school too.

The calendar hints that another school year will end before we can say “final exams”, Students and teachers are preparing for such wonderful milestones like First Communion and Confirmation. These blessed events as Catholics bring families together, make parents proud and help us share that commonality of Catholicism’s joy, spirituality and love of Jesus.

As we look to Holy Week, let us keep in our thoughts and prayers our children, schools and educators especially the children in our Catholic Schools and Religious Education programs. Let us remember the teachers, volunteers, priests and religious that guide our children on their way and navigate them through turbulent waters and serene surroundings alike.

Education is the most basic thing that we instill in our children from the time they are born. From day one, children are learning to eat, crawl, and do things on their own. It takes a village to get each child out into the world. Celebrate all those that help to raise each child. Show gratitude for what we can often take for granted: organized and funded education systems.

The Mission Lands do not have the luxury of schools, books and teachers who are educated and enlightened. But with the help of the Church and organizations like Missionary Childhood Association, MCA, things are improving, thriving and taking off. Cherish your children and all they are able to advantage of here.

As Spring brings promise for new beginnings like Sacraments and graduations, we also hope for good things to come in the Mission Lands, with the help of our children making a world of difference here. Pray that an abundance of hope, faith, joy and love will help all of God’s children receive the education they deserve.

Thank you to our Catholic Schools and Religious Education Programs here in our Diocese for all you do! God Bless!

Please remember “The Society for the Propagation of the Faith” when writing or changing your Will.

www.dioogdensburg.org/missionoffice

OBITUARIES

Adams — Edwin J. Smith, 79; Funeral Services April 1, 2017 at the Paddock Funeral Home.

AuSable Forks — Marie “Elaine” (Annunziato) Amato, 75; Funeral Services April 1, 2017 at Holy Name Church.

Canton — Floyd A. Firman, 77; Funeral Services March 27, 2017 at St. Mary’s Church; burial in St. Mary’s Cemetery.

Chateaugay — Homer LaValley, 91; Funeral Services March 30, 2017 at St. Patrick’s Church; burial in St. Patrick’s Cemetery.

Dannemora — Claire A. (Longtin) Bow- man, 64; Funeral Services April 19, 2017 at St. Joseph’s Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Dannemora — William E. Donahue, 91; Funeral Services March 27, 2017 at St. Joseph’s Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ellenburg — James “Jim” H. Bilow, 85; Funeral Services March 30, 2017 at St. Edmund’s Church.

Ellenburg — Paul L. Lagree, 72; Funeral Services March 28, 2017 at St. Edmund’s Church; burial in Immaculate Heart Cemetery, Churubusco.

Hammond — Roberta W. Evans, 76; Funeral Services April 1, 2017 at St. Peter’s Church; burial in Riverside Cemetery, Rossie.

Gouverneur — Patricia D. “Patty” (Holt) Bigarel, 73; Funeral Services March 30, 2017 at French Funeral Home; burial in East Riverside Cemetery.

Lake Placid — Sheila M. (Lenahan) Durkin, 86; Funeral Services April 3, 2017 at St. Agnes Church; burial in Mt. Calvary Cemetery, Cheektowaga.

Louisville — Raymond A. Legault, 81; Funeral Services April 1, 2017 at St. Lawrence Church; burial in St. Lawrence Cemetery.

Lowville — Theresa Amiable, 73; Funeral Services March 29, 2017 at the Sundquist Funeral Home; burial in Beaches Bridge Cemetery.

Malone — Doris Lauber; Funeral Services March 16, 2017 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Morningside Cemetery.

Malone — Dorothy M. (Trumble) Robert, 91; Funeral Services March 29, 2017 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Mooers — Rosemarie (Reinwarth) Miller, 77; Funeral Services March 30, 2017 at the Hamilton Funeral Home.

Ogdensburg — Pierrette S. (Fiset) Gagnon, 84; Funeral Services March 29, 2017 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Ogdensburg — P. Margaret (Rheaume) Noble, 89; Funeral Services March 28, 2017 at Notre Dame Church; burial in White Church Cemetery, Lisbon.

Ogdensburg — Mary M. (Limoges) LeClair, 69; Funeral Services March 31, 2017 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Peru — Richard Zerrahn; Memorial Services April 1, 2017 at St. Augustine’s Church.

Plattsburgh — Walter A. “Sonny” Bluhut, 70; Funeral Services April 3, 2017 at St. Peter’s Church.

Plattsburgh — Louise M. Brusniewski, 95; Funeral Services March 30, 2017 at St. John the Baptist Church; burial in Sacred Heart Cemetery, Chazy.

Plattsburgh — Helene F. (Martin) LeClair, 95; Funeral Services March 31, 2017 at St. Peter’s Church; burial in St. Peter’s Cemetery.

Plattsburgh — John W. Sorrell, 80; Funeral Services March 29, 2017 at St. Peter’s Church.

Potsdam — Raymond J. “RJ” Hassett, 17; Funeral Services April 1, 2017 at St. Mary’s Church.

Saranac Lake — Bernadette Harrigan Derby, 90; Funeral Services May 6, 2017 at St. Bernard’s Church; burial in St. Bernard’s Cemetery.

Theresa — April M. Thompson-O’Dett, 30; Funeral Services March 30, 2017 at St. Theresa of Avila Church.

Watertown — James C. Brett, 85; Funeral Services June 1, 2017 at Holy Family Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown — John F. “Jack” Killeen Jr., 91; Funeral Services March 30, 2017 at Holy Family Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Watertown — Patrick J. Lawler, 48; Funeral Services March 31, 2017 at Holy Family Church.

Watertown — Virginia J. (Geglia) Schofield, 90; Funeral Services April 1, 2017 at Holy Family Church; burial in Glenwood Mausoleum.
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