Pope: Faith says ‘no’ to Satan

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Baptism requires rejecting Satan and professing one's full faith in God, Pope Francis said.

"Only by being able to say "no" to the devil, his works and empty promises 'am I able to say 'yes' to God, who calls me to conform myself to him in thoughts and deeds," he said. "It is not possible to follow Christ (while) imposing preconditions," he said May 2 during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square.

Continuing his series of talks on the sacrament of baptism, the pope looked at the importance of the heart being ready to receive the gift of new life from God through the baptismal water and the Holy Spirit. When a child is presented for baptism, its parents and godparents renew the vows of their own baptism in rejecting sin and professing faith in Jesus.

"Either you are with God or with the devil," the pope said, which is why the renunciation of sin and the profession of faith are "two acts tightly connected to each other."

Catholic Charities appeal

The annual Catholic Charities Mothers Day Appeal will take place in all parishes of the diocese May 12-13.

Spearheading this year's appeal is Deacon Patrick J. Donahue who succeeded Daughter of Charity Sister Donna Franklin as diocesan Catholic Charities director.

"Now celebrating over a century of service reminds us that the church's response to the poor and needy is ongoing," Deacon Donahue said. "Catholic Charities continues to help the most vulnerable and marginal of our North Country communities."

FULL STORY, PAGES 8-9

Abortion and Divine Mercy

A message for all women especially those who have had an abortion

FULL STORY, PAGE 12

FATHER MUECH: Moving prayerfully through the Easter Season... p. 2
EDITOR’S NOTE

Where charity and love prevail

I see it as a happy coincidence that the NCC coverage of the annual deacon convocation usually comes during the same week as our promotion of the Catholic Charities Mothers’ Day Appeal.

Ideally, a deacon is known for a life of charity, working to extend the loving hand of God to all those in need. The Vatican’s Congregation for Catholic Education has called this work “the ministry most characteristic of the deacon.”

Through the years, I’ve had the privilege of interviewing many deacons in our midst who have devoted their lives to service.

Whether through St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Charities, charitable parish ministries or other endeavors, they have taken Jesus words “Whatever you do to the least of my brothers, you do for me,” straight to their hearts.

Today we are blessed to have one of our deacons in charge of the diocesan Catholic Charities office. Deacon Patrick J. Donahue will lead us through the first years of the second century of Catholic Charities, ready to address the needs of people in the 21st century.

The centerfold spread of this week’s North Country Catholic highlights all the critical work of the agency. On these pages Bishop LaValley and Deacon Donahue make the case for great generosity in next weekend’s collection far better than I could.

FATHER MUENCH SAYS

A prayerful walk through the Easter Season

I would like to begin today by recognizing the many accomplishments, the great accomplishments of our diocesan Office of Catholic Charities.

Ever since I became a parish priest in this diocese, I have known of the importance of Catholic Charities in the ministry of all of our parishes in bringing help – financial and in many other ways - to those in need. So, today, I want to take this opportunity to offer my gratitude and my congratulations to the many priests, sisters, lay men and women, who have staffed our Catholic Charities Offices so successfully.

Our Diocese can be very proud and fortunate in having the presence of Catholic Charities in offering help to each parish in the Diocese in giving help to the needy.

We are still celebrating liturgically the Easter Season. The Easter Season, these weeks between Easter Season and the Pentecost is our time through the Scriptures at Mass to remember and restudy the experiences of the early days in the formation of our Church.

We read a great deal from the Acts of the Apostles at Mass. The Acts is St. Luke’s description of the days and years after Jesus’ crucifixion as the message of Jesus was spread throughout the world.

For me, it is interesting to hear of the various challenges and the difficulties and the controversies among the leaders of the Church during those times. There are some parts of the story that make me wonder a bit how our Church ever made it. I often mention that I consider the biggest Christian miracle is that our Catholic Church still exists today, that we followers of Jesus are still united and continue to worship regularly as a community, as a parish.

The Gospels that we read during this Easter season show us the important messages of Jesus that were used to teach the people throughout the years, messages that continue to show us how to be Church.

On one of the Sundays we read the Good Shepherd Gospel. Jesus promises to be like a good Shepherd toward his sheep, his followers, his disciples, always ready to protect us and watch over us and direct us. He will not desert us like the hired man in the parable.

On another Sunday, the Gospel tells us of Jesus’ great love for us. He loves us so intensely that he wants to be like a friend to us. Jesus, the Son of God, became one of us, lived among us, died for us, rose from the dead and wanted to become a loving part of our lives.

There is also the Gospel image given us in the parable of the vine and the branches. Again, Jesus wants us to realize the importance of our relationship and connection with him. As the image of the vine and the branches indicates – just as a branch finds its life only when connected with the vine, we Christians find our life by our union with Jesus.

When we allow Jesus to be part of our lives, we will find life, the life of Our Savior, the life that brings peace and love into our lives, the peace and love of Jesus.

The image of the vine and the branches further reminds us that the Lord wants to unite us as a community, a community of prayer and action as we bring the Lord into our lives to make our world a better place.

So, each Sunday as Mass we join together as a community, as a family to worship the Lord. Each Sunday we should recognize our worshipping congregation, as our community, as our family for that day. As a family, we should be praying with and for each other; no one is a stranger, we are all family.

Pope Francis writes this in his recent Apostolic Exhortation: A community that cherishes the little details of love, whose members care for one another and create an open and evangelizing environment, is a place where the risen Lord is present, sanctifying it in accordance with the Father’s plan.
Ministry beyond the comfort zone

Bishop LaValley’s homily for 2018 Deacon Convocation May 3

Perhaps you’ve heard it before. The story is told of a great French circus performer by the name of Blondin who, in the winter of 1858, stretched a long steel cable across Niagara Falls.

During high winds and without a safety net, he walked, ran, and even danced across a tightrope to the amazement and delight of the people who watched. He even took a wheelbarrow full of bricks and pushed it effortlessly across the cable, from one side of the Falls to the other.

Blondin then turned to the crowd and asked, “Now, how many of you believe that I could push a person across the wire in this wheelbarrow?”

The vote was unanimous. Everyone cheered and held their hands high. They all believed he could do it!

Then, asked Blondin, “would one of you please volunteer to be that person?” As quickly as the hands went up, they went back down. Not a single person would volunteer to ride in the wheelbarrow and trust his life to Blondin.

All of us here today believe in and trust Jesus Christ. “Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in and trusts in Jesus will never perish.”

But, boy, when the Lord asks something of us and He trusts Him, when He pushes us out of our comfort zone and invites us to get into the wheelbarrow, sometimes, we, at least I, resist. And, you know, that’s why we can get stuck in our Christian lives; stuck on this side of holiness, stuck with a mediocre faith to whom others show little interest.

You and I must believe that we need God for absolutely everything! Then, act on the radical trust that such belief engenders.

When I first moved off the Navy base when I was stationed down in Pensacola, I remember going to a nearby Christian Book Store. I was looking for a nice religious picture to put up on my bare walls in my apartment.

I came upon a picture of Jesus with a sailor at the helm of a boat. It was entitled “Jesus as my Co-pilot.” It wasn’t until years later that it hit me. I might think that I am, but in reality, I am co-piloting nothing. God has the wheel.

When I think that God needs my help to pilot the ship, to run my little world, I encounter problems. I need to jump into the wheelbarrow and trust God and let God be God.

What I am able to accomplish in my ministry is all, all done through the grace of God. The same goes for deacons, for deacon wives, indeed for all Christians.

We stretch ourselves right out of our comfort zones, the Lord is always there to catch us, to encourage us through the risks, the sweat and the tears. Remember that old tune: ‘He’s got the whole world in His hands’.

You might say, now bishop, ever since you’ve been our shepherd, you’ve herded us into wheelbarrows and we’ve had to perform numerous high-wire acts in our local parishes.

Maybe your ministry stretches you to such an extent that the idea of a comfort zone is a fantasy, given your hard work in our Living Stones Pastoral Planning efforts. Fair enough. Know of my sincere gratitude.

But we must never tire of looking for opportunities for simple acts of service and mercy—the heart of the ministry of a deacon.

Deacons will lead the charge in the Church in going out to those who know not Christ and His Church because you work alongside the faithful, you rub elbows with the folks. Such missionary zeal is what fueled the early Church in its phenomenal growth—the growth of one person at a time. Now that might mean that we risk rejection or ridicule. It can be awfully lonely being the only one in the wheelbarrow, but what a witness to Christ!

Obviously, this takes great energy and trust. But that’s why the witness of the giants of our faith, apostles like Philip and James, gives you and me hope and encouragement to sometimes jump into the wheelbarrow.

We have Someone a whole lot more trustworthy than a Blondin upon whom to rely. Blondin is no Jesus!

The Apostles are sent to bring the Good News. St. Paul reminds us in today’s Second Reading: “I handed on to you,” he writes to the Corinthians, “what I also received.” Our commission is the same.

Holy Spirit of God, we ask you to help us hand on what we have received. We know that we have received much. Help us to feel not afraid to jump into the wheelbarrow at times because we know you are always there to hold us and embrace our efforts in Your Name.

And through it all—May God be praised... forever may God be praised!
Diocesan teens gather in Canton to reflect on the theme ‘Remain in Me’

Youth Rally 2018

By Tom Semeraro
Contributing Writer

CANTON - It was a typical overcast spring morning April 28 but, the damp chill of the outdoors was easily replaced by the warmth inside St. Mary’s School as young people from across the diocese gathered for the annual Youth Rally.

The rally brought North Country teenagers together for a day filled with games, faith-building activities, speakers and prayer.

In one game, the participants were grouped into teams creating mad lib lyrics set to Journey’s “Don’t Stop Believing.” Then they engaged in a fast and furious game of super “Rock, Paper, Scissors” with one winner in the end.

Following a bit of Biblical trivia, the young people settled themselves for morning prayer led by fellow students. After the prayer service, the group of youth, chaperones, and clergy made their way into St. Mary’s Church to hear keynote speaker, Bob Perron.

Perron, a renowned speaker, youth minister, director of education, and Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia, opened his talk with a unique game of “Simon Says.” After many laughs, he shared a few humorous, personal stories.

Perron then introduced the audience to a game he called “The Curly Shuffle” based on one of The Three Stooges comedy routine from many years ago.

The participants were asked to change seats and sit next to somebody different, and they had 10 seconds to do so. Once they repositioned themselves, Perron asked them to share a story with each other, offering the attendees the opportunity to get to know each other.

Perron dove into his presentation with humor, warmth, insightful words and spirituality.

Intertwining his personal experiences with God and Catholic belief, he masterfully displayed the truth in the passage “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5.

Perron shared numerous examples of how people fall short, even fall away and die spiritually without complete dependence on God, just as a broken branch does when it is separated from the vine that gives it life.

He left the young people with a positive message to “always stay connected” to the vine that is Jesus Christ. “For when you do, God will work in your lives, in God’s amazing way,” he said.

After the keynote presentation, everyone broke for lunch and free time.

During the break, the youth had an opportunity to receive the sacrament of penance, retreat into quiet adoration of the Eucharist, engage in fun activities and visit information booths covering ministry, right to life, caring for the planet, vocations and more.

The participants then had the opportunity to participate in two separate afternoon workshop sessions.

The workshops were full of information ranging from caring for the planet to the miracle of the Eucharist.

Immediately following the workshops, home baked snacks were offered, followed by a Q&A session with Bishop Terry R. LaValley.

The bishop presided at the Mass at the conclusion of the day.
ANNUAL DIOCESAN GATHERING COMBINES FAITH AND FUN

AT THE YOUTH RALLY

The program offered the young people an opportunity for silent prayer as well as Mass with Bishop LaValley.

Anthony Samperi of St. Bernard’s Parish in Saranac Lake; Hunter Acostamadiedo, St. John’s, Plattsburgh; Ian Montandon, St. Patrick’s, Watertown; and Nolan Boyea, Catholic Community of Burke & Chateaugay, are shown participating in “Electronic Zombie Tag” during the 2018 diocesan Youth Rally held April 28 at St. Mary’s in Canton.

Bishop LaValley made a new friend during the day, bravely holding a snake provided by Mary Benvenuto of Reptiles Forever. The snake was a centerpiece of a workshop “God’s Creation,” was organized through the diocesan Faith & Ecology committee.

Mariah Manning and Ava Bartholomew of St. James Parish, Gouverneur; and Ava Day of St. Agnes, Lake Placid enjoyed the chance to spend time together before morning prayer.

Michael Pierce of St. Raphael’s Parish in Heuvelton kept the beat with a basketball during the game “Mad Lib Karaoke.”

Karen Bujold of St. Alphonsus Parish in Tupper Lake talked with another Youth Rally participant during “Curly Shuffle,” part of the keynote address presented by Bob Perron.
### Bishop's Schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>4 p.m., Vigil for Ascension of the Lord at St. Mary’s Cathedral</td>
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<td>May 10</td>
<td>7 p.m., Confirmation at Holy Family Church in Watertown</td>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td>5 p.m., Solemn Vespers followed by Commencement Ceremonies at Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora, NY</td>
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<td>May 12</td>
<td>10:30 a.m., Confirmation at St. Bartholomew’s Church in Old Forge</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4 p.m., Confirmation at St. Mary’s Church in Clayton</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 13</td>
<td>10 a.m., Confirmation at Church of the Holy Angels in Altona</td>
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<td>May 14</td>
<td>7 p.m., Confirmation at St. Mary’s Church in Massena</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>7 p.m., Confirmation at St. James Church in Carthage</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 16</td>
<td>12 p.m., Farewell luncheon for Mary Lou Kilian at Gran View Restaurant in Ogdensburg</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7 p.m., Leadership Gift Reception at Church of the Holy Angels in Altona</td>
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### Rest in Peace

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

- **May 11**: Deacon Richard D. Hart, 2007
- **May 14**: Deacon Vincent E. Irvin, 2003

### To Report Abuse

If you have a complaint of suspected misconduct involving diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact Victims Assistance Coordinator, Terrianne Yanulavich, Adult & Youth Counseling Services of Northern New York, 618 Lake Rd, Chateaugay, NY 12920; terrianneyanulavich@yahoo.com

### Protecting God’s Children

The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled sessions for Protecting God’s Children for Adults. Pre-registration online is required in order to participate. Participants may pre-register at www.virtus.org by selecting the registration button and following the directions. Further information is available from Jill Lawrence, 315-393-2920, ext 1440

### Adult Children of Alcoholics

Adult Children of Alcoholics is a recovery program for adults whose lives were affected as a result of being raised in an alcoholic or other dysfunctional family. It is based on the success of Alcoholics Anonymous and employs its version of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

### Environmental Stewardship

Plants Seeds of Hope

For more information on ACA, go to www.adultchildrens.org

Yes, Mr. Coleridge, even reptiles and amphibians!

Saturday, April 28, was the date of the Diocesan Youth Rally and the halls of St. Mary’s Elementary School in Canton were filled with the voices and laughter of more than 100 young people learning about all aspects of their faith.

As part of this day, The Faith and Ecology Groups who meet in Lake Clear and Watertown participated in the rally. These groups, whose mission is rooted in the social teachings of the Catholic Church, are committed to modeling environmental responsibility and educating and sharing what they have learned on caring for God's Creation. Educating young people about caring for all creation is an important aspect of their mission.

To further this goal, the Faith and Ecology Groups sponsor a workshop and educational display tables at the annual youth rally.

This year, the focus was on some of God's less than warm and fuzzy creatures-reptiles and amphibians, including a seventy-five pound boa constrictor. Mary Benvenuto, presenter of Reptiles Forever, and her assistants shared much information about the many snakes, turtles, and lizards that they brought.

Several of these young people were allowed to hold, upon which they discovered that snakes are not slimy at all. One young person entering the room said, “I am terrified of snakes and I would never want to touch one.”

A short while later, however, with a big smile on her face, she was holding a boa constrictor.

Suggestion for this week, as we observe the miracles of springtime unfolding before our very eyes: Pay attention. Be amazed. Share it with someone. (Mary Oliver)

Submitted by a Member of the Faith and Ecology Group
DEACONS AND THEIR WIVES GATHER IN LAKE PLACID

DEACON CONVOCATION

At fifth annual gathering, deacons hear about the importance of creating disciples in their parishes

PHOTO BY PAT HENDRICK
Deacon Tyrone A. Rabideau, a Mooers Forks native who now lives in Plattsburgh; and Deacon Randal J. Smith of St. Peter’s in Plattsburgh represent the decades of diaconal ministry in the diocese. Deacon Rabideau was ordained in 1981 and Deacon Smith in 2017

PHOTO BY PAT HENDRICK
Karen Donahue of Chaumont, wife of Deacon Patrick J. Donahue, is the new director of the wife’s program for the deacon formation program.

PHOTO BY PAT HENDRICK
Deacon James W. Chaufty of Port Leyden and Kevin T. Mastellon of Watertown were part of the convocation planning committee.

PHOTO BY PAT HENDRICK
Two deacons who serve in Lewis County parishes were able to spend time together. At left is Deacon Michael J. Allan, deacon assistant at St. Stephen’s in Croghan as well as at Holy Family in Watertown; and, at left, newly ordained Deacon Thomas J. Yousey of St. Peter’s in Lowville.

PHOTO BY PAT HENDRICK
Bishop Christopher J. Coyne, bishop of Burlington, Vermont, and chairman of the Committee on Communication of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, was the keynote speaker for the convocation. He shared ten points on how to create successful parishes, centering on forming disciples. The afternoon session focused on the digital culture. He reminded the assembly that digital media is neither good nor evil but rather “a vehicle to be used to evangelize and an object of evangelization to transform it into more holy ground.”

PHOTO BY CHRISTINE CHAUFTY
PHOTO BY GAYLE FRANK
A special session for the deacons wives featured a presentation on “True Radiance” by Lisa Mladinich of Long Island. She is shown, at right, with Kathleen Mastellon, wife’s representative on the diocesan Deacon Council.
Dear Friends in Christ:

Pope Francis’ behavior exemplifies faith in action. His declaration of the Year of Families calls on each one of us to live the gospel with a special emphasis and recognition on the family, the Domestic Church. Mercy, Compassion, and the values that we so often associate with being both inclusive and community-minded begin in our families. Catholic Charities, as an agency reflects these gospel values and strives each day to address the many needs of the poor and marginalized of our North Country.

As a community of believers, we can all participate in Christ’s mission of love and hope; charity is an essential component of this mission and you can help through providing a generous gift. Your donation can make a vital difference in the lives of individuals and families who struggle with unintended economic hardship. Catholic Charities also help those with emotional issues and provide counseling to families that want to more effectively communicate with one another. These people are not strangers but in so many cases are your neighbors, friends, co-workers and even family members who have knocked on Catholic Charities and asked for help.

Catholic Charities depends on your financial support to continue reaching out to those who need us. Our programs and services express our Christian and Catholic priorities. As your Bishop and chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Catholic Charities, I am graciously asking you to consider making a generous gift to this wonderful organization.

The Mother’s Day Annual Appeal for Catholic Charities will take place in all our parishes on the weekend of May 13, 2018. Thank you for your generosity and your support.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

Celebrating over 100 Years of Service 1917-2018
Help us reach our goal: $165,000
For more information: Call (315) 393-2255 or visit our website: www.cathcharities.org
Dear Friend of Catholic Charities,

Now celebrating over a century of service reminds all of us of the Church’s response to the poor and the needy is ongoing. Catholic Charities continues to serve the most vulnerable and marginal of our north country communities through developing programs and services that significantly address the variety of unmet needs faced by our brothers and sisters. Catholic Charities cannot do this alone. We need our benefactors to be partners in the mission of charity and justice. Your financial gift to Catholic Charities provides the resources for Catholic Charities to effectively respond to the numerous requests for assistance.

- Helping the victims of flooding relocate to new homes and better lives.
- Helping financially struggling families keep their homes heated or keep the electric turned on during times of economic hardship and cold winters.
- Providing counseling to parents and teens or struggling couples to more effectively communicate with one another.
- Helping a senior citizen with a co-pay for an essential medication. These are only a small sample of the hundreds of requests for assistance from individuals and families who come to Catholic Charities...the working family, the veteran, the retiree and others who need assistance today.

We thank you for your past support to our Annual Appeal and will be grateful for your support in the future. We hope that you will be able to help out again this year. Remember, all of our benefactors are remembered in a Mass celebrated each month.

In gratitude and with prayers,

Dcn Patrick J. Donahue LMSW, D. Min
Diocesan Director

Catholic Charities needs your help to continue the Legacy of Hope that began 100 years ago in New York State. This year’s Annual Appeal will support Catholic Charities core services: counseling, financial assistance for critical needs, maternity services, parish and community outreach, advocacy and networking. Your gift provides the resources for this Legacy of Hope to continue.

Be a part of the Legacy of Hope

In 2017, Catholic Charities served over 19,000 people across the North Country. Many of the services and programs continue to be offered because you cared enough to provide financial support through your Mother’s Day Appeal gift. For just pennies a day, your gift will make a difference in the lives of your neighbors. For the cost of one soda, a cup of coffee, or snack foods each week for one year, you can provide the following:

- $ 40.00 will provide a food voucher for a family
- $ 55.00 will provide gas money for a parent to travel to Syracuse or Burlington to be with their sick child
- $ 150.00 will provide two counseling sessions for a teen in crisis
- $ 200.00 will provide a safe new crib for an infant
- $ 250.00 will provide home heating fuel for an elderly couple
- $ 350.00 will prevent homelessness through rent/mortgage assistance
- $ 500.00 will subsidize the cost of counseling sessions for parents experiencing a crisis pregnancy
- $1,000.00 or more will support the Core services of Catholic Charities: counseling, maternity, advocacy, parish and community outreach

For more information about Catholic Charities and programs in your area visit our website: www.cathcharities.org or call (315) 393-2255

“How marvelous it would be if, at the end of each day, each of us could say: today I have performed an act of charity towards others”

- Pope Francis

Your gift makes a difference
Catholic Charities will be there for your family member, neighbor and community when they need support in times of emotional, financial crisis.

⇒ You can make your donation online at www.cathcharities.org.

For privacy protection, Catholic Charities is accepting credit card donations online only.

Our online donor program is a secure site.

Or detach below and return with your donation

Name: ___________________________ Phone #: ___________________________

Address: ________________________

Street /P.O. Box __________________ City __________________ State ___________ Zip Code ___________

Parish: __________________________

Your Donation (check enclosed payable to Catholic Charities) Amount: $ ___________

You can donate online: www.cathcharities.org

All donations to Catholic Charities are tax deductible.

Mail to:
Catholic Charities Appeal 2018
6866 State Highway 37
Ogdensburg, NY 13669
WASHINGTON LETTER

Through nibbles or bites

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) - For generations, religious denominations in the United States have been largely exempt from paying taxes. However, some cracks are beginning to show in that armor.

Principal among them is a suit awaiting a hearing by the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in the case of Gaylor v. Mnuchin, in which the Freedom From Religion Foundation is challenging the constitutionality of a 1954 law that permitted housing allowances given by denominations to clergy to be exempt from taxation.

The suit had a false start, according to Luke Goodrich, vice president and senior counsel for the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty and its lead attorney on the case. When the Freedom From Religion Foundation first sued, the case was thrown out because it lacked standing. The foundation later gave a housing allowance to its directors - money taxed by the IRS - and was rebuffed when it asked for its tax money back.

"In general, people don't sue the IRS to raise taxes on other people," Goodrich told Catholic News Service May 2.

"Tax policy fights eating away at church exemptions"

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops joined an amicus brief in the case filed April 26 by the Church Alliance, which describes itself as "a coalition of the chief executive officers of nearly 40 denominational benefit programs," although the USCCB was not listed among those in the brief.

"When Congress chooses not to impose a burden on religious organizations - whether by means of tax exemption or regulatory exception - it honors, rather than transgresses, this nation's long tradition of separation between church and state," the brief said. "Leaving religion alone does not establish it."

The brief quoted from a 1954 Senate report prior to passage of the housing allowance: "Under present law, the rental value of a home furnished a minister of the gospel - although the benefit extends to non-Christian clergy - as a part of his salary is not included in his gross income. This is unfair to those ministers who are not furnished a parsonage, but who receive larger salaries - which are taxable - to compensate them for expenses they incur in supplying their own home," it said.

"What about clergy-less churches? "Almost every conceivable arrangement would create at least some inequities," the brief said. "Congress was entitled to cure the most salient of these."

"This is a long-standing tax provision that treats the ministers the same as hundreds of thousands of other workers," Goodrich said. "The atheists have sued only to take it away from ministers. So if they win, it would (re-)establish discrimination against ministers."

Goodrich said the circuit court's ruling is key, because if the ministers win, it is highly unlikely the Supreme Court would consider an appeal on a matter of settled law.

But if the Freedom From Religion Foundation wins, he added, "in one fell swoop, that's drastically rewriting the tax code and adding close to $1 billion in taxes every year. I would say the Supreme Court would be taking that up."

"The state of New York was able to claim a hefty chunk of the proceeds from the sale of a Catholic health care provider"

The Church Alliance brief also pointed to a 1970 Supreme Court case, Walz v. Tax Commission of the City of New York. In the case, the justices held that grants of tax exemptions to religious organizations do not violate the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

"The grant of a tax exemption is not sponsorship since the government does not transfer part of its revenue to churches but simply abstains from demanding that the churches support the state," the high court said. "There is no genuine nexus between tax exemption and establishment of religion."

A similar amicus brief was filed by the Alliance Defending Freedom. But the 224-page brief is long because it contained the names of 9,000 or so churches and pastors; Catholic churches or priests, if there are any, are few and very far between on the list.

"Although they had the right to walk away, they didn't," Hammond said. "In fact, Centene is contributing some of the $2 billion. $1.5 billion comes from Fidelis and $500 million comes from Centene."

Fidelis had been New York's largest purveyor of state-sponsored health services for the poor. It had intended on using the sale proceeds for a foundation to support health care for the needy. Even after the state's bite, it still has $3.2 billion in cash and other assets to use for the foundation if it chooses.

Hammond warned this sets a precedent. "Any large nonprofit clearly in the health field, that contemplates conversion or sale, will clearly expect a phone call from the governor's office," he said. "And New York does have a pretty substantial nonprofit health insurance sector. It's probably close to half of all people."
New York bill would help parents who experience an early miscarriage

By Kate Blain
Catholic News Service

ALBANY, N.Y. (CNS) – When parents lose a child to miscarriage, “you can never take away their pain,” said labor and delivery nurse Sharon Hoffman.

She said it brings back some level of control though when they can at least bury their child.

Currently, in the state of New York, a child miscarried before 20 weeks’ gestation is often considered simply “products of conception,” disposed of by the hospital without notifying the parents that they can access hospital records and obtain their child’s remains to bury, cremate or otherwise respectfully dispose.

In contrast, Hoffman described her experience with parents who suffer a miscarriage after 20 weeks: “They’re allowed to see and, if they wish, to hold, wash and dress their lost child; to have photos taken; and to have the child’s remains released to a funeral home for burial or cremation. Some families choose to have a funeral service, as well.

The New York State Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the state’s bishops, is trying to help families who have had early miscarriages to grieve and heal. A proposed law drafted by the conference would make it mandatory, when a miscarriage occurs before 20 weeks, for hospitals to let parents know they can get a fetal death report, enabling them to then get a burial permit and obtain their child’s remains.

Many New York Catholic hospitals have a policy to do so already. St. Peter’s Hospital in Albany, for example, has a communal plot where the remains of miscarried infants can be buried.

But, for infants miscarried before 20 weeks, “the law is silent,” said Kathleen Gallagher, director of pro-life activities at the conference. Hospitals can make their own policies, and parents often do not know their rights. One bereavement coordinator told Gallagher it was “horrifying that I can’t tell families that they can bury their child.”

Hoffman, who attends Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Duanesburg, N.Y., told The Catholic Observer, newspaper of the Diocese of Albany, that she has heard hospital officials compare the remains of a child miscarried before 20 weeks to an appendix that’s been removed or a leg that has been amputated.

“It’s not like your leg,” she said emotionally. “It’s your future. It’s a part of you.”

Not all parents want to see a child miscarried that early, she added, but “that doesn’t mean they don’t have the right to bury it” if they choose.

The bill that would change New York law on this issue is gaining support in the State Legislature, with at least three senators and at least five Assembly members backing it.

The legislation is sitting in each chamber’s health committee.

Advocates are clear in telling legislators that the bill has nothing to do with elective abortions. It is specifically about spontaneous abortions, commonly called miscarriages. In addition, it does not put any financial responsibility on the state; parents who wish to bury their miscarried child would bear the cost.

Ironically, Gallagher noted, the issue has been discussed among pro-life advocates for years, but because New York tends to be “so hostile to pro-life priorities,” lobbyists like her are forced to spend most of their time “fighting the bad stuff,” such as a proposal to legalize assisted suicide.

Being contacted by two nurses last year who serve families dealing with early miscarriages galvanized the pro-life community to push for a new law. Having drafted the bill, the Catholic conference has since been collecting testimonials from families who have experienced such a loss and sharing those thoughts with state lawmakers.

One of the testimonials came from Jacob and Katherine Vander Veen of Altamont, N.Y. They lost their son, Isaac, at 21 weeks’ gestation.

“Even though we didn’t know him long, we knew him intimately,” they wrote. “We heard his heartbeat, felt his movements in the womb, talked to him and cherished him daily… He was a real person in every sense.”

Katherine Vander Veen recalled the day she miscarried. It happened at home, so the couple had to bring Isaac’s remains with them to the hospital.

“I remember my husband and I wondering, ‘What on earth are we going to do if we can’t bury him?’ I’ve known other people who have miscarried and you never hear what they did,” she said. “Granted, the baby was very small, but you could see he was fully formed.”

The Vander Veens were relieved to learn that they could claim Isaac’s remains for burial. But it disturbed them to hear that, if the miscarriage had occurred earlier, they likely would not have had that comfort.
Contribution Writer

“He’s an abortion. Without dimensionally.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

from the public eye ascends into the air on God’s and is lost to sight before their eyes.

They suddenly reach out to all women, especially those who have attached to it. Without diminishing the seriousness of the sin, I want to tell them about the Good News of the Gospel.

I'll begin with this universal truth: “Never put a limit on God's mercy.” You've heard it said that God is love. Well it's true. God's love is infinite, unconditioned, and unchanging. Do not live in some dark corner apart from His loving kindness.

There are no unforgivable sins. The only sin called unforgivable in the Gospels is the sin of refusing God’s forgiveness. A person who refuses to accept God’s forgiveness cannot receive it. The main point however, is that God wipes away all the sins of everyone who repents and asks Him for forgiveness. As far as worrying about the baby's well-being, you must leave it up to God to shower him or her with love.

When I hear confessions, I conclude with these words, “You’ve made a good confession; now put your mind at ease and try as best you can to trust God's love completely. For now, renew your good intentions and Go in peace.”

At a recent White House Press Corps dinner their entertainer made jokes about yanking her baby out of her womb. She even used the word “baby”. Watching an audience laughing at this kind of humor was horrifying. Mother Theresa and millions of saints in heaven, must have been outraged. So were millions of Americans of all faiths. There is nothing funny about abortion.

It's difficult to write about Divine Mercy on this topic. It seems like you're downplaying the magnitude of the evil. I tried it once many years ago, and to my utter shock the article was used in abortion clinics to encourage women to proceed with their abortion. That's like trying to get absolution before you kill someone.

I've been wary ever since. Even so, I've risked it again today because I fully realize that many women were almost paralyzed with fear when they aborted their child; a deed they detested in their heart of hearts. They did not the give full consent of their will.

A V.O.I.C.E. OF FAITH

Abortion and Divine Mercy

Father John Catoir
Contributing Writer

in abortion clinics. Even with consent of the will. Some cowardly man or family member pushed them into it, and without the necessary support system they succumbed to misery.

Permit me to conclude, I think that's why Pope Francis tempered the zeal of those who make abortion the central issue of Christian revelation. Their condemnations are too sweeping.

Brava to those heroic women who found the moral strength to save their baby in such extreme circumstances. To all men and women, I send the assurance of Divine Love.

"May the passion and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints, and whatsoever good you do, or suffering you endure, may it lead to the remission of your sins, the increase of grace, and the gift of everlasting life with God in heaven."

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I FEEL PRETTY

By Kurt Jensen
Catholic News Service

Whacks to the noggin make such convenient plot devices.

In "I Feel Pretty" (STX), the latest Amy Schumer comedy, a tumble during a Soul Cycle workout gives her out-of-shape character the reverse of body dysmorphic disorder. Thus she sees herself as slim, beautiful and perfect -- and this supercharges her self-esteem, transforming her romantic life and her career.

Logical flaws in this aside, parables about self-confidence can be useful to all. While some may see the movie's theme as veering in the direction of fat-shaming, more deeply engrossed in performing physical comedy routines.

"I Feel Pretty" also represents a considerable departure from the raunchiness on which Schumer -- who plays Renee, a lovelorn online customer-service representative at Lily LeClaire, a big cosmetics firm -- has built her brand. Even so, a sequence in which Renee's sudden boldness is shown to extend to sexual matters may have the parents of teen girls, who are this film's target audience, hesitating to give them the green light.

Pathos is not the aim here. Instead co-writers and directors Abby Kohn and Marc Silverstein have packaged an unbendingly cheerful girl-power fable.

Renee, with low self-esteem and a healthy appetite for carbohydrates, considers herself stuck permanently in a lost corner of life. Somewhat desperately, she and girlfriends Vivian (Aidy Bryant) and Jane (Busy Philipps) attempt to fire up their love lives with online dating -- with predictably little success.

All it takes is that exercise accident, though, and Renee has the moxie to seek a new job as a receptionist at Lily LeClaire. Having gained the post, her aptitude for identifying the shopping habits of the average gal at the makeup counter impresses the namesake founder (Lauren Hutton) and her daughter, Avery (Michelle Williams).

Renee's newfound self-assurance alienates her from her pals for a time, but also lands her a sensitive new boyfriend, Ethan (Rory Scovel). He, like everyone else, sees past the illusion, but admires her for going with it.

That second thump to the head will eventually arrive, raising the question of whether Renee can succeed without the ongoing fantasy that animated her.

Despite its trite plot, "I Feel Pretty" conveys sound messages and showcases some good moral choices. It also reinforces an insight as old as the Book of Proverbs: Namely, that "charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting" -- and that real worth, accordingly, is to be sought within.

The film contains an implied nonmarital sexual encounter, obscured rear nudity and a single instance each of scatological and anatomical humor.

The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

ALSO PLAYING... A QUIET PLACE

CNS PHOTO/STXFILMS
Amy Schumer stars in a scene from the movie "I Feel Pretty."

CNS PHOTO/PARAMOUNT
Emily Blunt and Millicent Simmonds star in a scene from the movie "A Quiet Place." This compact, stylish horror film might be a parable about resisting tyranny. Taken strictly on its surface, it's a story about how strong, trusting family ties can overcome any obstacle, especially if the members of the clan in question (led by John Krasinski, who also directed and co-wrote the screenplay) are as technically adept as TV's MacGyver. Krasinski's character, his wife (Emily Blunt) and two surviving children (Millicent Simmonds and Noah Jupe) initially evade and eventually battle the invading aliens, armed with incredibly acute hearing, who killed his youngest. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned. (CNS)
HEALING MASS
Morrisonville – St. Alexander’s Parish will have a Healing Mass.
Date: June 7
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Features: Also included will be Anointing of the Sacrament of the Sick, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Confession and the opportunity to receive individual prayer with members of Living Waters Healing Ministry.

GOLF TOURNAMENT
Peru - The 32nd Annual Knights of Columbus Council 7273 Bill McBride Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament will be held.
Date: June 15
Time: 10 a.m. Shotgun start
Place: Adirondack Golf and Country Club
Features: The 4 person scramble is dedicated to its former chairman, the late Bill McBride Jr.
Contact: Obtain entry forms and information from Greg Lombard at 518-643-5444 or email gnelombard@charter.net.

MOTHER’S DAY BRUNCH
Lyons – Knights of Columbus Council #7215 to have a Mission of Hope Mother’s Day Brunch.
Date: May 13
Time: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Place: Lyons Mountain American Legion
Cost: Adults, $10; Children, 6-12, $5; under 5, Free
Features: 50/50 raffle; Proceeds to Benefit North Country’s Mission of Hope & Knights Council #7215.
Contact: Takes outs are available 518-735-4372; For more information please call (518) 578-2638

ALUMNI REUNION
Plattsburgh – The Seton Catholic, MAI & SJA Alumni Reunion is set
Date: May 25 – 27
Schedule: May 25, Golf at Harmony Golf Course at 11 a.m.; Welcome back reception at Valour Brewing Company at 6 p.m.; May 26, School tours from Noon to 2 p.m., Alumni Banquet at the Westside Ballroom at 6 p.m.; May 27, Mass at St. John’s Church at 9:30 a.m.
Contact: Susan Pellerin at 518-561-4831 option 7 to register

GARAGE SALE
Plattsburgh – Donations are being accepted now for the Seton Garage Sale.
Date: Donations accepted now, Garage sale to be held June 2 and 3
Features: Items needed: Furniture, Books, DVDs, Clothing & Shoes, Home Decor, Kitchen Supplies, Holiday Decorations, Electronics (no TVs or printers), Jewelry, Small Appliances, Athletic Items, Toys/Games, Bikes, Accessories, Drop off locations at Seton Academy and Seton Catholic.

OPERATION MIRIAM LUNCH
Watertown – Women of middle school age and up invited to learn about what the consecrated life all about.
Date: June 17
Time: 11 a.m.
Place: SSJ Motherhouse
Features: Prayer to know one’s vocations, lunch, sharing of vocation stories and information about consecrated life.
Contact: Shayne Lippincott at slippincott@rcdony.org or call 315-782-3620 by June 11.

TO SHRINES IN MONTREAL
Clayton - Parishioners from the parishes of St. Mary’s, St. John’s, LaFargeville are sponsoring a day trip to Montreal to visit St. Joseph’s Oratory and Notre Dame Basilica.
Date: May 15
Cost: $125 covers coach transportation from St. Mary’s, admission and tour costs, lunch, and dinner in Old Montreal.
Schedule: Bus leaves at 7a.m. from St. Mary’s. Trip includes a guided tour at each church, visiting the Oratory’s museum and gift shops at both locations. Fr. Art LaBaff will say Mass for the group in the crypt church at St. Joseph’s. Arrival back at St. Mary’s is expected to be between 9:30 and 10 p.m.
Contact: St. Mary’s Church at 315-686-3398.

LIFERIGHT MEETING
Watertown - Lifelight meets the first Wednesday of the month.
Time: 1 p.m.
Place: 580 Arsenal Street
Features: pro-life videos, books and educational materials for borrowing

ST. PETER’S MAY FESTIVAL
Lowville – St. Peter’s May Festival to be held.
Schedule: May 18, 5p.m. to 10; May 19, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; May 20, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Features: Food, Fun, Games for all.
In honor of mothers

Mothers watch over, nourish, and protect. Mothers give life. The role of a mother can often be thankless or it can be the defining moment in a woman’s life. Mothers are responsible for holding it all together. They can be taken for granted. Mothers are loved. Mothers are exhausted. For this Mom, it has been my greatest joy, challenge, accomplishment and at times heartbreak. I am blessed to still have my mom and my mother in law. I respect the job of being a mom so much more now that I am the mother of two teenagers. Often difficult but always loving.

Motherhood is often seen through the eyes of unconditional love. Probably no other Bible verse can sum this up better: “Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not envy. It does not boast. It is not proud. It is not rude. It is not self-seeking. It is not easily angered. It keeps no record of wrong done. It does not delight in evil, but rejoices in the truth. It always protects, trusts, hopes, perseveres.” (Corinthians 13)

As our world evolves, maybe the importance on being a mother is diminished. Not so in the eyes of God. There is no greater calling. There is a strategic role between God and a mother. No one can influence the life of a child more than a mother. As we look in admiration at the relationship between Jesus and His Blessed Mother, Mary, we take note of the love and devotion Christ had for His Mother. Jesus recognized the sacrifice that Mary made for him. She knew Jesus better than anyone. She grieved more than anyone when He died for us on the cross. She shaped the relationships he would have with women, the respect he would have for them and the kindness he would show as we read in the Bible. Mary the Mother of Jesus is a role model for all mothers, past and present, in the world we live in. She embodies all the love, kindness and protective qualities women need to remember when they become a Mom.

The work of the missions is a lot like motherhood. It can be unexpected. It can bring joy and pain. It requires strength, patience. It requires action. It is not proud. It is not self-seeking. As Jesus looked to His Mother Mary for guidance and love, so goes the life of those on Mission. They know the love of God and that He is there for them. They learn they have a greater purpose or a calling. Just as there is no greater calling than that of the role of the mother.

This Mother’s Day, take the opportunity to remember those in the Missions who continue to be nourished and loved through our prayers and sacrifice at home. Many children in the Missions are orphans and the only “mother” they know are the missionaries who care for them and minister to their spiritual needs. As the definition of mothering states “to nourish and protect”, may we continue to support the Missions through prayer and sacrifice. I wish all Mothers a Happy Mother’s Day. God Bless!

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

OBITUARIES

Robert G. Decker, 95
HAMPD - A Mass of Christian Burial for Robert G. Decker, 95, father of Father Robert L. Decker of Black River and Father Douglas A. Decker of Tupper Lake, was held May 2 at St. Peter’s Church with his two sons officiating.

Mr. Decker died May 4, 2018 at the Samaritan Keep Home in Watertown. Burial was in Fineview Cemetery.

He was born March 14, 1923 in Hammond, son of Loren R. and Ellen Chase Decker. He was educated in Hammond Schools and married Mary Aline Constance Amyot, on May 16, 1945 at St. Patrick’s Church, in Rossie.

Mr. Decker owned and operated his own farm on County Route 1, until 1970 and also worked as a bus driver for Hammond Central School. He then served as highway superintendent for the town of Hammond for 20 years, retiring in 1992.

He was a member of the K of C, and played in the band “Blue Notes” for many years. Besides his wife Aline, and his two priest sons, he is survived by three other sons, George (Susan), West Gard­ner, Maine; Lyndon (Judy), Tully, NY, and Steven (An­gela), Adams; a daughter, Sally and her husband Frederick Paddock, Hammond; five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by two sisters, Lorene Hall and Margaret Shannon.

Memorial donations may be the Cystic Fibrosis Found­ation, the American Diabetes Association or St. Peter’s Church.


Burke — Jeanne (Chauvin) Lanctot, 92; Mass of Christian Burial April 28, 2018 at St. George’s Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery, Malone.

Constable — Harold “Pal” Lamondie, 79; Mass of Christian Burial May 7, 2018 at St. Francis of Assisi Church.


Glenfield — Denise J. (LaPorte) Dufault, 91; Mass of Christian Burial July 9, 2018 at St. Joseph’s Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Mooers Forks — Della M. (Kirouac) Bertrand, 89; Mass of Christian Burial May 4, 2018 at St. Ann’s Church; burial in parish cemetery.

North Bangor — Walter Woods, Jr., 88; Mass of Christian Burial April 30, 2018 at St. Augustine’s Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ogdensburg — Faye A. (Brouillette) Fraser, 81; Funeral Services May 4, 2018 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Plattsburgh — Fidelia (Hamner) Lessor, 102; Mass of Christian Burial May 4, 2018 at St. John’s Church; burial at St. Peter’s Cemetery.

Watertown — Peter L. Esposito, 85; Mass of Christian Burial May 4, 2018 at St. Patrick’s Church; burial in Glenwood Cemetery.

Malone — Gerald R. Benoit, 89; Mass of Christian Burial May 8, 2018 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Malone — Carole Ann Wilcox-Yando, 83; Mass of Christian Burial May 1, 2018 at Notre Dame Church; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

Massena — Glenn A. Peets, 87; Mass of Christian Burial May 1, 2018 at Sacred Heart Church; burial in Calvary Cemetery.

North Bangor — Walter Woods, Jr., 88; Mass of Christian Burial April 30, 2018 at St. Augustine’s Church; burial in parish cemetery.

Ogdensburg — Faye A. (Brouillette) Fraser, 81; Funeral Services May 4, 2018 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Notre Dame Cemetery.

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To conclude the year of religious education at Sacred Heart Church in Chazy, students in grades one through 10 worked together to construct a Floating Rosary. This environmentally friendly rosary was put together with helium balloons. The students, teachers, walkers, and families were invited to Sunday Mass April 29 at 8 a.m. and, after Mass, everyone processed across the street to a field where a decade of the Rosary was recited as the Floating Rosary was released. Above, left, Celine Juneau and Catherine Langlois fill a balloon.