Pope: Coming to terms with past brings peace

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – People need to make peace with their lives and anything they are running from, rather than lose themselves to escapism and playful distraction, Pope Francis said.

There is an "industry of distraction" in full force today, which paints the ideal world as being "a big playground where everybody has fun" and the ideal individual as one who "makes money in order to have fun, find satisfaction" in the many "vast and diverse avenues of pleasure," he said Sept. 5 during his weekly general audience.

Such an attitude leads to "dissatisfaction with an existence anesthetized by fun, which isn't rest, but alienation and escaping from reality," he added. "People have never been able to rest like they can today and yet people have never felt as much emptiness as they do today."

The pope continued his series of talks about the Ten Commandments, focusing on keeping the Lord's day holy.

It seems like an easy commandment to fulfill, he said, but it isn't because people need to recognize there is a false kind of rest marked by avoidance and distraction, and authentic rest, which is being at peace with and giving thanks for the gift of life.

After God made the heavens and the earth, he rested, making the seventh day holy. This day reflects "God's joy for all he created. It is a day of contemplation and blessing" and giving praise – not running away, the pope said.

"It is a time for looking at reality and saying, 'How beautiful life is!" he said. "To the idea of rest as escaping reality, the commandment responds with rest as blessing reality."

In fact, the Eucharist, which lies at the heart of Sunday, means "thanksgiving," he said; it is a day to thank the Lord for his mercy, his gifts and for the gift of life.

Follow Me: Catechists are evangelists

The Church celebrates Catechetical Sunday on September 16, 2018, when some parishioners will be commissioned as catechists.

Bishop Terry R. LaValley reflects on the role and significance of catechists in our communities in this pastoral letter, and thanks those who serve our parishes and families.

FULL STORY, PAGE 3

State launches investigation

NY Attorney General issues subpoenas to all dioceses in the state

FULL STORY, PAGE 5

MEETING OF FAMILIES

Locals attend event in Ireland

Seven members of St. Stephen's Youth and Young Adult Ministry in Croghan attended a Franciscan University at Steubenville Youth Conference recently. Pictured are, group leader Peter Woolschlager, Erik Campeau, Sierra Kempney, Madeline Monnat, Timothy Woolschlager, Natalie Monnat and Evan Lashbrooks.

Full Story, Page 4
Lessons from the ‘unruly child section’

“Out of the mouths of infants and nurslings you have brought forth praise.” — Matthew 21:16

For some reason, it seems like most families with very young children sit in the same section at the church I attend, St. Mary’s in Brushton. I refer to it as the “unruly child section,” not because the children misbehave, but because they behave like toddlers, with all the movement, unpredictable speech and occasional crying that come with that.

My husband and I sit in the unruly child section. My husband would tell you we sit there because I’m an unruly child. I enjoy silently interacting with the young children around me.

Can the little ones be distracting? Absolutely. But, to me, they’re distracting in the best way. They add joy and humor to the Mass, and they represent hope and the future of our church.

While I enjoy all the little ones in the unruly child section, I have a favorite family. This family has two very young boys.

Earlier this month, my husband and I sat in front of this family. About ten minutes into Mass, one of the boys, I assume the younger based on voice, rather loudly asked his parents, “all done?” He continued asking that question roughly every five minutes, more frequently as Mass progressed.

Each time he said it, the parents nicely gave him a “shhh.” And each time he said it, I’d start laughing. I couldn’t help it, much to my husband’s dismay.

While these little ones almost always provide a laugh or two, occasionally, they say something that has an even greater impact.

One Sunday, the older boy in my favorite family was more than a little restless. When it came time for the Sign of Peace, it was his time to shine. He went up and down the pew, shaking hands with those around him, saying “peace” to each in his cute little man voice.

As the Lamb of God began, he was still trying to shake hands. His mother was trying to get him seated and still. He looked up at her with big, sad eyes, and simply said, “I want more peace, mama.”

Don’t we all little man. Don’t we all.

We all need the peace of Christ. We all need to share that peace with those around us. And we all need to listen for those moments when the Lord speaks to us through others, even through unruly children.

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Remembering priests in prayer, stories

September has become a road trip for me. The summer has been great, and I have – for various reasons – had the opportunities to drive around sections of our Diocese of Ogdensburg. I’ve included parts of Vermont in my travels as well. September does mark the beginning of autumn. As you know so well, this part of the world becomes a sort of wonderland during the fall. Each year, the colors seem more spectacular than ever before.

So, today I want you to know that I have joined the other retired folks and taken to the road.

As I drive around, I frequently stop in a town and visit the Catholic Churches of Northern New York. I always try to take the time to wander into a town along the way and visit the church. Often, it is a parish church where I was pastor once upon a time.

This part of my trip becomes a bit of nostalgia. I remember the place and the people and the families who made up part of the parish. Occasionally, I look up some old friends.

In all the places I pass by, I remember the priests who were pastors there and all those priests who were assigned to minister at that place. So, now, I would like to take a moment to encourage you to remember the many priests who were part of your life.

I want to take the moment to call upon you to remember with respect the memory of those priests who have been part of the presbyterate of our diocese. Take the time to remember the qualities that made them such great pastors and priests. Personally, I remember so many priests who have had and continue to have a profound influence on my life and my priesthood. They have all been an important part of my life. I know only too well that our diocese has had – and continues to have – true saints among our priests, all deeply dedicated to our Catholic Church and to our Diocese of Ogdensburg.

Recently, on a Sunday afternoon, I walked down to the Battlefield here in Sackets Harbor to listen to an orchestra playing there. It was part of the summer Sunday concert series. During the intermission, I struck up a conversation with a lady who was sitting nearby. It came up in our conversation that I was a retired priest living in town. She then began to tell me of the many priests who have been part of her life as a Catholic. She had driven quite a distance to the concert, and she began to tell me the pastors she remembered in her town. She also added many great stories about those priests and how they had influenced her family.

This happens to me often when I meet someone, and they determine I am a priest. They want me to know of the many priests that they knew and remembered and loved. There are many lovely stories.

One more thing today! It is important for me to take this opportunity to offer my gratitude to all of you – all of you lay men and women. You continue to be such an important source of support to all of us, priests – the active ones and the retired ones also.

I can personally guarantee you that your prayers and good words have strengthened and challenged my ministry. So please, I encourage you to continue your support and your prayers for all of us priests. And a quick reminder to pray for our Bishop Terry and our Holy Father, Pope Francis. Thank you.
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

The Church celebrates Catechetical Sunday on September 16, 2018 when some of our parishioners will be commissioned as catechists. We are so fortunate and truly blessed to have such generous women and men who sacrifice their time to help our parents in their critical responsibility of training their children in the Catholic faith.

In the past, our catechists were clergy or religious who had extensive training and formation in the Catholic faith. Given the drastic decrease in their number, dedicated lay people now lead our parish’s catechetical efforts. Their Catholic education and faith formation have become more urgent. The catechist seeks to understand and be comfortable in articulating the Catholic faith in many areas that comprise the fullness of Church teaching.

First and foremost, the catechist, him or herself, must be a disciple of Jesus Christ. This year’s theme, “Enlisting Witnesses for Jesus Christ,” reminds us that catechesis is not the mere sharing of information, but an inherent aspect of discipleship. I must know whom it is that I am called to follow and with whom I am on this journey. If we desire that those whom we lead would develop a personal encounter with Jesus, we best have one ourselves. When we don’t, our words reveal a hollow, fraudulent witness.

The catechist seeks to understand the changing parish landscape and is an active force in the ongoing vitality of the faith life of the local parish as local pastoral planning evolves. They have an acute sensitivity to and respect for the parishioners whose parishes have closed or have been merged or reconfigured into new parish communities. No one must feel left behind or lost in the cracks. Our catechists develop the skills that enhance collaboration and flexibility in community-building endeavors in our endeavor to meet the varying needs of today’s families. What we’ve always done, what everyone else is doing will not suffice.

As Pope Francis wrote in The Joy of Love, “We need to find the right language, arguments and forms of witness that can help us reach the hearts of young people, appealing to their capacity for generosity, commitment, love and even heroism...” (#40)

Inspiried and energized by the Gospel and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we invite our families to discover, celebrate and deepen their relationship with Christ in the midst of the local family of faith. Catechesis is critical to the evangelizing mission of the Church and to the health and vitality of a parish and its people.

We congratulate and support all those in our parishes who help to strengthen faith formation in family life.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg
Saranac Lake family attends meeting of families

DUBLIN—When the location of the 2018 World Meeting of Families (WMOF) was announced three years ago, the Miner family from Saranac Lake felt it would be a perfect fit.

“The diocese sent ten of us to the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia in 2015,” said Colleen Miner, who attended this year’s WMOF with her husband, John, and daughter, Ellen. “At the end of it, they announced the next one would be in Dublin, Ireland. I thought, ‘We’re Catholic. We’re Irish. We’re in.’”

This year’s WMOF opened Aug. 21 and ran through Aug. 26. It included an opening ceremony, a three-day congress that included speakers and discussions on a variety of family-related topics, a Festival of Families and a solemn Eucharistic Celebration.

Pope Francis attended the Festival of Families and said Mass on Sunday of the conference.

“We were right near where Pope Francis entered and exited, and we had no idea,” Colleen Miner said. “We were standing waiting, and Ellen said, ‘Look! He’s right there!’ She got a great photo of Pope Francis going by.”

The Miners said they attended a variety of workshops and talks at the conference portion of the event.

“Ellen and I sort of fell into a really good workshop on marriage preparation, which is awesome, since Ellen is currently engaged,” Colleen said. “We were standing waiting, and Ellen said, ‘Look! He’s right there!’”

The Miners also enjoyed a presentation on genealogy.

“People in Ireland, ancestry is a big deal,” said John Miner. “During what we call ‘the potato famine’ and they call ‘the hunger,’ there was a great diaspora. It made them want to find their family and connect to their heritage and roots.”

“This is a reminder of some fundamentals,” John Miner added. “There was some really good stuff, and some stuff I considered irrelevant. There was a lot of cause for hope, but also at least some cause for concern. I’m really glad I went.”

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New York launches probe of sex abuse records

ALBANY (CNS) – The New York State Office of the Attorney General is the latest to announce that it is launching an investigation of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic Church clergy, sending out subpoenas on Sept. 6 seeking documents from the state’s eight dioceses.

In a press release, the agency said it was seeking “a civil investigation into how the dioceses and other church entities—which are nonprofit institutions—reviewed and potentially covered up allegations of extensive sexual abuse of minors.”

In conjunction, the state’s Attorney General, Barbara D. Underwood, announced a hotline, specifically for those who may have been abused by clergy in New York.

Joseph Zwilling, director of communications for the Archdiocese of New York, said in a Sept. 6 email to Catholic News Service that “while we have just received a subpoena, it is not a surprise to us that the Attorney General would look to begin a civil investigation, and she will find the Archdiocese of New York, and the other seven dioceses in the state, ready and eager to work together with her in the investigation.”

Similarly, the dioceses of Ogdensburg, Syracuse and Brooklyn, said they, too, will cooperate and said they have collaborated with law enforcement and respective agencies over the years investigating sex abuse cases.

“We received a subpoena, and we look forward to cooperating with the Attorney General’s office,” the Diocese of Ogdensburg statement said. “In 2002, the Diocese of Ogdensburg met the District Attorneys in the eight counties within our borders and agreed to inform them of all allegations of sexual abuse and to provide any information requested by them. Since that time, we have notified those District Attorneys of all abuse claims and have provided those District Attorneys information as requested related to any sexual abuse allegations. It has consistently been our policy to cooperate with law enforcement, and we will continue with that policy. “As a diocese, we remain focused on the safety of our youth and working with victims toward healing and reconciliation.”

New York’s attorney general’s office said it had taken a cue from the state of Pennsylvania and its probe for records that resulted in an Aug. 14 grand jury report detailing claims of sexual abuse of minors by clergy going back 70 years. Though the report identified more than 1,000 sex abuse claims, the Pennsylvania, only two cases resulted in prosecutions because the statute of limitations had expired in the majority of cases.

“The Pennsylvania grand jury report shined a light on incredibly disturbing and depraved acts by Catholic clergy, assisted by a culture of secrecy and cover-ups in the dioceses. Victims in New York deserve to be heard as well—and we are going to do everything in our power to bring them the justice they deserve,” said New York’s Underwood.

She added that New York may face a similar scenario to Pennsylvania when it comes to prosecuting any cases since “many cases of abuse may not be prosecutable given New York’s statutes of limitations.”

The Diocese of Albany in a statement released Sept. 6 said it had contacted the Albany District Attorney’s office, inviting its officials “to review our records and look at how sexual abuse cases have been handled historically in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, to what extent survivors were heard and believed, what processes were followed, and what consequences resulted.” The letter was addressed to parishioners.

In an email to CNS, Albany’s Director of Communications, Mary DeTurris Poust, confirmed the diocese had received a subpoena, adding that Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger said “we have to do what is right, even if it is not easy.”

“As Bishop Scharfenberger stated in his letter to the people of our diocese, when he made the decision to ask Albany District Attorney David Soares to review our records, we believe that only by shining a light on whatever might be hidden can we bring about true healing for survivors and for our church,” she said in the email.

In Buffalo, where the diocese has been dealing with fallout following a series of television news reports that said Bishop Richard J. Malone did not remove two priests from ministry after receiving abuse allegations, George Richert, director of communications, said the office would work with state officials.

“Our diocese will cooperate with any investigation initiated by the New York State Attorney General or District Attorney,” he said in an email to CNS.

New York’s law enforcement agency joined a growing movement of state entities in early September seeking Catholic Church records documenting past sex abuse. A day before New York announced its probe, the Attorney General of Nebraska asked the state’s three dioceses for sex abuse records going back 40 years. New Jersey officials also announced on Sept. 6 the creation of a task force with subpoena power through a grand jury to investigate allegations at the state’s Catholic dioceses.
October is Respect Life Month
We are inviting you to consider sponsorship of a full page advertisement with the theme Every Life

Cherished • Chosen • Sent

to appear in our October 10th issue of the
NORTH COUNTRY CATHOLIC

For $25 your name will appear as a supporter of human life from conception through natural death.
Must be returned to the NCC by September 28, 2018

YES! I/We would like to support a Respect Life Page in the North Country Catholic.

Name
Address
City_________ State_________ Zip_______
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Name as it will appear in the ad (please print):

Mail Checks payable to: North Country Catholic
PO Box 106, Canajoharie, NY 13317

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Rest in Peace
This week marks the anniversary of the deaths of the following clergyman who have served in the Diocese of Ogdensburg
Sept. 12 – Rev. Vincent Skiba, 1984
Sept. 15 – Rev. George Lessard, O.M.I., 1978
Sept. 18 – Rev. Charles E. Campeau, 1952

Protecting God’s Children
The Diocese of Ogdensburg has scheduled sessions for Protecting God’s Children for Adults. Pre-registration online is required. Participants may pre-register at www.virtus.org by selecting the registration button and following the directions.
Upcoming sessions:
Sept. 12 – 10 a.m., St. Joseph’s Church, Dannemora
Sept. 12 – Seton Catholic, Plattsburgh
Sept. 18 – 3 p.m., St. Agnes School, Lake Placid
Sept. 18 – 4 p.m., Immaculate Heart Central High School, Watertown
Sept. 19 – St. Mary’s School, Ticonderoga
Sept. 25 – 5:30 p.m., St. James School, Gouverneur
Sept. 25 – 5:30 p.m., Holy Family School, Malone

Bishop’s Public Schedule
Sept. 16 – 9 a.m. – Installation of Msgr. Robert H. Aucoin as Pastor of St. Theresa of Avila’s Church at Theresa and St. Mary’s Church, Evans Mills
11 a.m. – Installation of Rev. Christopher J. Looby as Pastor of St. Patrick’s Church and St. Anthony’s Church, Watertown
Sept. 17 – 9:50a.m. – Mass at Immaculate Heart Central Jr/Sr School in Watertown followed by a school visit
Sept. 18 – 6 p.m. – Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Foundation Dinner in Watertown
Sept. 19 – Noon – Bishop’s Heritage Circle Mass at St. Mary’s Cathedral with lunch following at Bishop’s residence
Sept. 20 – 9:45 a.m. – Episcopal Council Meeting at Bishop’s residence
Sept. 21 – 2:30 p.m – Mass at Camp Guggenheim for the Middle School Vocations Retreat

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 Phone: Day: 518-651-2267, Night: 518-569-0612; or Father Christopher Carrara, the Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Personnel at 315-393-2920

Letters to the Editor
We welcome letters from readers of the North Country Catholic.
• Due to space limitations, we ask that the number of words be limited to 300.
• We cannot accept letters which support ideas which are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.
• Send letters to North Country Catholic, PO Box 326, Ogdensburg, NY, 13669 or e-mail to news@northcountrycatholic.org
• Join the conversation!

Environmental Stewardship
A teachable moment
Recently a grandmother shared her experience with her grandson. When he comes to visit her, he is always reminding her of what he has learned in school about taking care of the environment.
“Grandma, you didn’t turn off the light,” or “you didn’t recycle.”
At first, she had to admit she found his reminders rather annoying! However, after she read and studied Pope Francis’ encyclical Laudato Si: Caring for our Common Home, she realized that her grandson was actually putting the challenge of Pope Francis into action without realizing it!
Quoting Patriarch Bartholomew, the Pope reminds us that “we are called to acknowledge our contribution, smaller or greater, to the disfigurement and destruction of creation… “to commit a crime against the natural world is a sin against ourselves and a sin against God.” (Para. #8)
What a teachable moment this became for both grandma and grandson! He had learned concrete ways to take care of the environment at school, and his grandmother had learned from her faith a deeper reason for doing these “inconvenient tasks.”
As children return to school this month and continue to learn about the natural world and our responsibility to take care of it, we, as adults, have “teachable moments” to bring the light of our faith to environmental practices learned in school.
From youth, we may learn some new contemporary facts from science about what is happening to our earth. We can share with the young people in our lives another reason for caring for the earth that is rooted in Scripture.
These “inconvenient tasks” can then be seen as concrete ways to express our gratitude to God for His awesome free gifts of water, air, soil, sunlight.
He has given them freely to all life on the planet. Embracing these simple tasks can become a daily way of saying “Thanks, God!”
Cardinal, economist mull faith's role in economy

NEW YORK (CNS) – The role of faith in the free market is to insist that a just economy is built on a moral framework that serves the common good, according to speakers at a Sept. 5 event at Jesuit-run Fordham University.

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark and economist Jeffrey D. Sachs, professor of Sustainable Development at Columbia University, traced the history of the Catholic Church's robust engagement with social issues and said Pope Francis is a prophetic voice for the marginalized in an age of global inequality.

As a "son of the global south," Pope Francis has extensive experience with the social dimension of economics and "has seen the game played for too long to sugarcoat it," Cardinal Tobin said. The pope's blunt, alarming statements are caricatured by some as clerical meddling in the scientific sphere, but he speaks from a conviction that the Christian faith has a dimension that includes witness in the public square and in the marketplace, the cardinal said.

Catholic tradition reflects on the economy through the lens of faith because life in community is at the heart of society, and social virtues and attention to the common good are valued, Cardinal Tobin said.

Pope Francis insists on radical social change to combat inequality, beginning at the periphery, the cardinal said. "The periphery is a place that's hard to see ... it's the people we don't see at all," he said.

"Seeing someone through the eyes of faith is to see who they are," he added. Cardinal Tobin said universities and business schools should teach ethics and help students understand finance and economy in a human dimension.

Understanding church teaching is a first step to living in solidarity with others, he said. "No area falls outside truth and liberty," including spending, investing and making higher level decisions that weigh profits against the human cost of generating them.

Cardinal Tobin said the church does not have a preferred economic system, but its social teaching describes principles that should be included.

Although it may seem Pollyannish, members of the church can help promote the common good by "making conscious choices to be at the margins, sit with people, listen and give them a face. If we can recognize our common humanity, that's half the game," Cardinal Tobin said.

Pope: Teachers need trust

VATICAN CITY (CNS)–Without respectfully collaborating with teachers and schools, parents will risk being on their own when it comes to educating their children and be at a greater disadvantage for facing the challenges emerging from today's culture, mass media and technology, Pope Francis said.

Speaking to hundreds of parents, the pope told them "teachers are like you – dedicated each day in the educational service of your children."

His comments came to some 1,400 members and guests of the Italian Parent's Association during an audience at the Vatican's Paul VI hall Sept. 7.

Praising the group's efforts promoting the family and education as guided by Christian principles, the pope invited them to always build trust with teachers and schools.

If it is all right to "complain about limitations" or defects when it comes to schools and teachers, it is also "imperative to treasure them as the most invaluable allies in the task of education, which you together carry forward," said the pope, who taught high school students as a young Jesuit in Argentina.

Today, "families no longer appreciate like before the job teachers have and (teachers) – who are often badly paid – feel the parents' presence in the school as being an uncomfortable intrusion," which all ends in a situation, he said, where the parents are kept at bay or considered "adversaries."

"To change this situation, someone has to take the first step, overcoming any fear of the other and generously holding out one's hand," he said.

"That is why I invite you to always cultivate and foster trust toward schools and teachers; without them, you risk remaining on your own in your educational efforts and being increasingly unable to confront new educational challenges that emerge from today's culture, society, mass media and new technologies," the pope said.
It’s necessary to step outside comfort zones

There are many meanings to the phrase “comfort zone.” For some people, their comfort zone is sitting in an easy chair with a good book. As a teenager, my mother would constantly pry me out of my “comfort zone” with a gentle reminder that I was not a “star boarder” in our home.

Jesus applied a stronger “shock treatment” than that to the comfort zone of his apostles in this week’s Gospel. After he challenged them to confess that He was more than just a human teacher, one with divine authority, He announced to them the sobering news that He would soon suffer a humiliating passion and death at the hands of His enemies. Ironically, it was Peter who had just publicly proclaimed that He was the Son of God, who immediately rebuked Jesus for such defeatist talk. And Jesus swiftly retorted, “Get thee behind me, Satan!”

Do we modern-day disciples do any better at accepting a Messiah who calls himself a “suffering servant”? How good are we at joining our own sufferings with Jesus’ redeeming passion and death? Perhaps it’s something small, like a cut finger, or a toothache or a minor ear infection. But it also might be something much more serious — a heart problem, or cancer. It takes faith to unite our sufferings with the Passion of Jesus, just as it takes faith for the less painful actions of love and service in the community of our Church.

It’s all part of the faith plus good works that St. James speaks about in today’s second reading. He insists that faith without loving works is dead. For centuries, battles have raged about “faith alone” or “faith and good works” being necessary for salvation.

Of course, we cannot pull ourselves into heaven without the grace of God, but faith without actions that flow from it is useless and hollow.

We need to get out of our comfort zone from time to time. We’re not star boarders in this world. We’re loving followers of Jesus who must be prepared to go all the way with Him to Calvary. In these days of crisis in the Church, we are all undergoing a Calvary.

Pray the divisions and diabolic forces may be overcome. Pray especially for our Holy Father, Pope Francis.

Finding friendship in the Eucharist

Andrew Lauria
For the North Country Catholic

In a few short days, I will be reuniting with one of my good friends and this makes me very excited. He lives in Europe and we haven’t seen each other in a few years. We have one of those relationships that seems to pick up wherever we left off, regardless of time or place. And whenever we are together, we laugh a lot.

Although technology enables us to stay informed of each other’s lives, technology cannot replace the actual presence of another person. I miss him, not just information about him. In thinking about our first hello at the airport, a greeting I have anticipated for a long time now, I thought of my relationship with God. I think it works the same way with Him. While there are many resources, prayers and such, that allow me to come to know facts about God, they don’t substitute the actual presence of Him.

Certain prayers inform and remind me of basic understandings about God and how He functions. I think about the importance of the Our Father and how our entire faith is summed up in those words. It is the same with our Creed. In our faith tradition, there is no shortage of prayers and books and teachings about God. But the Eucharist is different because the Eucharist is God.

Receiving the Eucharist is like that visit with someone you love but can only see on a limited basis. There is so much anticipation around your uniting, there are expectations, and this meeting seems to consume your mind both before and after the event. Life, for a moment, seems to be colonized by the experience of this encounter. This can be a deeply fulfilling and beautiful experience. When we receive the Eucharist, we are filled in a way that mysteriously fills us with a satisfaction that both encompasses this human experience of fulfillment while also leading us to a deeper level of comprehension than we experience in our everyday life.

If we can go one step further, and although I struggle to understand this mystery any more than I can write in a few words here, death can be seen as the final uniting with the person you love the most. There is no longer a need for Facebook or WhatsApp, and thank goodness for that! The Eucharist is the forerunner of that perfect uniting, the fulfillment of that deeply intimate longing that exists in the center of every human experience.

Now, how I experience the reality of God entering into me in the Eucharist is usually a much less intellectual endeavor than is necessary in order to explain here. Usually I am at Mass, exhausted from work, preoccupied by the stresses of daily life in a very chaotic modern world. And so the experience of the Eucharist for me is striking not because it is the louder of the multiple voices in my mind, but rather because it is the stillness among them. God becomes not the totality of everything, but rather the complete subtraction of what is not necessary. We feel at peace when we are with someone we love. Nothing else needs to be done. We are resting the presence of the other. The Eucharist is the presence of the Ultimate Other.

So when I finally arrive at the airport and see my dear friend emerge from the cattle drive that is the security line at the airport, I probably won’t be waxing poetic about the glories of deep friendship and its capacity to shed light on the divine communion. I’ll probably give him a huge hug and feel deeply at peace and think it is good that you are here.”

We want your news

The North Country Catholic wants to hear from you!

We encourage submissions of story ideas, photographs of local events, upcoming event listings and letters to the editor.

If submitting a photo, please ensure all youth have signed photo releases, available from the Diocesan Communications Director.

To submit a story idea, photo, event announcement or letter, email dfargo@rdony.org.
NEW YORK (CNS) – Remember the proverbial admonition not to take candy from strangers? Well, that warning applies in spades to director Pierre Morel as he tries to hand out "Peppermint" (STX), a gory, over-the-top revenge fantasy that sets Jennifer Garner on the rampage.

Garner plays Riley North, a mild-mannered Los Angeles housewife whose mechanic husband, Chris (Jeff Hephner), unbeknownst to her, flirts with – but then backs out of – a scheme to rob local drug kingpin Diego Garcia (Juan Pablo Raba). Alas, hubby’s change of mind comes too late.

Forgiveness not being his strong suit – perhaps he’s still irritable over the fact that his parents named him after an atoll in the Indian Ocean? – Garcia orders his minions to snuff Chris in spectacular fashion. In doing so, they also slay Chris and Riley’s 10-year-old daughter, Carly (Cailey Fleming), and wound Riley herself.

Though Riley succeeds in identifying the assassins during a series of lineups, the fix is in on their trial and they walk free. Whereupon Riley goes underground and transforms herself into the gun-toting, martial arts-skilled killing machine of the title. (Little Carly was chowing down on some peppermint ice cream purchased at a Christmas fair when the bullets flew.)

Screenwriter Chad St. John tries to paper over Riley’s wrongdoing by making her the champion of the denizens of L.A.’s skid row – on whose behalf she improbably rids the area of crime. But the primary objects of her attention remain the gangsters and corrupt officials who robbed her of justice, and she tortures and terminates them with aplomb.

She drowns one in his swimming pool, burns another’s house down with him inside it and, after nailing his hands to his desk, wraps the judge who let the murders go in detonating cord and ... anyway, you get the idea. The lady is a scamp.

Riley’s slaughter spree eventually draws the attention of Detectives Moises Beltran (John Ortiz) and Stan Carmichael (John Gallagher Jr.), two of the LAPD officers involved in her original case. And, since she started her life on the run by robbing $50,000 from the bank where she once worked, the FBI – represented, most prominently, by Agent Lisa Inman (Annie Ilonzeh) – would like to have a word with Riley as well.

Though its very trashiness often makes it unintentionally funny, this is, overall, a sour confection that only a sucker would pay to see.

The film contains a benign view of vigilantism, excessive bloody violence, drug use, a few profanities, as well as much crude and crass language. The Catholic News Service classification is O – morally offensive. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R – restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

**ALSO SHOWING**

**God Bless The Broken Road**

Evangelical drama in which an Afghan War widow (Lindsay Pulsipher) and her young daughter (Makenzie Moss) both benefit from the upbeat presence in their lives of a racecar driver (Andrew W. Walker).

As Mom struggles to regain her faith and pay the bills, the speedster grapples with his inability to slow down on the curves.

Honorable but rather insipid, director and co-writer Harold Cronk’s film, inspired by a country music song, is suitable for a wide audience.

How much of an impression it will leave on viewers of any age is another question.

Mature themes and stylized combat violence.

The Catholic News Service classification is A-II – adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG – parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7**

A peaceful, prayerful, public, pro-life presence.

We stand for life rain or shine. Signs are provided.

**LOCATIONS**

**Massena** - Main Street at Route 37
3 p.m. to 4 - Charles Shearer 315-769-0898

**Plattsburgh** - Smithfield Blvd at Route 3
1:30 p.m. to 2:30 - Jack Lukasiewicz 518-562-1175

**Potsdam** - Market Street at Main Street
2 p.m. to 3 - Tylor Starkey 315-265-9680

**Saranac Lake** - Bandshell Park at River St.
2:30 p.m. to 3:30 - The Miners 518-524-0774

**Schroon Lake** - Route 9 and Main at Fairfield Ave.
2 p.m. to 3 - Dorothy Bean 518-834-7958

For more information: www.lifechain.net
**ADIRONDACK**

**FALL RETREAT**
Saranac Lake — Come away and rest awhile with the Lord amid the beauties of Fall in the Adirondack Mountains.

**Date:** Sept. 14-16  
**Place:** Guggenheim Lodge  
**Cost:** $145, Tenting or Commuter Option, $75  
**Theme:** Living the ‘Bookend Beatitudes’: an invitation to discover ways to put the First and Eighth Beatitude into practice through prayer, sharing and other spiritual practices.  
**Features:** Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SJ, Faith Formation Educator and Father Paul Kelly will celebrate Mass on Saturday afternoon.

**Contact:** To register, call: 315-212-6592 or email: sbethssj@gmail.com

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**CLINTON**

**TENT SALE**
Peru — St. Vincents will have its Annual Fall Tent Sale.

**Schedule:** Sept. 10 — 13, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Sept. 13 6:30 p.m. to 8:30; Sept. 14 - 16, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
**Features:** Purchase gently used fall/winter clothing and footwear.

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**FISHERS CLUB**
Plattsburgh — The Lakesiders Fishers Club to have their fall discerner meeting.

**Date:** Sept. 23; Oct. 7 & 21; Nov. 4 & 18; Dec. 2  
**Time:** 3 p.m.  
**Place:** St. Peter’s Upper Room  
**Features:** Discernment, Evening Prayer and Dinner for high school juniors and older.

**Contact:** Father Venette (iwenette@gmail.com) or Father Lucia (dlucia@rcdony.org)

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**APPLEFEST**
Peru — The 41st annual St. Augustine’s Applefest will be held.

**Date:** Sept. 15-16  
**Place:** 3030 Main Street  
**Features:** Saturday’s parade begins at 11 a.m. at Peru Elementary School and ends at the Applefest grounds. Two days of live music, a craft fair, food, games and several new rides. Sunday afternoon there will be a chicken BBQ. Saturday’s music features singer Mitch Willette followed by the Bootleg Band. On Sunday Taylor LaValley and the Intangibles will perform.

**Contact:** 518-643-2435, ext. 0

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**HARVEST DINNER**

Moores Forks — St. Ann’s Church to have their Harvest Turkey Dinner.

**Date:** Sept. 16  
**Time:** 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
**Cost:** Adults, $10; Children, $5; under 5, Free

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**FEAST OF THE HOLY ROSARY**
Keesville — Immaculate Conception Church to honor our Queen of the Rosary.

**Date:** Oct. 7  
**Time:** 11:30 a.m.  
**Features:** Bishop LaValley will celebrate Mass and the Most Holy Rosary with blessing of candles during Mass. Immediately following Mass, we will pray the living Rosary. After the Rosary, everyone is invited to join us for a free lunch at the Elk’s Club.

**WELCOME TO THE FEAST**
Plattsburgh — Six week Continuing Formation event to be held for All Commissioned Lay Ministers.

**Date:** Oct. 4 — Nov.  15  
**Time:** 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
**Place:** St. Peter’s Church  
**Cost:** Dinner only, $10; Scripture only, $17; Both Dinner event and Scripture Study, $27  
**Features:** This is an opportunity to deepen our understanding and learn how to lead a scripture study. Bishop LaValley will be the guest speaker.

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**ESSEX**

**HARVEST DINNER**
Elizabethtown — St. Elizabeth’s Church to have a Harvest Dinner.

**Date:** Sept. 30  
**Time:** 2 p.m. to 6

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**JEFFERSON**

**SPAGHETTI SUPPER**
Watertown — St. Anthony’s Church Altar Rosary Society to have a spaghetti dinner.

**Date:** Sept. 20  
**Time:** 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.  
**Place:** Msgr. Sechi Hall  
**Cost:** Adults, $8; Children, $4.50; Children under 3, Free; Sauce $5 per quart; Meatballs, $.75 each  
**Features:** Take-out available at 4 p.m., please bring your own containers

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**HARVEST FESTIVAL**
Malone — St. Andre Besseste Parish to have its 10th Annual Holy Harvest Festival.

**Date:** Sept. 16  
**Time:** Noon to 3 p.m.  
**Place:** Notre Dame Church  
**Features:** Dinner featuring pulled pork (Adults, $10; Seniors, $8; Children 6-12, $6; under 5, Free) Music, Children’s Games and activities, raffle with a $1,000 First Place Prize.

**HARVEST DINNER**
Chateaugay — CC of Burke and Chateaugay to have a Yankee Pot Roast Dinner.

**Date:** Sept. 23  
**Time:** 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
**Place:** St. Patrick’s Church  
**Cost:** Adults, $12; Children 5-11, $5; under 5, Free

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**177 PROJEC**
Malone - A nationwide tour of Eucharistic Adoration featuring some of the most talented Catholic musicians in the country.

**Date:** Oct. 5  
**Schedule:** Rosary at 6:45 p.m.; Eucharistic Adoration from 7 p.m. to 8; Concert at 8:15 p.m.  
**Place:** Notre Dame Church  
**Cost:** Free. Get tickets at www.iTickets.com

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**SCORCH CHALLENGE**
Canton — The Knights of Columbus will...
Missionary visits end for season

As mid-September is suddenly upon us, the calendar dictates that so too is the conclusion of another Mission Cooperation program.

If you were fortunate to be in the Eastern Side deaneries this summer of Adirondack, Franklin, Clinton, Hamilton-Herkimer or Essex, your parish participated in the annual Mission Coop Plan. Next summer, on the odd numbered years, the Western deaneries will host Coop in St. Lawrence, Jefferson and Lewis Deaneries.

The Summer of 2018 brought 15 different Mission Aid Societies to the Diocese of Ogdensburg from at least three countries and included speakers from as far away as India, Djibouti, Nicaragua and Syria.

To refresh, the Missionary Cooperation Plan (MCP) introduces each parish to a real-life missionary who represents a mission cause from a faraway place. In doing so, it serves as a preview and helps to prepare your parish for the celebration of World Mission Sunday in October. It also makes the needs of the Missions more real and more personal, as the faithful of the parish have an opportunity to relate to this visiting missionary in a way that might otherwise be relegated to a bulletin or pulpit announcement. Most diocesan mission directors agree that where there has been a successful and satisfying parish experience of participating in the MCP, the enthusiasm and response to Mission Appeals also improves.

The MCP is an opportunity for the faithful in a parish to meet face to face a missionary or mission representative and to be educated about our mission vocation. Hopefully parishioners will be animated about the needs of the mission Church as they respond with prayers and material help. It is an invitation from the Holy Spirit to participate in the ongoing Pentecost. An actual separate second collection works better than just using a special envelope at a given weekend Mass.

The Mission Office would like to extend its utmost gratitude to all the parishes and Mission Aid societies involved this summer. Your hospitality to our mission guests is so appreciated by the Mission office. There is a great deal of coordination, cooperation and organization required to pull off a successful event. For that, we again say thank you. Your support for these 15 societies and their impact is not only felt here but around the world. Thank you to our diocese for your prayers, sacrifices and donations to the Mission Cooperation Plan 2018. Next stop, World Mission Month 2018: October and World Mission Sunday.

God Bless you all!

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**Cathedral hosts day of prayer, penance**

In response to requests by our Pope and Bishop, St. Mary’s Cathedral in Ogdensburg will host a “Day of Prayer and Penance: for the victims of sexual abuse by the clergy and for the purification of the Church.”

The mystical Body of Christ, the church, is grievously wounded by these betrayals. Please join us in prayer and penance on Friday, Sept. 14, the Feast of the Exultation of the Holy Cross, beginning with noon Mass in the Main Cathedral.

The day will continue with adoration of the Holy Eucharist and praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3 p.m.

Bishop Terry R. LaValley will lead us in a Holy Hour of Reparation beginning at 4 p.m., concluding with Benediction at 5 p.m.
Around the Diocese

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be holding their annual Soccer Challenge.
Date: Sept. 15
Time: 10 a.m.
Place: Canton Central Varsity Soccer Field
Features: Challenge for all boys and girls ages 9-14. Winners progress through local, regional, state and international play. Participants are required to furnish proof of age and parental/guardian consent. This is a free event.
Contact: For more information call the Canton Knights of Columbus Hall.

CRAFT/ARTISAN SHOW
Brasher Falls - The Altar Rosary Society of St. Patrick's will host an Annual Craft/Artisan Show.
Schedule: Nov. 10, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Nov. 11, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Place: Knights of Columbus Hall
Features: We are looking for vendors to display their work. If you wish to do this or know someone that does; please call Val Cline at 315-389-4182 for a registration packet. Tables are rented for $18 each.

YOUTH LEAD
Saranac Lake – The 2018 youth leadership weekend to be held.
Date: Sept. 28-30
Cost: $70, Workshops, meals, and accommodations, included
Features: Open to students in grades 9-12.
Contact: For schedule information see https://www.rcdony.org/youthleadership.htm or contact Tom Semeraro, Director of Youth Ministry at: 315-393-2920 ext. 1415

JOURNEY WITH CHRIST
The Diocese of Ogdensburg Faith Formation Dept. to have leadership program.
Schedule: Western Region, Sept. 29 at the Lobster House in Norwood; Eastern Region, Oct. 13 at St. Alexander’s Church
Time: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Cost: $18
Theme: Heart of Leadership and Tools that help you lead
Features: All ministries are welcome to attend.
Contact: Western Region: Shayne by Sept. 21 — 315-782-3620 or slippincott@rcdony.org; Eastern Region: Andi by Oct. 5 — 518-310-3669 or apage@rcdony.org