Promise to protect

Bishop Terry R. LaValley discusses April’s Child Abuse Prevention Month:

“President Ronald Reagan first proclaimed April to be National Child Abuse Prevention Month in 1982. It is a tradition that continues today. During this month especially, and throughout the year, we raise awareness of child abuse prevention. We educate clergy, employees, and volunteers about how they can help prevent abuse and neglect of children. The Diocese of Ogdensburg remains committed to its pledge to address the clergy sexual abuse scandal. Our Child & Youth Protection Policy promotes healing and reconciliation with victims/survivors of abuse, requires an effective and immediate response to allegations of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults, and protects the faithful in the future with procedures that ensure accountability.”

FULL STORY, PAGE 8-9

Taking faith on the road

Fort Covington Volunteer Fire Department sponsored its first Easter Parade this year, and St. Mary’s Church entered a float highlighting the empty tomb of Christ and inviting town residents to Mass. Confirmation students Lucas Oakes, Karissa Lindley, Austin Bickford, Liam Reardon and Brennan Oakes decorated the float and threw candy to kids along the parade route.

Sharing our stories

Carol Gonthier of Norfolk compares her faith journey to her art background. “People ask me, ‘how did I come up with that idea? What made me create that?’ It came to me,” she said. “That’s the same way with my faith. When there’s a need, and of course I prayed for it, the need is answered.” Read about how Gonthier is living out her faith in this week’s “Sharing Our Stories; Sharing Our Faith,” our ongoing series highlighting the ways Catholics are living out their faith here in the North Country.

FULL STORY, PAGE 5

Pope calls for ‘prayer marathon’ to end pandemic

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis has called for a global prayer marathon for the entire month of May, praying for the end to the pandemic.

“The initiative will involve in a special way all shrines in the world” in promoting the initiative so that individuals, families and communities all take part in reciting the rosary, “to pray for the end of the pandemic,” said the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization in a press release April 21.

“It is the heartfelt desire of the Holy Father that the month of May be dedicated to a prayer marathon dedicated to the theme, ‘from the entire church an unceasing prayer rises to God,’” it said.

The theme refers to the miraculous event recounted in the Acts of the Apostles (12:1-12) when all the church prayed for Peter, who was imprisoned until God sent an angel to free him, illustrating how the Christian community comes together to pray in the face of danger and how the Lord listens and performs an unexpected miracle.

Each day in May, there will be a livestream from one of 30 chosen Marian shrines or sanctuaries to guide the prayer at 6 p.m. Rome time (noon EDT) on all Vatican media platforms, including social media.

The pope will open the monthlong prayer May 1 and conclude it May 31, the council said.
It no longer feels like penance

Darcy L. Fargo

In a previous column, I noted that I was committing to an exercise of gratitude to try to combat that part of my personality that focuses on negatives. My plan was that each day, I’d “make a list of three things for which I am grateful – one gift/talent/positive attribute I see in myself, a place I see God working in the world around me and one non-defined reason for which I am grateful (a free space of sorts).”

As one reader wrote to me in response to that Lenten practice, “it’s deceptively easy, until it isn’t.”

He wasn’t kidding. While I’ll admit I wasn’t perfect in that commitment, and I didn’t complete the gratitude exercise every single day of Lent, I really tried to stick to it. The first week or so were relatively easy. In fact, I found it relatively easy to find “a place I see God working in the world around me and one non-defined reason for which I am grateful” nearly every day. Predictably, it was finding that “gift/talent/positive attribute I see in myself” that was difficult as the weeks continued.

Despite the difficulties, the practice proved to be fruitful. I wrote most of these gratitude items in my journal, and I’d often flip back through my previous entries to ensure I expressed gratitude for something different each day. There were days it would take me 15 to 20 minutes of praying and reflecting to come up with a “gift/talent/positive attribute” I hadn’t already used.

God helped me find something for every day. Honestly, that shocked me. It also helped change me.

While I’ll likely always battle that part of me that dwells on my weaknesses and sinfulness, through that Lenten practice, God has equipped me with additional strength and grace to wage that battle. He’s helped me see myself more honestly, and he’s helped me see the multitude of gifts he’s given me. And focusing on where I see God working in the world has made me more grateful and more joyful.

Even though Lent is over, and we’re celebrating the Easter season, I’m trying to continue the gratitude exercise. Seeing the fruits its bearing in my life, it no longer feels like penance.

Joining in the celebration of Pentecost

The celebration of the joy of the Easter Season leads us to hope for the future. As we remember and celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus, we should be filled with the confidence to bring God’s love to others. Then we are given the hope to join in the celebration of Pentecost, the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles of the Lord of all times with power and wisdom and bringing hope that our future will be alive in the Lord.

The Gospels describe to us how those original apostles recovered their faith and hope in the Lord. It seems that they had lost all hope with the crucifixion of Jesus. Can you imagine how those apostles felt with the arrest of Jesus and his crucifixion? I often wonder where they were. I wonder why none of the apostles showed up as Jesus carried the cross to Calvary. None of them were there to help the suffering Jesus. However, I must admit that I don’t think I would have been bold enough to walk with Jesus or try to help him.

Everything changed for them with the Lord’s Resurrection. Their faith came alive. They discovered a new hope for the future. They suddenly discovered an enthusiasm in the Holy Spirit. They became witnesses for the apostles of all time. They demonstrated a readiness to carry the message of Jesus to others – the message of God’s great love for them.

This Easter season continues to bring a powerful message to every Christian, a message for you and me. As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord in these weeks after Easter, we will be renewed with a dedication to the following of the Lord. Jesus will touch our lives and help us to remember our baptism and discover hope for our future.

As we celebrate this Easter season, we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost, our Pentecost. You know the story of the first Pentecost. The apostles were gathered in the upper room. They were afraid and lacking all confidence. Then when the Holy Spirit touched their lives, they were transformed with new power and hope. They were no longer afraid to speak out the message of Jesus.

You and I must be ready again to allow the Holy Spirit to put new life into our hearts. Each and every day should be a Pentecost. Our prayer is that the Holy Spirit will bring the same enthusiasm to us as was given to those original apostles.

Today I want to encourage you to celebrate the joy of the resurrection of the Lord each day of this Easter season, and encourage you to be ready and prepared with an open, loving heart for the coming of the Holy Spirit in your Pentecost. This will give you hope and confidence now in the midst of this curious time of Pandemic. Pentecost will ready you to bring the Lord’s spirit of love and peace and nonviolence to the world.

Our Church is coming to a time of real transition. I wonder, as you may also wonder, what the future of life as a Catholic will be. Our joyful celebration of the resurrection of Jesus and the powerful coming of the Holy Spirit will bring us the hope that all will be a time of happiness and love in the Lord. Our hope in the Lord must mean that we do not have to be afraid. Please join me as we pray together that we will all be united in the possibilities of a Church alive in the love of the Lord – working to bring a strong faith in God and hope in the following of our Savior.
Bishop meets with priests, deacons

By Deacon Kevin Mastellon
Contributing Writer

PLATTSBURGH – Bishop Terry R. LaValley completed a series of meetings with priests and deacons of the diocese in Plattsburgh April 12, 2021.

Over the course of the previous week, Bishop LaValley met with the clergy five other times in Ogdensburg, Clayton, Massena and Morrisonville.

“It is always a pleasure to meet with my fellow priests and deacons,” Bishop LaValley said. “I come away from these gatherings confident in their work among the people of God and inspired by their spirit.”

It has been a tradition for Bishop LaValley to meet with the clergy annually for “listening sessions” at the Priest and Deacon Assemblies in the spring. Those gatherings had to be cancelled this year due to restrictions on the size of gatherings during the pandemic.

“I still wanted to meet with them,” Bishop LaValley said, “so we developed this format.”

A total of six meetings were held in the diocese over a seven-day period.

The sessions provided opportunities for the priests and deacons to ask questions and voice concerns, as well as an opportunity for fellowship. Clergy had the option to attend the sessions either in person or via digital means.

Seminar teaches ‘Loving Authentically’ to deacon class

By Deacon Kevin Mastellon
Contributing Writer

OGDENSBURG – “Loving Authentically” is a leadership seminar developed by the diocesan offices of Family Life and Natural Family Planning. Deacon candidates of the diocese recently extended their formation weekend by a day to participate in the first seminar conducted by the group.

Sub-titled “Sex, Happiness and Catholic Teaching,” the presenters took their mission from St. Paul’s warning in 2 Timothy, “the time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires.”

Wives of the deacon candidates could also attend the session.

Family Planning Director Stephen Tartaglia told the candidates the presentation is intended to educate Church leaders about Church teachings related specifically to contraception and sexual relations.

The presenters included Dr. Maura Hearden Fehlner, a Catholic theology teacher at the undergraduate and graduate levels for the last 20 years, Deacon John Fehlner of Lake Placid, founder and current president of Light of Truth, Inc.

Light of Truth is “a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to educating the general public about the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.”

Also presenting were Pietropaoli, Malone. They are the Natural Family Planning (NFP) directors for the diocese and certified NFP educators and Pre-Cana instructors.

The presentation included a viewing of the movie “Unprotected: A Pope, A Pill And The Perils of Sexual Chaos.”

Tartaglia told the group the seminar was being presented for the first time. Additional presentations to diocesan leadership groups are planned.

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Catholic Charities
local director to receive award

ALBANY – New York Assemblyman D. Billy Jones recently announced Joelle Lamica as a 2021 Woman of Distinction Award winner under the category of Community/Civic Affairs.

“Joelle Lamica currently is the local director of Catholic Charities of Franklin County and has worked tirelessly during the pandemic to serve the North Country,” Jones wrote in a social media post. “She worked with multiple agencies to ensure that those in need had access to essentials like food, clothing, sanitizers, and medications. In 2020 alone, Catholic Charities provided service to approximately 6,000 individuals.

“Additionally, for many years Joelle has coordinated the Toys for Tots program, managed the Youth Employment Program and created, initiated and directed the Soup Kettle. Throughout all these programs, regardless if Joelle worked with or helped them, she always treated every individual with respect, dignity, kindness. Joelle always leads by example by being as charitable as possible.”

The Woman of Distinction Awards will be presented in an online ceremony planned for April 28 from 6 to 7 p.m. To obtain the Zoom link, visit Assemblyman Jones’ Facebook or Twitter. The link was posted April 18.

Formation for Ministry bolstered faith, marriage

By Jessica Hargrave
Contributing Writer

ADAMS – What’s meant to be will always find a way.

Kevin and Maryann O’Rourke had been wavering on whether to go through the Diocese of Ogdensburg’s Formation for Ministry program for quite a while. It was when they heard the 2019-2021 program would be held at their home parish of St. Cecilia’s Church in Adams that they thought the timing was perfect.

Father Martin E. Cline, then pastor in Adams, reached out to Kevin to see if he had interest in the program, but after talking with his wife, Maryann, they decided to do the program together.

“We have always found strength in each other when we pray together and this could only strengthen our faith and marriage,” said Maryann.

Much of the two-year program is now online to accommodate busy schedules and to afford more flexibility except for in-person workshops in Tupper Lake and retreats twice a year. The courses explore the core foundations of the Catholic Faith including the Eucharist, the history of the Church, and Catholic social teaching, which opens meaningful discussion amongst program candidates.

The couple agrees the courses expanded on their knowledge of the faith.

“When you think you know everything about your faith, you go through the Formation for Ministry program and find out that there is a lot more to learn about your faith. We always say that we are all a work in progress,” Maryann admitted.

The program going completely online took some adjustment, but Kevin and Maryann feel the online discussion allows people to feel more comfortable to open and share than in an in-person group setting and creates a sense of community. Candidates can build on those friendships when they finally see and speak face-to-face at the workshops.

“Meeting and bonding with our classmates was very rewarding. It was great being able to share our faith stories with one another,” said Maryann.

The O’Rourke’s believes the program enriched their marriage and allowed them to dig deeper into their Catholic Faith.

“We have always found it rewarding and intimate when we share our faith openly with each other,” Maryann said. “After almost 33 years married, we tend to take each other for granted. Taking this course as a couple, has reenergized not only our faith but our marriage.”

Kevin and Maryann will be Commissioned Lay Ministers this June when they will receive a blessing from Bishop Terry R. LaValley and their certificates. The COVID-19 vaccine has made them both optimistic and excited to pursue their ministry in family outreach and hospitality and look forward to reaching out to get their church families back in the pews.

Registration for the 2021-23 Formation for Ministry program is now open.

If you believe you are called to serve your parish as a commissioned lay minister, you are encouraged to discuss it with your pastor.

If your pastor agrees your gifts are needed, contact Formation for Ministry Director Cathy Russell at crussell@rcdony.org or call (315) 393-2920.
‘I want for others what I grew up with’

By Jonathan Monfiletto
Contributing Writer

NORFOLK — Carol Gonthier compares her faith journey to her art background. “People ask me, ‘how did I come up with that idea? What made me create that?’ It came to me,” she said. “That’s the same way with my faith. When there’s a need, and of course I prayed for it, the need is answered.”

To live your faith, she said, you have to be involved with it. And, she added, always look for the best.

“I try my best to look for the positive in anything. That drives me forward,” Gonthier said. “You can always draw on the bad. There’s enough of it, but if you look for the positive, it’s there.”

Gonthier doesn’t see her faith as something she does but as something she is; she doesn’t see her faith separately from who she is as a person. Growing up in a large Irish Catholic family of seven children – she jokingly calls herself “Irish trapped in a French name” – faith is something that has always been part of Gonthier’s life.

With her parents and siblings, she attended Mass every Sunday at 10 a.m.; the family also went to Mass on holy days. All of the holidays revolved around Mass and church activities, including going to confession on Christmas Eve.

“It was part of us,” said Gonthier, who lives in Norfolk and attends Church of the Visitation. “It was integrated totally into who we were.”

Faith remained part of Gonthier’s life as she worked as a graphic artist while following her husband’s Air Force career from place to place around the country. She shared her Catholic faith with the people around her by getting involved in her parish however she could.

Gonthier said she shares her faith “first of all by living it,” but she started out as a catechist and then became involved in the Altar and Rosary Society. From there, she became a director of religious education and also got involved with family ministry and became a lay minister, a youth director, and a catechist trainer.

“If there was a need and I was able to help, I offered,” she said. “People who know me know I don’t do things kind of. I throw myself into it. It’s that Irish background.”

Gonthier said her efforts to share her faith with others relate back to the faith she experienced as a child and still experiences today.

“I want for others what I grew up with and still feel today,” she said. “Too often, it seems like our faith is becoming more and more obscure. It’s something that in its simplest form, I want to bring that light and interest especially to the youth.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has offered a challenge Gonthier has been able to meet with her passion for serving God and His people.

“I didn’t give up because I knew the Lord wanted it. I knew we needed it,” she said. “This is our way of communicating with our families. In a lot of ways, it’s helped us communicate even more out of need.”

To strengthen her own faith, Gonthier jokes that she and Bishop Robert Barron, an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and author, speaker and theologian, “are close friends,” as she regularly and avidly consumes his materials regardless of the format, or time of year.

“I don’t get enough of him. There’s such a spiritual drive in him that I connect with,” she said. “He has that interest too. He wants to help people to come to understand their faith, not just think their living it.”

She also points to the work of Catholic authors such as Matthew Kelly and Scott Hahn, as well as Bishop Barron’s “Word on Fire Bible,” especially the artwork within, as sources she uses to develop her relationship with God.

Gonthier also credits “the people along the way” and the relationships she has made for not only strengthening her faith but also encouraging her desire to serve God and His people.

“Any time that I would’ve had something that could’ve been a road bump, there was either someone or some people that, it’s not that they didn’t allow me to pull away from my faith, they were living their faith, which helped me to live my faith,” she said, adding from her undergraduate years to moving from state to state to her life now people have been there to help grow closer to God. “Somebody believed I had the interest and talked me into it. The Lord has placed people in my way to help me.”
Funeral celebrated for Bernice Bushey

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Mrs. Bernice M. Bushey on Friday, April 23, 2021, at St. Edmund’s Church in Ellenburg.

Bernice went to join the Lord on Saturday, April 17, 2021, at University of Vermont Health Network CVPH Medical Center. She was 95 years old.

She was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts, on Feb. 25, 1926, the daughter Frank and Anna (Longeviss) Lashway.

On June 14, 1944, she married Leonard Bushey.

Bernice worked at the slipper factory in Mooers Forks for four years and later at Georgia Pacific for 16 years.

For 40 years, she worked for the Diocese of Ogdensburg as a housekeeper for Rev. Howard McCasland. Bernice was a Franciscan from 1984 until her passing. Over the years she received numerous awards for her work, including The Bishop Leo R. Smith Award for Outstanding work and interest in youth, and a special proclamation from Most Reverend Gerald Barbarito and from President George Bush for her dedicated service to the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

For the past 10 years she lived in what she called her “apartment” at Skilled Nursing at CVPH Medical Center.

She is survived by five children, Kenneth (Joan) Bushey, Judy Lyons, Mary (John) Weightman Sr., Sue Davison, Rod (Donna) Bushey and Karen (Douglas) Trombley; 16 grandchildren, Kevin, Tony, Johnny and Amy Boutin Bushey, Art and Paula Whitlock Lyons, John Jr., Penny and Jimmy Weightman, Victoria Davison Herox and Thomas Davison, Kasey and Lyndie Bushey, and Kyrnne Trombley Vincent, Danyelle and Joel Trombley; 20 great-grandchildren, four great-great-grandchildren; her brother, Francis "Maynard" Lashway; a sister Geraldine Kimbler; and several nieces and nephews.

Bernice was predeceased by her parents; her husband, Leonard; twin boys, Gary and Larry; a son, Daniel; two sons-in-law, Robert Davison and Art Lyons Sr.; and 13 siblings, Frank Jr., Clarence, Leon, Amos, Harold, Gerald, her twin brother, Bernard, Kenneth, Irene Bushey, Lillian Fountain, Evelyn Riley, Mildred Dame and Shirley Jarvis.

Burial will be in Holy Angels Cemetery in Altona.

Donations in her memory may be made to the St. Bernard’s and St. Edmund’s parish.

Bernice’s family wishing to thank the staff of skilled nursing for all the care they provided her over the years.

Arrangements are entrusted to the Brown Funeral Home, 3123 Miner Farm Road, Altona, N.Y.

Online condolences may be offered at www.brownfuneralhomeinc.com.
Safe Environment Office prepares for audit

By Darcy Fargo
Editor

OGdensburg – Though the format of the compliance audits has changed, the Diocese of Ogdensburg Safe Environment office is confident the diocese is complying with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and working hard to protect children.

Working with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and companies with which USCCB contracts for auditing, the Safe Environment efforts every diocese in the United States are reviewed annually.

“This year, we have an on-site audit,” explained John Morrison, diocesan director of Safe Environment and coordinator of Charter Compliance. “On-site audits are every three years. In the two years in between, they conduct what are referred to as ‘data-collection audits.’ In the data-collection audits, they ask us to collect similar information for reporting, but they’re not here reviewing the supporting paperwork and documentation.”

Previously, the on-site audit reviewed compliance for only one year. This year, the on-site audit will include the two previous years, as well.

“July 1 to June 30 is our audit year,” Morrison said. “So instead of covering the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, this year’s on-site audit will also cover the two preceding years.”

The on-site audit will take place likely in late summer or early fall.

“We’re tentatively scheduled for late August or early September,” Morrison said. “But the actual date will be confirmed about 45 days in advance.”

In addition to the time period covered by the audit changing, the “audit instrument,” a questionnaire the diocese is asked to complete to report its Safe Environment compliance efforts, has also changed.

“Now the questions cover a three-year period,” Morrison noted. “And some of the questions have changed, as well.”

As part of the efforts to ensure diocesan compliance with the Charter, the audit team also reviews three parishes and one school at each in-person audit.

“Whether they do school and parish visits are at the bishop’s discretion,” Morrison said. “Our bishop opted to do that. Those reviews are typically done on the second day of the three-day audit.”

Morrison noted, though, that “in-person,” may not necessarily mean the auditors visit each site.

“Because of the size of our diocese, they may do that review remotely,” Morrison said. “They prefer not to drive more than an hour from the main audit location, which is the Chancery here in Ogdensburg in our case.”

“Those reviews simulate the on-site audits. We also meet with schools, pastors and (directors of religious education) to help them ensure they’re in compliance. There have definitely been challenges in this pandemic year, but we’ve seen people getting creative and developing ways to ensure their programs can continue and be in compliance with the Charter in a tough year.”

Morrison said his office works to serve as a resource to diocesan parishes, schools and organizations.

“Most (directors of religious education), pastors and schools know we want to work with them and help ensure they’re in compliance and doing everything the right way,” Morrison said. “We want them to know they can call our office and know they’ll get good answers, and we’ll work with them to help them reach their goals while also protecting kids.”

To learn more about the diocesan Safe Environment Office, the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and the diocesan Youth and Child Protection Policy, visit rcdony.org/safe-environment.
Dear Friends in Christ:

President Ronald Reagan first proclaimed April to be National Child Abuse Prevention Month in 1982. It is a tradition that continues today. During this month especially, and throughout the year, we raise awareness of child abuse prevention. We educate clergy, employees, and volunteers about how they can help prevent abuse and neglect of children. The Diocese of Ogdensburg remains committed to its pledge to address the clergy sexual abuse scandal. Our Child & Youth Protection Policy promotes healing and reconciliation with victims/survivors of abuse, requires an effective and immediate response to allegations of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults, and protects the faithful in the future with procedures that ensure accountability.

Those who have suffered abuse are encouraged to contact our Victim Assistance Coordinator, Terriane Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC. Dr. Yanulavich’s contact information is listed on the opposite page. She will assist with reporting the allegation as well with starting the healing process. The Diocese will continue to report all allegations to local authorities in its pursuit of justice. Victims are also encouraged to notify the local authorities of the allegation.

Mr. John Morrison, our Safe Environment Director and Charter Compliance Coordinator, works with our parishes, Catholic Schools, and other entities, to ensure that the national and diocesan policies to establish and maintain safe environments are fully implemented and revised, as necessary. One of the most notable recent changes to Diocesan policy is the addition of procedures that govern reporting and investigative actions when the accused is the Diocesan Bishop.

The Diocese is independently audited annually to determine compliance with national standards. While the Diocese has always been found to be in compliance in these audits, we recognize that this is an on-going process. To create and maintain a culture of safety and trust, we must remain fully committed and dedicated to the cause.

I am so grateful to our clergy, employees, and volunteers who assist with the implementation of our Safe Environment programs. By working together, we can uphold our promise to protect and our pledge to heal. “Behold, sons and daughters are gifts from the Lord, the fruit of the womb, a reward” (Psalm 127:3).

With a Shepherd’s care and concern,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg

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A PRAYER FOR HEALING

Dear Lord,
We pray for anyone who is suffering because of abuse. Please protect them, remove abuse from their life, and restore the damage that has been done. Let Your power heal their hearts and bring comfort to them. Please renew their spirit and help them not to fear. Rebuild trust and confidence. Help them to regain strength, courage, and hope for better days. May Your Holy Spirit cover them in Jesus’ name, AMEN!
WHAT IS THE DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG DOING TO PROTECT CHILDREN?

Our Commitment to Children’s Safety:

- Criminal History Background Checks
- Initial, Continuous, and Refresher Safe Environment Training (VIRTUS)
- Adherence to a Code of Conduct
- Annual Training for Children
- Enhanced Misconduct Reporting Procedures
- Supervision of In-Person and Virtual Instruction, Activities and Events for Children

DO(s) and DON'T(s) of ONLINE SAFETY

**Do**

- turn off GPS tracking in your phone and disable it in apps that don’t need it.
- tell children in your care to talk to you or another safe adult about people they meet online.
- check the apps on your child’s phone and use the strongest security and privacy settings.
- monitor the use of technology on all electronic devices for the children in your care – know what apps are downloaded, how they are being used, and who they are communicating with online.
- manually set all social media and cell phone apps to private.
- report any suspicions of sexual exploitation to the Cybertipline at [https://report.cybertip.org/](https://report.cybertip.org/)
- research about different apps targeted for teens.
- have frequent conversations with the children in your care about online safety and what they can do to keep themselves safe.

**Don’t**

- give out personal information to people you only know online.
- agree to meet people in person who you have met online.
- use the same username on more than one website.
- make your email address public and searchable on social media.
- check in on social media unless your account is 100% private.

To report sexual abuse and related misconduct by Diocesan Bishop, contact:
CATHOLIC BISHOP ABUSE REPORTING SERVICE
(800) 276-1562
www.ReportBishopAbuse.org

IF YOU SUSPECT A CHILD HAS BEEN HARMED OR IS AT RISK:

**EMERGENCY**

Mandated Reporters
1-800-635-1522
Non-Mandated Reporters
(can remain anonymous)
1-800-342-3720

To report sexual abuse and related misconduct by Diocesan clergy, religious, employees or volunteers, contact:
Victim Assistance Coordinator:
Terriane Yanulavich, Ph.D., LMHC.
518-651-2267 (Days); 518-569-0612 (evenings)
terrianeyanulavich@yahoo.com

Diocese of Ogdensburg Safe Environment Office: 315-393-2920
https://www.rcdony.org/safeenv.html
Caring adults and reporting abuse

Editors Note: April is “Abuse Prevention Month.” This is the third article in a series this month explaining how you can help prevent abuse from happening and/or respond to potential abuse. This content is provided by Virtus.

Every person involved in the life of a child, even when on the “periphery,” has the opportunity to make a significant difference in that child’s life – regardless of their role. This article addresses the intersection of caring adults and reporting, what is required by law for situations of child maltreatment, and tips for caring adults who all share the commonality of ethical reporting.

What is child maltreatment?

Child maltreatment refers to all types of abuse and neglect of anyone under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or other person with the responsibility of safeguarding the child. The vast majority of children who are abused are abused by someone they know and trust. This includes coaches, teachers, clergy, volunteers, family and others.

The four most common forms of child maltreatment include physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. Consistent with prior data, in the past year alone, research estimates one in seven children have experienced maltreatment. When children are exposed to the type of abuse, they may also be experiencing other forms, too, known as polyvictimization. Every type of abuse causes harm to children, even if a child appears to be coping well. Maltreatment is associated with an abundance of adverse outcomes for children, including negative effects on neurobiological, social, emotional and cognitive development within the brain. The effects of abuse can be immediate, or may be long reaching.

What is a mandated reporter?

Anyone can report suspected or known child abuse, anytime, day or night.

Mandated Reporters are persons who are legally required to report suspected cases of abuse or maltreatment to child protective service agencies when they are suspected or disclosed. In some states, every adult is considered to be a mandated reporter. In other states, you are more likely to be a mandated reporter based on your profession or interaction with children.

However, regardless of the law, everyone has an ethical obligation to report known or suspected child abuse. Additionally, even if the law in your state does not specifically denote you as a mandated reporter, it is possible that your organization might have a policy that obligates you to make reports per your role.

What are “Child Protective Services” agencies?

Every state has statutes regarding mandatory reporting laws, along with a child protective services agency that is typically referred to as Child Protective Services (CPS) or something similar. Most of the agencies maintain a 24/7, toll-free help and reporting hotline and maintain a database of cases.

Child Protective Services agencies are charged first with protecting children, and when possible, with keeping families together. CPS is responsible for screening incoming calls, evaluating the content and then classifying the risk level of imminent danger. In many cases, the elements of the call must meet specific criteria before CPS can officially “register a report” within their system. If the report contains enough information to conduct an investigation, the investigation is coordinated between a multi-disciplinary team involving CPS and local law enforcement.

The dilemma: what if I do not have proof?

As an employee or volunteer, it is not your responsibility to provide proof of harm, and it is not your role to investigate cases of suspected or disclosed child abuse. But, it is your role to communicate reasonable suspicions to the right entity which, in most cases, is CPS or a local law enforcement agency. And, keep in mind that “good faith” reports of a reasonable suspicion of abuse are protected by law, even those that end up being deemed unsubstantiated or cleared of any wrongdoing.

How do I know whether I have a suspicion of abuse?

At the most basic level, having a “suspicion of abuse” means the thought has entered your mind that abuse may be happening. Either you saw something, heard something, or you are more likely to be a mandated reporter based on your profession or interaction with children.

What if I am wrong?

Always err on the side of safeguarding the child. It is common for many adults to feel apprehensive or reluctant about communicating child abuse concerns. In these cases, please rest assured that both law enforcement and CPS (and, children themselves) would much rather that you err on the side of caution to protect the most vulnerable person – the child. Reporting a concern or suspicion is being a protector of a child (even if it ends up finding no harm to the child).

The child, anyone under the age of 18, should always be at the center of the equation when it comes to safety. Any fears or concerns that we have about whether we are doing the right thing about reporting should always circle back to what is best for the child. Children have a right to be safe. Communicating your concerns to the appropriate entity is a significant step you can take to help keep youth safe.

What else do you need to know?

You do not need to tell the parents or the person you suspect when you make a report (doing so could compromise a potential investigation). Law enforcement or CPS will reach out if needed; let the multi-disciplinary team conduct their investigation.

You still need to report even if you heard about the suspicion from someone else. The source of the information is irrelevant; it is not hearsay to relay material from another person. Anyone who becomes aware of child abuse or has a suspicion of it, should report it per the mandated reporting laws.
Guggenheim will not open for teen camp

By Thomas Semeraro
Director of Youth Ministry

As the Director for the Office of Youth Ministry, I feel it is important that I speak to you directly regarding the decision not to operate Summer Camp Guggenheim in 2021. Much time and energy was spent in discernment, discussions, and most importantly, prayer. Many factors contributed to reaching this decision. Many of them centered on COVID Pandemic mitigation requirements set forth by the New York State Department of Health. We also applied thoughtful consideration of campers and their families, counselors, staff, Pastors, and their health and safety amidst this Pandemic. I know that we so desperately want to be done with this Pandemic but, we must remain vigilant. COVID is still here, and it is still a public health challenge.

As discouraging as this may seem, there is great hope as we forge ahead. This Pandemic has brought much pain and discomfort to all of us, but I feel that it also has opened our eyes and our hearts to Grace. We have learned new ways to live and a new understanding about the human condition. With Hope and Grace in our hearts and minds, we will take this 2021 pause and dedicate energy and time to growing the Summer Camp program along with the camp facility itself.

The new look of the Summer Camp Guggenheim program will be well crafted and balanced. It will provide young people with a fulfilling experience of church, an opportunity to encounter Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, and an immersive experience in nature. We will strive to continue the Summer Camp Guggenheim tradition and fulfill its mission as set forth by the original creators of the Summer Camp program.

I see a future filled with Hope and Joy for our young people in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. If you would like to be part of the journey with our youth, please feel free to reach out to me personally at any time.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

God Bless.

Caring adults and reporting abuse

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

or ethical responsibilities—the duty of reporting is on the person who becomes aware that abuse could be happening. If information comes “through the grapevine,” it should still be communicated to CPS. There are specific questions that CPS will ask you during the call. But, even if you do not have all of the facts, you can still report the information you do have.

Children do not often disclose abuse to people in positions of authority, and when they do, it is rarely a lie. Fewer than half of child victims disclose about the abuse that has happened to them, and it usually is not to their parents or an adult. Of the children who tell someone, it is more likely to be to their friends (referred to as “peer-to-peer” or “friend-to-friend”), and that information does not typically make it to an official report to child protective services. When children do disclose about sexual abuse, fewer than 5% of their initial disclosures are intentionally false. This means that there is a 95% chance that they are telling the truth! A report of child abuse should always be treated as if it is true.

How should I react if a child discloses abuse to me?

It is paramount to reflect upon the immense power we each have when communicating with others about the subject of child sexual abuse. You may one day have the privilege of hearing a youth’s disclosure of abuse that occurred to them. How you respond, in your words and actions, have a significant impact. Let them talk and listen carefully. Address their feelings, letting them know that you trust them and believe them. Be careful to limit your questioning. Do offer discretion, but do not offer confidentiality—depending on the situation, you may need to report the information. You will want to be honest with the youth about next steps.

How do I actually report or communicate my concerns?

• If you are aware of an adult exhibiting behavior that is against the code of conduct or organization’s policy: speak to a supervisor. Keep communicating “up the chain” of command until your concerns are addressed.
  - If you are aware that a child is, or could be, in immediate danger: call 911.
  - For a suspicion or knowledge of abuse, including if a child discloses directly or indirectly: call the child abuse hotline (for Child Protective Services) for the county or the state, or local law enforcement.
  - For possible exploitation via technology: If you suspect that a child is being groomed or exploited via technology (online, gaming, cell phones, social media, etc.), communicate your concerns via the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children’s tipline, at www.cybertipline.com.
  - For possible abuse within your employee or volunteer organization: If you suspect or know a child is being abused, or has been abused, by a diocesan employee or volunteer, first call the child abuse hotline for your state, and then notify the diocese immediately (typically through the safe environment or child protection office).

Safe adults prioritize the safety of children. Are you a safe adult? Ultimately, it does not matter whether your role directly involves children or not. What is critical, however, is your awareness and courage to speak up on behalf of a child or youth to the right person or entity. You have great power to positively impact a child or youth’s life and healing journey—the way you respond, and the actions you take, could drastically affect the child’s future. You matter; you are needed. Thank you for your willingness to be a protector of children.

For more information visit us online at www.myvocationalct.org
Pro-lifers will meet to pray, honor organizations

DALLAS (CNS) – Thousands of pro-life advocates from across America will gather together online and in person for the National Prayer Luncheon for Life April 30 to honor “high-impact pro-life organizations” and award $85,000 in grants for ongoing effective pro-life ministry and advocacy.

The nominees are: And Then There Were None, Focus on the Family, Sidewalk Advocates for Life, Students for Life of America and the Susan B. Anthony List.

They were selected “for their demonstrated significant, quantifiable impact and measurable successes in saving lives and winning battles against the abortion industry,” said spokesperson Karen Garnett, executive director of the pro-life event.

Winners will be chosen based on total vote tallies as cast by pro-life participants across the country via the website nationalprayerluncheonforlife.org.

Besides voting, which ends April 23, those interested in participating in the luncheon also can register on the site.

One group will be named the winner of the luncheon’s 2021 Pro-Life Impact Award, which includes a $50,000 grant. Two additional pro-life organizations will be named second- and third-place winners, receiving grants of $20,000 and $15,000, respectively.

This year’s event is being held both in person at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas, and virtually because of the pandemic. Several hundred are expected at the convention center and thousands more are expected to participate via the livestream.

By mid-April, 6,000 pro-lifers across the country had already participated in the voting process for the Pro-Life Impact Award and related grants. That number was already double 2020’s participation, according to Garnett, vice president of culture for Heroic Media.

This year’s featured speakers include evangelist Alveda King, niece of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and executive director of Civil Rights for the Unborn, and David Bereit, founder and former CEO of 40 Days for Life.

The program will also feature the Bishop Edward J. Burns of Dallas, along with Bridget VanMeens, president and vision leader of Thrive Nation, Astrid Bennett Gutierrez, president of the VIDA Initiative, and Garnett, whose Heroic Media is producing the event.

The program and awards will be presented live online April 30 from noon to 1 p.m. (Central time), at no cost, with the winners of the Pro-Life Impact Award and grants announced live at the end of the program.

The National Prayer Luncheon for Life began in 2016 “as the brainchild of Heroic Media’s founder, Brian Follett, to hold a same-day, same-time prayer luncheon as a direct counter to Planned Parenthood’s annual awards luncheon held in Dallas,” Garnett told CNS.

Heroic Media designs and runs professionally made online ads that connect women considering abortion to pro-life facilities that save babies’ lives. It raises money to place the ads, its website says.

“From 2016-2020, the goals at the annual prayer luncheons were to gather to pray, and to both outnumber and outraise Planned Parenthood, so that, as Planned Parenthood was raising money to advance their agenda to destroy life through abortion,” Garnett said.

“Heroic Media would raise money to counter them year-round through our daily competing internet ads as the first line of defense to save lives from abortion.”

The ads, she said, are known as OASYS – for On-demand Alternatives to Abortion SYStem.

“In 2020,” Garnett continued, “all three National Prayer Luncheon for Life goals were achieved for the very first time: in addition to gathering to unite in prayer, nearly 3,000 gathered in person – nearly triple to Planned Parenthood’s attendance – and $1.83 million was raised to fund Heroic Media’s OASYS mission, compared to $1.1 million raised by Planned Parenthood.”

She noted that this year, Planned Parenthood is not having its annual luncheon until the fall.

Asked her assessment of the new Biden administration’s impact on the pro-life movement so far, Garnett noted “there are grave concerns about the reversals of Trump administration pro-life policies.”

However, she said, “we remain hopeful that the makeup of the U.S. Supreme Court has shifted to a pro-life majority, and many state legislatures are continuing their concerted efforts to implement legislation to protect women and preborn babies from the tragedy of abortion.”

CATHOLIC WORLD

AT A GLANCE

Pope celebrates name day at Vatican vaccination clinic

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Celebrating his name day, the feast of St. George, Pope Francis was serenaded by hundreds of Rome’s most vulnerable residents and the people who assist them. The pope, who was born Jorge Mario Bergoglio, marked his birth saint’s feast April 23 by visiting people who came to the Vatican for the second dose of their COVID-19 vaccinations. Close to 600 people were scheduled to receive the inoculations throughout the day. Photos of the pope with the special guests and Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the papal almoner, showed stacks of sandwiches, fruit juice and cookies, as well as a large chocolate Easter egg, which was cracked and shared. Pope Francis personally greeted those waiting for their shots at the atrium of the Vatican audience hall as well as those who had just received the vaccine and were under observation in case of an allergic reaction. “As he left, those present sang,” their best wishes to the pope for his name day, the Vatican press office said.
Mass to be held each Sunday.

Features: The traditional Latin Mass
Date: Sundays
Time: 1 p.m.
Place: Sacred Heart Church

**ST. LAWRENCE**

**FIRST SATURDAY ROSARY**
Massena – First Saturday Rosary to be held.
Date: May 1
Time: 3:15 p.m.
Place: Sacred Heart Church
Features: The first Saturday rosary devotion will be to Our Lady of Fatima. Confessions began at 2:45 p.m. and Saturday Mass Vigil starts at 4 p.m.

**ROSS C. ISLAND**

**First Annual Rosary**
Mary, Mother of Jesus, to be held.
Date: May 1
Time: 3 p.m.
Place: Our Lady of the Islands Church
Features: The first annual rosary devotion will be held in honor of Mary, Mother of Jesus. Confessions began at 2:45 p.m. and Saturday Mass Vigil starts at 4 p.m.

**AROUND THE DIOCESE**

**LATIN MASS**

Port Henry – Extraordinary Form Latin Mass to be held each Sunday.
Date: Sundays
Time: 1 p.m.
Place: St. Patrick’s Church
Features: The traditional Latin Mass

**DOCCUSAN EVENTS**

**DEACON CLASS INFORMATION**
The Deacon Formation Department will hold information meetings for men interested in the ministry. The next class will be seated in the fall.
Schedule: St. Anthony’s in Watertown, May 11 at 6 p.m.; St. Peter’s in Plattsburgh May 18 at 7 p.m. and at St. John’s in Morristown May 20 at 4 p.m.
Contact: For more information contact Deacon John Drollette at 518-726-0019 or jdrollette@rcdony.org

**LET US DREAM**
Virtual presentations to address and discuss our responsibilities to see + CHOOSE + ACT for a better future on God’s Earth.
Date: May 25, 26 and 27
Time: 7 p.m. to 9
Place: Via Zoom
Features: This is a joint project of the Laudato Si Committees of the Dioceses of Ogdensburg and Syracuse. More information to come.

**DAY OF REFLECTION**
Virtual presentation about putting forgiveness into practice.
Date: June 19
Time: 9:45 a.m. to Noon
Place: Zoom

**FEATURES**
We all know from the Scriptures that we are called to forgive others and ourselves as well. We also know the challenge this call can be in our daily encounters. This reflection day will consider the dynamics of forgiveness, obstacles often experienced in becoming a forgiving person, and aids from our Catholic tradition. It includes presentations, time for prayer and reflection and opportunities for sharing. The speaker will be Sister Bethany Fitzgerald, SSJ.
Contact: Cost is free. To register go to www.rcdony.org/ReflectionZoom

**CONTACT**
www.rcdony.org/ReflectionZoom

**NEW YORK (CNS) –** Award-winning documentary Evgeny Afineevsky (“Cries From Syria”) issues a call for action with his film “Francesco” (Discovery+).

The unspoken summons comes through allowing viewers to witness the influence one man, Pope Francis, has succeeded in having over the many social and other issues of our time.

Rather than present a linear biography, the movie takes its form from the Holy Father’s own agenda. As depicted here, the pontiff’s primary goal is to bring the message of human dignity to the world by shining a light into some of the darkest corners of the globe, where political, social, economic and religious injustices have taken – and, in some cases, are still taking – place.

Afineevsky, for instance, brings his audience to the Philippines, ravaged by Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, as Francis talks about climate change and the call to protect our common home.

The plight of refugees is highlighted through the pope’s visit to Lampedusa, a modern-day Ellis Island in the Mediterranean Sea through which thousands of Tunisian and Libyan migrants have passed, fleeing political upheaval in their home countries. The passage from the North African coast to Lampedusa is considered one of the world’s deadliest migration routes.

The pontiff also visits the island of Lesbos in Greece to which many Syrian migrants fled in the wake of their nation’s civil war. One interviewee calls the Syrian refugee situation “the greatest humanitarian crisis since World War II.” Pope Francis not only gave words of comfort to refugees – he followed them up with action, sponsoring the immigration to Italy of three Muslim families.

“Francesco” also addresses other hot-button topics such as clergy sexual abuse, homosexuality and the building of walls between peoples.

Through the experience of Juan Carlos Cruz, a Chilean survivor of clergy sexual abuse recently appointed to the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, Afineevsky takes us through the journey Pope Francis experienced from initially making comments many viewed as hurtful to arriving at a better understanding of the plight of victims.

The film’s treatment of homosexuality and same-sex marriage and Afineevsky’s use of the pope’s words on the subject may leave viewers confused. Pope Francis has said that civil recognition of same-sex couples may be appropriate in order to protect their legal rights, but he has always been clear that marriage is only the union of a man and a woman.

Rather, Pope Francis calls for respect to be shown toward all, based on each individual’s inherent dignity as a human being. Thus, when asked by a same-sex couple whether they should take their children to their home parish, Francis encourages them not to deny the graces of the church to their kids, while also saying that not all will understand their choices.

Where does the pontiff get the inspiration to do all he does? Afineevsky takes us back to the life of young Jorge Bergoglio, especially stressing the influence that his grandmother, Nonna Rosa, had on his growing faith and spirituality.

From his decision to become a priest, to joining the Jesuits, to becoming the archbishop of Buenos Aires and a cardinal, Pope Francis has been consistent in his action on behalf of others. In other words, the film shows what Francis has done since his 2013 election to the papacy is just a continuation of what he had done up to that time.

Of special interest to American viewers will be the interviews with Sister Norma Pimentel, a Missionary of Jesus. As head of Catholic Charities in South Texas’ Rio Grande Valley, she has worked closely with refugees from Mexico and Central America.

During a virtual papal audience, Sister Norma was recognized by the pope and, as a representative of all the religious women in the United States, was thanked for her service to the church.

Francis also has been instrumental in appointing women to important posts in the Vatican. They include Silvia Monica Correa, the first female postulator on the staff of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints and Barbara Jatta, the current director of the Vatican Museums.

With a running time just under two hours, “Francesco” is quite long for a documentary. But, among other things that sustain viewer attention, Afineevsky uses news headlines and posts from the @pontifex Twitter account to great effect.

In fact, an April 23, 2020, message from that account aptly summarizes the basic theme the documentarian seeks to promote.

“The pandemic reminds us,” the pope tweeted, that “there are no differences or borders between those who suffer. We are all frail, all equal, all precious. May we be profoundly shaken: Now is the time to eliminate inequalities and heal the injustice undermining the health of the entire human family”.

The teaching of the vine and branches

Soon after the early Church began to grow, a major event occurred. Saul of Tarsus, one of the most feared and hated persecutors of Christians, miraculously converted to Christianity. No one could have predicted the startling accident that befell Saul on his way from Jerusalem to Damascus. He was knocked off his horse and struck blind by a divine shaft of light that left him blind and helpless. He was directed by a Voice to seek out one Ananias, who would give him further directions.

The rest is history. After some time in prayer and solitude, Barnabas, a man respected and trusted by the Christians, brought him to Jerusalem, and introduced him to Peter and the other leaders. At first, distrust and fear kept them at a distance, but gradually he was accepted.

Despite many severe trials, Paul’s theology prevailed. The Church would never be the same again.

It was surely a miracle of grace that often-bitter fighting between various factions did not split the Church apart and destroy it. Furthermore, many were sorely tested when friends and relatives opposed them or even betrayed them to the authorities.

What saved the whole enterprise was surely the teaching we find in today’s second reading. John tells his followers “…love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.” We must not merely “mouth” the beautiful teaching of Jesus, but we must work on the difficult task of living those words.

All the disciples must likewise have found consolation in the powerful image of today’s Gospel. In the great farewell address of Jesus at the Last Supper, He tells His disciples: “I am the vine; you are the branches.”

Think about it! As a branch cannot survive if it is separated from the vine, neither can we survive if we sever our connection with Jesus. He is constantly strengthening us with grace, just as a vine gives life moment by moment to its branches. Sometimes we take to ourselves all the credit for the resulting growth within us. We even try to control the directions in which our faith life is shared. We like to pick our own ministries rather than allow the Lord, through the Church, to have a say in the decision.

Then, when our activities are “pruned” through failure— or a call to another ministry, we can complain or become bitter. At those times, we need to be more trusting, and realize that perhaps God’s Providence has broader plans for our growth and the growth of His kingdom.

This is what Jesus meant by “pruning.” Let’s hope it’s all for a closer grafting on the vine.

Even masked, we receive the Body of Christ

From the back of a chapel recently, I could not help but notice how nice everyone’s masks looked. It was before a liturgy, and I was between prayers. That was my excuse for looking around instead of meditating. Mea Culpa!

Anyway, everyone’s masks were tight to their cheeks, the elastic ties, over the ears, were taut, and the colors, prints and embroidery were quite stylish. I was impressed. We’ve come a long way in mask design.

Masks have become a fashion item. You probably have four or five of them strategically located in your car, home or favorite coat. Maybe you have one or more in each location. How many times have you entered a church or business and realized you did not have your mask on? More than once I’ve done a 180 and returned to my car to secure a mask.

Do you recall your first experience with a face mask? I can remember the Lone Ranger wearing one to hide his identity. Superman didn’t wear one. All he had to do was take off his Clark Kent glasses, and no one recognized him. Zorro wore a mask. So did every guy, and the occasional gal, who held up a bank in the westrens of long ago.

Most of us wear the kind the mask that covers your mouth and nose, steams up your glasses when you exhale, and, for some people, makes it difficult to breathe while walking briskly, running or even singing. Some people wear a scarf like those we have seen people wear in desert environments. They are called shemagh or keffiyeh. I think they are cool looking, but I suspect they take longer to put on and take off than the over-the-ear type.

Most of us have accepted wearing some kind of facial covering to prevent us from breathing directly onto another person and potentially infecting them with the virus called COVID-19. Several localities and states have discontinued requiring a face mask. We’ll see how that works out. There was an “expert” on a radio program the other day saying masks probably do not make much difference when you are outside, unless you happen to be standing around outside chatting with the same group of people for more than a minute. “Then,” he said, “cover up.”

We still wear masks in church. Folks have identified a variety of techniques for moving the mask out of the way when they receive the Body of Christ. I found a YouTube produced by a parish in Massachusetts that describes a “proper” technique. Leave your mask on while you receive the Eucharist in your hands. Cover the host by putting one hand over the other while you move a few steps left or right, facing the altar. At this point you lower your mask, put the host in your mouth and cover-up again before moving back towards your pew.

Others may have a better plan. As we have learned, different rules in different places. When in doubt, ask your pastor.

Deacon Kevin Mastellon ministers in Watertown. He is the Director of Permanent Deacons for the Diocese of Ogdensburg.
Funeral Mass celebrated for Sister Rita Mary Morrissette

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Monday, April 19, 2021 for Sister Rita Mary Morrissette, a sister of the Servants of Mary (Servite).

Sister Rita died April 14, 2021. She was 93 years old.

Sister Rita served in parish ministry at St. Bernard’s in Saranac Lake from 1993 to 2006, and she served in volunteer ministry at Sacred Heart in Massena from 2006 to 2013.

She celebrated her 70th jubilee in 2017.

She retired to the Servants of Mary Motherhouse in Omaha, Nebraska. In her retirement, she worked at the reception desk at the Motherhouse and spent time sewing daily, making bags, aprons, coasters, quilts, table runners and hats, as well as other projects.

“I didn’t really retire, I more retreated myself,” Sister Rita was quoted as saying in a Sisters of Mary publication.

Sister Rita was preceded in death by her parents, Delma and Vina (Julius) Morrissette; her stepmother, Cordelia Morrissette; brothers, Raymond, Leo, and Kenneth Morrissette; and sisters, Lena Bennett, Rose Evans, Linda Sasser, Jeannette Greenwood.

She is survived by siblings Philip Morrissette (Betty), Thomas Morrissette (Karla), Donald Morrissette (Mary Lou), Pauline Bordeau, Gloria McClay (Don), Joyce Smith, Theresa Ferguson (Hal), Joyce Smith; and a sister-in-law, Barbara Morrissette.

Memorial donations may be made to the Servants of Mary, 7400 Military Avenue, Omaha, NE 68134.

OBITUARIES

Brushton — Lorraine F. Martin, 91; Mass of Christian Burial April 27, 2021 at St. Mary’s Church


Malone — Adrien Brooks, 80; Funeral Services April 25, 2021 at Frary-Spaulding Funeral Home.

Malone — Virginia (Russell) Hogan, 75; Graveside services to be held.


Norwood — Kevin A. Patterson, 63; Private Services held.

Ogdensburg — Lavernne M. (Booth) Brouse, 96; Funeral Services April 21, 2021 at Frary Funeral Home; burial in Foxwood Memorial Park.

Ogdensburg — Calvin Smith Williams, 89; Mass of Christian Burial April 22, 2021 at St. Mary’s Cathedral; burial in St. Mary’s Cemetery.

Plattsburgh — Suzanne L. “Coach Sue” Carpenter Connors, 87; Mass of Christian Burial April 19, 2021 at St. John’s Church; burial in Mount Carmel Cemetery.

Port Henry — Josephine (O’Kusky) Yelle, 89; Mass of Christian Burial April 23, 2021 at St. Patrick’s Church.

Rouses Point — Brian Power, 73; Mass of Christian Burial April 21, 2021 at St. Patrick’s Church.

Theresa — Raymond A. Desrosier, 79;

Private Services held.

Ticonderoga — Evelyn L. Crammond, 93; Mass of Christian Burial April 30, 2021 at St. Mary’s Church; burial in St. Mary’s Parish Cemetery.

Ticonderoga — Lawerence Herman Matte, 87; Funeral Services April 17, 2021 at the Wilcox & Regan Funeral Home; burial in St. Mary’s Parish Cemetery.

Watertown — Francis “Chick” Anthony Garifo, 80; Private Services held.
St. Joseph, Lover of Poverty

**St. Joseph’s Corner**

You done this to us? Your Father and I have been searching for You in sorrow.”

Then Jesus returned with them to Nazareth, as they pondered His words in their hearts. He progressed under Joseph and Mary “in wisdom and age and grace before God and men.” Lk. 2:51. At some unknown moment, Joseph died, having fulfilled all that the Eternal Father expected of him, before Jesus began His public life. Without obituaries or accolades, this poor carpenter of Nazareth passed away into eternity.

Today we remember Joseph, lover of poverty, as we also try to live a life of poverty. We seek out the Poor in deed and in fact. “Two turtle doves – two pigeons...” are so meager to redeem Jesus and Mary. Yet in God’s eyes, they represent lives of tremendous love and self-sacrifice as we surrender our very substance, and not merely our surplus to serve Christ’s Poor. Sisters of St. Joseph reach out to the sick, the lonely, the addicted, the abandoned, the derelicts seeking the comfort of Jesus and His parents of Nazareth.

Aware of over 820,000 hungry in our world’s population and of the 4,924,166 people ill with the coronavirus today, with those numbers daily increasing the death toll, we do the little that we can to alleviate the poor. The most “poor” are the billions in the world who do not know Jesus, whose souls must be saved so they do not die without repentance.

We “Go to Joseph” to beg him to embrace with a father’s love each and every soul needing grace at this time. Joseph, lover of poverty, lead us to Jesus and Mary who constantly praise the Triune God of love and mercy!