

To be read at Masses or inserted in parish bulletins the weekend of July 20-21, 2024



July 21-27, 2024

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Every day we pray, "...*Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done...*" Jesus was born to do His Father's will. We know that when we discern and then do the will of God it is always in our best interest. God's measureless love guarantees it!

During *Natural Family Planning Awareness Week (July 21st-27th)*, the Church asks us to consider married love and the blessings of children. But first we must spend time reflecting on God's love. This year's theme is "*Love Beyond Measure: Natural Family Planning—supporting God's gifts of love and life in marriage.*" God is love but not everything today labeled "love" is of God.

Christian marriage, a reflection of the union between Christ and His Church, is fully realized in the union between a man and a woman who give themselves to each other in free, faithful, and exclusive love, who belong to each other until death, are open to the transmission of life and are consecrated by the sacrament.

Responsible parenthood is the call to discern God's will for one's marriage while respecting God's design for human life and love. The Church's teaching is meant to help couples experience in a complete and conscious way their communion as husband and wife, together with their responsibility for procreating life.

I am grateful to Suzanne and Angelo Pietropaoli, Diocesan Directors of the NFP Office. Through their ministry as directors and educators, we offer assistance to families throughout our diocese. Should you like more information about Natural Family Planning, please contact our office. Let us all renew our commitment to respect human life and follow God's divine will for marriages and family life. It's in our best interest!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry R. LaValley".

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg