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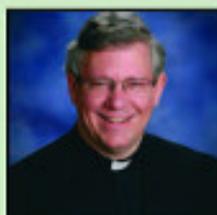
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Deacon Frank Jaramila is the first deacon specifically appointed by Bishop Robert Oromas to be administrator of a parish. Page 2



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DIOCESAN STUDENTS HEAD BACK TO SCHOOL

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Catholic Travel

EXPLORING THE LAUREL HIGHLANDS

Southwestern Pennsylvania region renowned for natural beauty and architectural masterpieces

By Aaron Leventhal

Recently, Beth and I experienced a delightful getaway to the scenic Laurel Highlands, about a four-hour drive from Columbus. We decided to splurge on our lodgings and stayed at **Nemacolin Woodlands Resort** (nemacolin.com), nestled in the bucolic surroundings of the lush valleys and rolling foothills of the Allegheny Mountains in rural Fayette County. It proved to be an ideal base for exploring the region's outstanding attractions.

Nemacolin features two Pete Dye-designed championship courses—Mystic Rock and the new Shepherd's Rock; Woodlands Spa and Holistic Healing Center; and several restaurants, including fine dining at Aqueous and Lautrec and casual Italian fare at Baratollo's. The Woodlands Wine Cellar has the state's largest private collection. Numerous specialty shops include a cigar bar, clothing boutiques and Hardy and Hayes fine jewelry. Daily offerings include Afternoon Tea at 3 p.m. and Art Tours of resort founder Joseph A. Hardy's extraordinary collection.

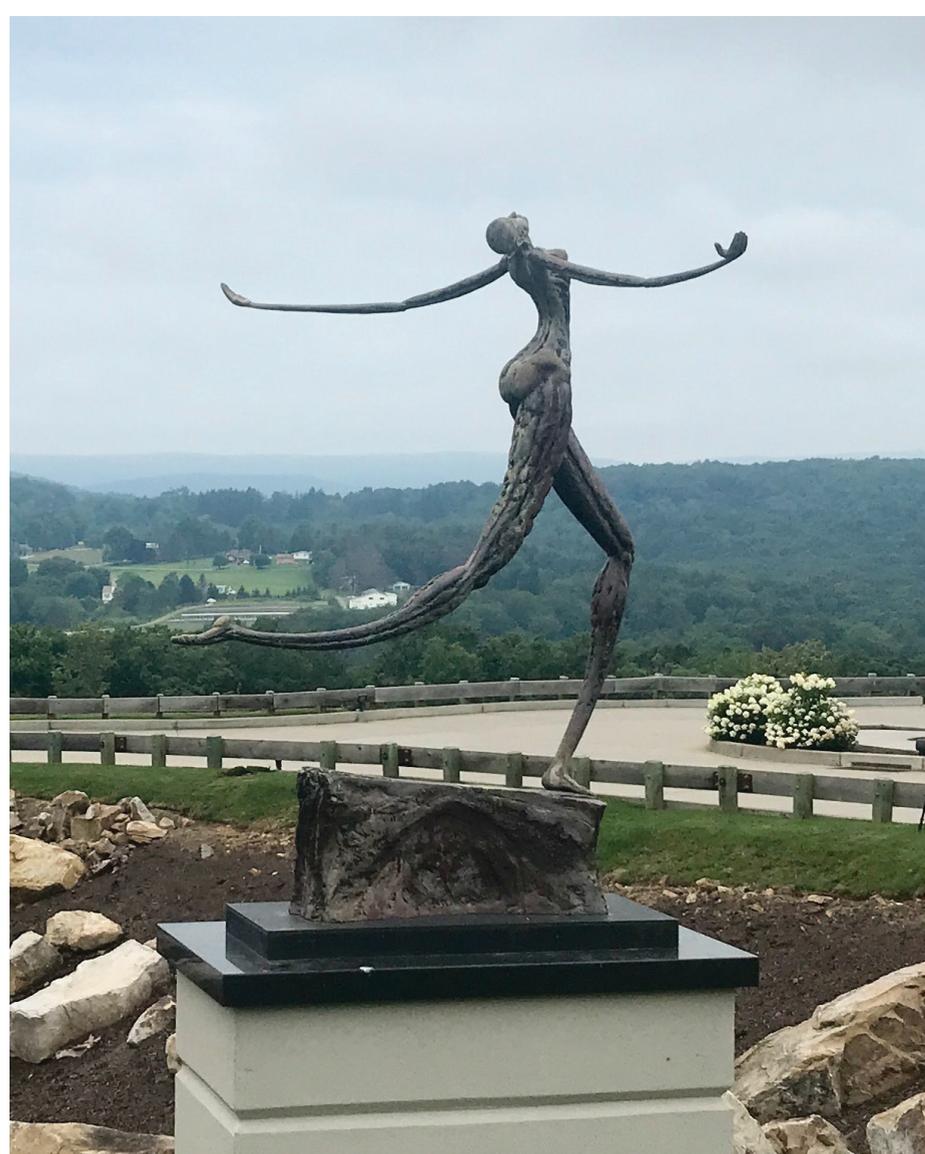
The concierge recommended an orientation to the sprawling 2,000-acre grounds with a complimentary shuttle bus tour. We were surprised to discover a remarkable collection of sculptures and art work displayed on hillsides and in gardens, the Outdoor Wildlife Habitat filled with exotic animals, challenging ziplines, mid-air ropes course, electric bike tours and the Lady Luck Casino.

During our three-day stay we were impressed that Nemacolin, recognized as one of the country's premier resort destinations, has been able to maintain an authentic ambiance—informal, laid-back and devoid of glitzy pretensions and gimmicky programming. Many of the staff attributed this to the resort's founder Joseph A. Hardy and his daughter Maggie, who took over its leadership. At age 95, Hardy still resides on the property and is frequently seen at its restaurants and attractions.



Fallingwater is considered to be Frank Lloyd Wright's most significant architectural achievement.

Ohiopyle State Park (discoverohiopyle.com), with its rugged natural beauty, is the Laurel Highlands' biggest draw. The rushing Youghiogheny River cuts through the park's more than 20,000 acres and offers some of the best whitewater rafting in the eastern United States, along with scenic



Nemacolin Woodlands Resort, a four-hour drive from Columbus, is tucked into the rolling hills of the Laurel Highlands.



Nemacolin Lodge

vistas and waterfalls.

The park is popular for fishing, camping and more than 75 miles of hiking and biking trails. In the small village of Ohiopyle, diners serve up salads and sandwiches and seasoned outfitters offer bike and boat rentals as well as guided tours and instruction

for rafting, fly fishing, rock climbing, zip lining, kayaking, canoeing and mountain biking.

The Laurel Highlands also is famous as the location of two masterpieces designed by legendary architect

Frank Lloyd Wright—**Fallingwater** and **Kentuck Knob**. Though the homes differ in size, setting and use, both exemplify Wright's philosophy of organic architecture that promotes the harmonious union between human beings and nature through design.

Fallingwater, (fallingwater.org) was designed by Wright in 1935 for Pittsburgh department store owner Edgar J. Kaufmann, Sr. as a weekend vacation home. The multi-level structure, named the "Best All-Time Work of American Architecture" by the American Institute of Archi-



Aaron and his wife Beth enjoy the natural beauty of Ohiopyle State Park.



Lead tour guide Tim Fischer points out Kentuck Knob's unique design to travel writer Aaron Leventhal.

itects, is dramatically cantilevered over a 30-foot waterfall, forcing its occupants to walk out to its concrete terraces to see it and the glorious natural landscape. In 1963, Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. entrusted the home and surrounding 469 acres to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. Fallingwater is open daily March-December; a guided tour is included with admission.

Only minutes away is Kentuck Knob, spectacularly perched on a bluff high above the Youghiogheny River Gorge and wedged tightly into the brow of the hillside. In 1954, Ha-

gen Ice Cream founder I.N. Hagen convinced the 86-year-old Wright to design a house on an 89-acre tract of farmland. Wright never saw the home completed.

Unlike Fallingwater, Kentuck Knob is modest in size and served as the Hagen residence for 30 years. The uniqueness of the single-floor home is the hexagonal grid incorporated into all of its rooms. In 1986 the Hagens sold their home to English property developer and art collector Peter Palumbo, who eventually opened it to the public. Kentuck Knob is open March-December; ad-

mission includes a 30-minute guided tour.

Everyone we spoke to during our trip highly recommended a visit to the Laurel Highlands in October and early November, when the hillsides become a palette of red, orange and gold leaves.

Photos by Beth Ervin Leventhal

Aaron is a frequent contributor to *The Catholic Times* travel pages. If you're interested in joining a small group tour to the Laurel Highlands in spring 2020, send an email to leventhal43206@gmail.com.

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Trip continues to Philadelphia and New York City

Farewell to the relaxed pace and natural beauty of the Laurel Highlands. On to the adrenaline rush in the fast-paced centers of Philly and the Big Apple, as we extended our trip a few days to focus on a favorite pastime—exploring great museums.

A pleasant five-hour drive took us to **Club Quarters Hotel Philadelphia** (clubquartershotels.com), conveniently located in Center City (downtown). We enjoyed delicious pasta with clams at the adjacent **Davio's Southern Italian Steakhouse**.

In the morning we toured **The Barnes Foundation** (barnesfoundation.org), a renowned museum founded by American pharmaceutical tycoon and art collector Dr. Albert C. Barnes. He amassed more than 3,000 early 20th century Impressionist and Early Modern masterpieces by artists such as Cezanne, Van Gogh, Picasso and Modigliani. Barnes' revolutionary approach was to exhibit his paintings with a mix of ancient, Medieval and non-Western metal works, furniture and sculpture from various cultures and time periods to demonstrate the universal impulse to create.

We dined at two local favorites—**Silk City Diner, Lounge & Garden** (and **Suraya**, serving Middle Eastern specialties in the newly gentrified Fishtown neighborhood).

Luckily a friend invited us to spend a few nights at his Jersey City townhouse with a fabulous view of the Statue of Liberty and Manhattan skyline. Convenient transportation to Manhattan on the ferry or PATH train makes hotels on the harbor in Jersey City attractive options for more reasonable rates and parking. For the next two days, we set our sights

on visiting three museums in Lower Manhattan and Midtown.

9/11 Memorial & Museum (911memorial.com), at the World Trade Center, was an emotional and heart-breaking experience we never will forget. Though the terrorist attack took place in 2001, continuous debate and construction challenges delayed its opening until May 2014. Today it is one of the most visited and important museums in the country. A one-hour guided tour eloquently conveys the enormity of the hideous act, the colossal devastation and its significance for future generations. Avoid long lines by making an advance reservation that combines admissions and the tour.

Our guide was well-informed and conveyed a sense of the incomprehensible devastation that took the lives of 2,977 innocent victims from 90 countries and 441 police officers and firefighters at Ground Zero. As our small group moved deep underground and around the museum, he pointed out a crushed city firetruck, mangled steel girders and the slurry wall that held up nearly a million tons of falling debris and prevented the Hudson River from flooding southern Manhattan and Jersey City. The ultimate message of the museum is expressed in the words of Virgil written in large letters on a museum wall. "No day shall erase you from the memory of time." Outside at the landscaped Memorial Plaza designed by Israeli architect Michael Arad are dozens of diverse food vendors in colorful small tents serving up ethnic specialties. Nearby are other outstanding restaurants for every budget in **Little Italy** and **Chinatown**.

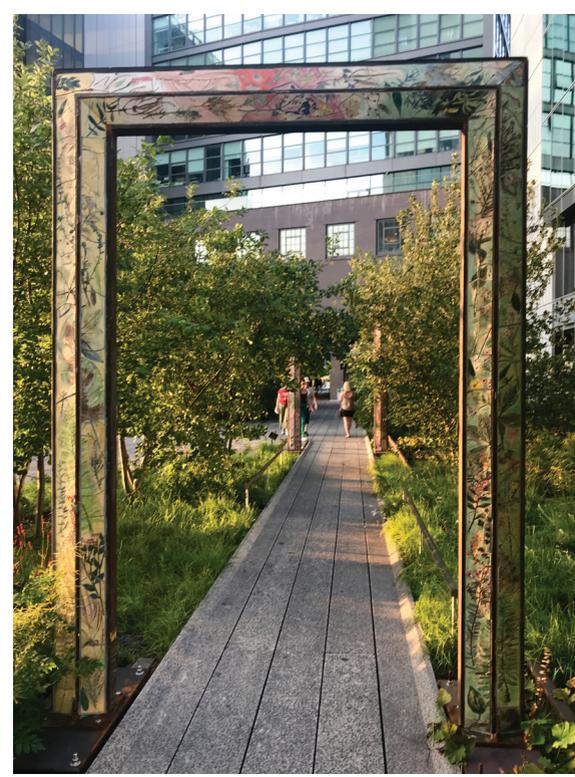
The Tenement Museum (tenement.org), on the Lower East Side, was of great personal interest since my grandpa, Louis Leventhal, escaped the Czar's army in 1907 and fled from Belarus to live and work in the tenements. Visitors can choose one of five guided tours through a tenement that housed more than 10,000 immigrants from 25 countries between 1863 and 1935.

On our tour, as we moved from room to room our guide employed actual case studies to bring to life the difficulties faced by two families—one Jewish and the other Sicilian Catholic—who lived in small walk-up apartments devoid of plumbing and electricity. Recently, a second tenement was added to focus on new immigrants who arrived from the 1940s to 1980s. The museum is open daily for hour-long tours only; neighborhood tours and culinary experiences also are offered.

A short walk took us to the legendary **Katz's Delicatessen**, established in 1888 and considered by many to be the world's greatest deli. Classic fare includes matzoh ball soup; lox and bagels; gigantic, hand-crafted corned beef, pastrami and brisket sandwiches; and, of course, New York cheesecake, all served up with panache and an attitude.

Further Uptown is **The Whitney Museum of American Art**, founded by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney in 1930 and recognized as the country's foremost showcase for 20th and 21st century American art. The museum recently moved from its original Upper East Side location to the hip downtown Meatpacking District.

In addition to exhibiting works in its permanent collection of legendary artists such as Georgia O'Keefe, Jasper Johns and Alexander Calder on several floors, the remaining galleries have been constructed with moveable walls to accommodate constant change. The Whitney takes pride in reshaping how a museum should serve the public. It is open daily with free afternoon tours and until 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. The Studio cafe and Untitled



The High Line is a 1.5 mile public promenade on a dormant elevated railroad track.

both offer excellent food and views of the surrounding cityscape.

The High Line (thehighline.org), adjacent to the Whitney, is a public park created in 1996 on an elevated, dormant railroad track that hovers 30 feet above its Chelsea neighborhood. The 1 1/2-mile promenade—artfully landscaped with wild grasses, flowers, plants and trees—is a welcome oasis from the city's hustle and bustle and an amazing testimony for urban renewal at its best. It's a perfect setting to relax and re-energize before taking in more sights, dining and entertainment.

If time and budget had allowed, we would have added an extra day to travel Uptown to visit three landmarks along sophisticated Fifth Avenue: **St. Patrick's Cathedral**, a Roman Catholic Church built in 1878 and considered to be New York's finest Gothic Revival structure; **Metropolitan Museum of Art**, noted for its incredible size and the largest collection of artistic masterpieces in the Western hemisphere; and the **Jewish Museum**, housed in a mansion formerly owned by financier Felix Warburg with one of the world's greatest collections of Jewish fine art and historic Judaica. **Russ and Daughters** is an excellent restaurant on the premises. Of course, we also would find time to window shop at some of the most luxurious retailers in the world, including Tiffany, Cartier and Bergdorf Goodman.

Happy Travels!



The 9/11 Museum is a must see.