

# Diocese of Scranton

[www.dioceseofscranton.org](http://www.dioceseofscranton.org)

## *News Briefing* Vol. 7 No. 2 2/3/2011



### MISSION STATEMENT

*We the Catholic faithful of the Diocese of Scranton, in union with our Holy Father, the Pope, are called through baptism to share in the mission which Jesus Christ has entrusted to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Priests, deacons, religious and laity, under the leadership of our Bishop, cooperate to proclaim the Gospel in accordance with the teaching of the Church, to celebrate the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, for the salvation of all, and to witness by grace to the Kingdom of God so as to promote a culture of life, justice and peace.*

[Subscribe to  
News Briefing](#)

### In This Issue

[New Class Forming for Permanent Diaconate](#)

[Diocese Hosting Slovak Catholic Federation Centennial](#)

[Retreat for Men Considering Priesthood](#)

[Regional Workshops for the Implementation of The Roman Missal](#)

[Bible Study Leadership Training Day Set](#)

[Faith Formation Bible Study](#)

[Evangelization Program Set for Williamsport Area](#)

[Involved In Adult Faith Formation?](#)

[Pastoral Formation Institute Course Offerings](#)

[Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Training](#)

[Honoring and Strengthening Marriage](#)

[Mark Your Calendar](#)

### **New Class Forming for Permanent Diaconate**

The Diocese of Scranton is seeking men who want to serve as permanent deacons. Successful candidates will begin the five-year formation program in the fall.

In the Catholic Church, there are three categories of ordained ministers: bishops, priests and deacons. All are members of the clergy.

A permanent deacon is called by God to serve in the manner of Jesus and is ordained as a sacramental sign of Christ, who came "to serve and not to be served," explained Father John Polednak, V.E., Diocesan Director of the Permanent Diaconate.

The deacon's service, he said, has three aspects: Word, worship and charity.

Deacons proclaim the Gospel and, on occasion, preach. They can preside at the Liturgy of the Hours.

Deacons can baptize, witness marriages, and conduct wake and grave-site services.

As a leader in charity, the deacon identifies the needs in the parish, and then coordinates the efforts and resources to address those needs. He ministers to the needs of families, single parents, students, the aged, the infirmed, the imprisoned, and those who suffer from poverty or addictions.

Knowing those needs, the deacon brings them to the altar at Mass so that they can be lifted up to God in the Prayers of the Faithful.

The five-year formation program includes study, prayer and active service. A 13-week course will be offered each semester and the candidate will have an additional one-day course each month. A day of reflection will be required each semester and a weekend retreat will be held each year. Required reading will be done in the summer. If married, the candidate's wife must attend the days of reflection and the retreat, and she is encouraged to attend the courses.

To be considered for acceptance into the program, the man should be between 31 and 60 years of age, have sound moral character, be mature in faith, and have a sense of vocation to service.

He should have already demonstrated active service and involvement among the people of his parish and community, and be attuned to the needs and life of the Church and family life. He should be able to offer 10-12 hours per week to the program and to the diaconate when ordained.

If married, he must have the support of his wife. Single men must remain single once they are ordained as permanent deacons.

To enter the process, the candidate must be nominated by his pastor. The pastor will gather information about the candidate and submit that in writing to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate.

The candidate should make his interest in the Permanent Diaconate Program known to his pastor as quickly as possible since nominations will be submitted during February and early March.

### **Criteria for Candidates**

- Male between 31 and 60 years of age.
- Must have sound moral character, be mature in faith, and have a sense of vocation to service and already demonstrated active service and involvement in his parish and community.
- Able to offer 10-12 hours per week during the five-year formation program, and similar time commitment once ordained.
- If married, he must have the support of his wife. Single men must remain single once they are ordained as permanent deacons.
- Candidate must be nominated by his pastor. The candidate should make his interest known to his pastor as quickly as possible since nominations will be submitted during February and early March.

### **Diocese Hosting Slovak Catholic Federation Centennial**

The Slovak Catholic Federation will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its founding on Sunday, May 15, with a Liturgy of Thanksgiving at 2:30 p.m. in St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton, the Mother Church of the Diocese in which the Federation was founded in 1911.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will be the principal celebrant, along with Bishop Joseph V. Adamec, Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown and Episcopal Moderator of the Slovak Catholic Federation. Father Philip A. Altavilla, V.E., national president of the Slovak Catholic Federation, will serve as homilist.

Following the liturgy, a Centennial Banquet will be held at the Clarion Hotel, 300 Meadow Avenue, Scranton. There will be a cash bar at 4:30 p.m., and dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. The cost of the banquet is \$35 per person.

Entertainment will be provided by Pajtasi, a Slovak ensemble

from New York. The deadline for banquet reservations is April 15.

To commemorate this historical event, a Commemorative Book will also be published. Patrons for the Commemorative Book will be appreciated. The deadline for Patrons is April 1.

For more information or to receive a Patron Form and/or a Banquet Reservation Form, please call Dolores M. Evanko, national secretary-treasurer of the Slovak Catholic Federation, at 570-454-5547 or visit [www.slovakcatholicfederation.org](http://www.slovakcatholicfederation.org).

### **Retreat for Men Considering Priesthood**

St. Joseph had a decision to make: follow the custom of society and divorce Mary quietly, or follow God's plan for salvation. He chose God, and the whole course of history was changed for the better.

Men who are facing a similar decision - whether God is calling them to the priesthood - will have an opportunity to focus on that possibility when the Diocese of Scranton hosts a Discernment Retreat March 25-27 at Fatima Renewal Center in Dalton.

The retreat will be a weekend of prayer, reflection and conversation to help the participants discern whether they have a vocation to become a priest.

Father Brian Van Fossen, the retreat leader, said the participants will reflect on St. Joseph's dilemma and how he accepted God's invitation.

"St. Joseph's initial decision was to divorce Mary quietly," Father Van Fossen noted. "That was a good decision, according to the customs of the world, his family and his station in life. It was a comfortable decision, one that everyone would accept. It was a difficult decision, but one he thought needed to be made. But God had other plans and called St. Joseph to be the saint we know him to be."

As they reflect on this, the retreat participants will discuss and ponder questions such as:

Are you being called by God? Are you set in your decisions in life? Are you searching to find the answer to how to walk with God and His Church? Do you feel like God is calling you, like St. Joseph, to not be afraid? Are you willing to become the saint God is calling you to be? St. Joseph changed his decision and followed God's call - are you willing to do the same?

"We are inviting men to come and discern with the heart of St. Joseph what God is calling them to do," Father Van Fossen said. "For one weekend, allow God to touch your heart with other men who are searching to follow God's call. Allow God's call to be strengthened and nourished as St. Joseph did - through our relationship with our Blessed Mother and Christ's True Presence in the Eucharist."

The retreat will enable the men to listen to God's prompting through interactive conferences on masculine spirituality, fatherhood, and the story of St. Joseph and other great men throughout history. The weekend will conclude with Mass.

For information and to register for the retreat, contact Father Christopher Washington at the Vocations Office, 570-558-4383. Participants can also register by visiting the "Coming Events" section of the new vocations website at [www.scrantonvocations.com](http://www.scrantonvocations.com).

### **Regional Workshops for the Implementation of *The Roman Missal***

General Meeting: February 7, Monday (Snow-date: February 10, Thursday)

St. Clare/St. Paul School, Scranton - 7 to 9 p.m.

Musicians Meeting: February 15, Tuesday (Snow-date: February 17, Thursday)

St. Clare/St. Paul School, Scranton. - 7 to 9 p.m.

General Meeting: February 21, Monday (Snow-date: February 24, Thursday)

Divine Mercy Hall, Minooka -- 7 to 9 p.m.

Musicians Meeting: Participants may choose the location of their choice. Please consult *The Catholic Light* or the Diocesan website for additional sites.

To register: Call Jane Guzek at the Office for Parish Life and Evangelization at 570-207-2213, ext 1105.

### **Bible Study Leadership Training Day Set**

A full-day training session led by an Ascension Press representative for those who wish to lead "Great Adventure" Bible Studies in their parishes as been scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 19, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church Hall in Peckville.

The presenter will be Kelly Wahlquist, who works with Bible Study leaders in order to help them organize, implement and conduct their studies.

The leadership training session will include an overview of the Bible study program and methodology, a workshop that includes a guided walk through a "Great Adventure" lesson, and tools for training and supporting small group facilitators.

Registration fee is \$65 for Bible Study Leaders (Includes lunch and comprehensive Leader's Manual) or \$45 for Core Team Members (includes lunch and Core Team materials).

To register, call 570-207-2213, ext. 1133, or at: [www.regonline.com/LTDScranton](http://www.regonline.com/LTDScranton).

### **Faith Formation Bible Study**

A Faith Formation Bible Study will be offered at the Diocesan Center in Scranton on eight consecutive Wednesdays - March 16, 23, 30, April 6, 13, 20, 27 and May 4 - from 2 to 3:30 p.m. The sessions will be led by Brendan Murphy, Diocesan director of Family Life, Marriage Preparation and Adult Faith Formation.

This eight-part series provides an excellent introduction and overview of the Bible from a Catholic perspective. The study briefly covers salvation history through talks that are complemented by group discussion questions, useful maps and charts, and information for home study.

The series makes the complexity of the Bible simple through an easy-to-follow narrative approach and an innovative color-coded Bible timeline. It will also serve as a guide for those who desire to lead Bible Study groups in their parishes.

Most importantly, it is recommended for those who seek to learn about the story of our faith as it unfolds in the Bible. It is an invaluable way for individuals to enrich their understanding and appreciation for God's word as revealed throughout salvation history.

Registration fee is \$30, which includes the \$20 cost of the workbook. To register, call 207-2213, ext. 1107.

## Evangelization Program Set for Williamsport Area

The Office for Parish life and Evangelization, through the Pastoral Formation Institute, is sponsoring a two-evening session entitled "Evangelization: Our Call to Holiness and Mission," to be held on Feb. 10 and 17 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Msgr. Fleming Center in Williamsport.

Guest presenter for the program will be Father Shane L. Kirby, pastor of St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Williamsport.

The basic topics include: What is Evangelization? Why evangelize? How does evangelization happen? Father Kirby will explain the concept of evangelization and provide practical application and examples for parishes to lead Catholicism renewal and conversion and to provide ways to "welcome home" those who have been away from the faith.

These sessions are highly recommended for parishes, cluster groups and individuals who desire to understand the meaning and importance of what it means to evangelize, especially as parishes are involved in *Called to Holiness and Mission: Pastoral Planning in the Diocese of Scranton*.

This program will also be offered in Scranton and East Stroudsburg during the month of May.

Cost to attend is \$20 per person or \$65 for five or more from one parish. To register, call 570-207-2213, ext.1107.

## Involved In Adult Faith Formation?

Are you responsible for directing adult faith formation (AFF) in your parish or cluster? Do you have a desire to find ways in which you can increase the faith of the adult Catholics in your community? If so, please e-mail Brendan Murphy, diocesan Director of Family Life, Marriage Preparation, and Adult Faith Formation at [Brendan-Murphy@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Brendan-Murphy@dioceseofscranton.org). This will put you on an electronic mailing list through which you will receive monthly e-mails containing suggestions on how to get AFF up and running in your parish/cluster, or how to improve existing programs. In addition you will receive access to great resources, reviews of AFF materials, tips on how to incorporate technology into your apostolate, and other helpful suggestions geared towards evangelizing adult Catholics.

### February Free Adult Faith Formation Resources

The February edition of the monthly adult faith formation (AFF) resource, *Disciple*, is now available. This month's issue features commentary on the Sunday Gospel readings, a look at the sacrament of baptism, a listing of upcoming adult faith formation opportunities in the Diocese and reviews of the book *Jayber Crow* and the film *Nicholas Nickleby*.

Also available is the next installment of *AD: Anno Domini*, which looks at the key events occurring in the life of the Church from A.D. 700-800 (previous installments, beginning with A.D. 30-100 are cataloged online).

The February edition of the monthly family resource, *Familia Fidelis*, is also available. This month's issue features a reflection for parents on how they can evangelize their children, a look at practical ways to engage in evangelization for teens, a review of the game Uno Moo for children, and a look at this month's "Friend for Families," St. Gianna Beretta Molla.

To receive these materials please contact Brendan Murphy at

[Brendan-Murphy@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Brendan-Murphy@dioceseofscranton.org) while the diocesan website is being retooled.

### **Pastoral Formation Institute Course Offerings**

The Pastoral Formation Institute in the Diocese of Scranton announces its Level III courses for the Spring 2011 semester. Level III courses are designed for Catholic school teachers, catechists, parish coordinators, or for those seeking personal enrichment. The course schedule is as follows:

**201 - *Fundamental Teachings of the Church***, Notre Dame High School, East Stroudsburg, Feb. 22 to April 26 (Tuesdays), 3 to 6 p.m. Instructor: Helen Findlay.

**301 - *Sacraments in General*** (three locations): St. Agnes School, Towanda, Feb. 8 to April 12 (Tuesdays), 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Instructor: Father Martin Boylan; Prince of Peace Church, Old Forge, Feb. 15 to April 19 (Tuesdays), 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Instructor: Father James Dougher; and St. John Neumann Church, Lords Valley, Feb. 15 to April 19 (Tuesdays), 6 to 9 p.m. Instructor: Father John Ryan.

**401 - *Introduction to the Spiritual/Moral Life***, St. John Neumann High School, Williamsport, Feb. 15 to April 19 (Tuesdays), 3 to 6 p.m. Instructor: Father David Bechtel.

**501 - *The Catholic Church through the Centuries*** (two locations): Holy Cross High School, Dunmore, Feb. 15 to April 19 (Tuesdays), 6 to 9 p.m. Instructor: Ben Tolerico; and St. John/Holy Family Hall, Honesdale, Feb. 16 to April 20 (Wednesdays), 6 to 9 p.m. Instructor: Father William Langan.

Please note: If class falls on a holy day of obligation or a holiday, the instructor will advise on make-up dates. Registration fee for all courses is \$150 (audit: \$65). To register, call 570-207-2213, ext. 1107 or e-mail: [sister-leonita-duhoski@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:sister-leonita-duhoski@dioceseofscranton.org).

### **Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Training**

Diocesan Center, Scranton  
March 15, 22, 29 - Tuesdays 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.  
Deacon Gerard L. Carpenter

Good Shepherd Academy, Kingston  
March 7, 14, 21 - Mondays 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.  
Deacon Thomas Cesarini

Fee: \$30. To register: Call the Pastoral Formation Office at 570-207-2213, ext. 1107.

### **Honoring and Strengthening Marriage**

World Marriage Day, sponsored by the Worldwide Marriage Encounter, will take place this year on Sunday, Feb. 13. World Marriage Day is an opportunity for all of us to give thanks to God for the Sacrament of Matrimony and to offer prayers for those who have

undertaken this vocation. We should especially pray for spouses as they work to raise families devoted to Christ and His Church.

Regarding this aspect of married life, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, "In our own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centers of living, radiant faith. For this reason the Second Vatican Council, using an ancient expression, calls the family the *Ecclesia domestica* [Domestic Church]. It is in the bosom of the family that parents are 'by word and example . . . the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children. They should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each child, fostering with special care any religious vocation.'"

Remembering that Jesus Himself willed to be raised in a human family, let us all take a moment on Feb. 13 to pray for healthy families and marriages in our Church and world.

### **Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend Feb. 11-13 in Bethlehem**

Looking for a way to make your marriage even better? Then why not spend Valentine's Day at a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend (much better than dinner and a movie). Get away from jobs, kids, chores, and phones - and focus only on each other. If you'd like greater depth, growth, and enrichment in your relationship, you'll love the difference this weekend can make! Website: [wwme-nepa.org](http://wwme-nepa.org) Phone: (800) 787-7679.

### **Mark Your Calendar**

**Retrouvaille Weekend**, Feb. 18-20 -- at Fatima Renewal Center, Dalton. Are you or a loved one currently going through a difficult time in your marriage? Retrouvaille is a weekend with additional follow-up sessions for stressed marriages led by a trained priest and married couples who have survived marital difficulties. It is not counseling or group therapy. A registration deposit is required and a donation will be requested; finances, however, should not prevent attendance. For more information, call 587-0415 or e-mail: [Net530@comcast.net](mailto:Net530@comcast.net). All information is confidential.

**Ash Wednesday Day of Reflection: "Come Back to Me with All Your Heart,"** March 9 -- at Fatima Renewal Center, 1000 Seminary Road, Dalton. Guest presenter: Passionist Father James Price, rector of the Basilica of St. Ann Shrine, west Scranton, who will lead participants into the Lenten season by focusing on the importance of our relationship with Jesus Christ and how it impacts our relationships in life on all levels. Includes reflection on both Old and New Testament themes that call for a response to the invitation to "come back to the Lord with all our hearts," in order to enjoy a deep and lasting relationship with our Crucified and Risen Savior by having healthy and happy relationships with one another. Mass will be celebrated, with the distribution of ashes; opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Fee: \$30 includes lunch. To register, call Fatima Center at 563-8500.