

# Diocese of Scranton

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## MISSION STATEMENT

*We, the Catholic community of the Diocese of Scranton, are called through Baptism to imitate the servant leadership of Jesus Christ.*

*In union with our Holy Father, the Pope, we proclaim the Gospel faithfully, celebrate the sacraments joyfully, and boldly promote life, justice and peace in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.*

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## Diocese Will Enter Season of Lent on Ash Wednesday

***Bishop Celebrating 12:10 p.m. Mass at Cathedral Feb. 22  
Services at Cathedral Include Sunday Evening Series***

Ash Wednesday, February 22, will mark the start of the solemn 40-day season of Lent. Parishes throughout the 11-county Diocese of Scranton will distribute ashes to remind individuals of their mortality and need for daily spiritual renewal.

At St. Peter's Cathedral in Scranton, the Mother Church of the Diocese, ashes will be distributed during the 6:30 a.m., 8 a.m., 12:10 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Masses. Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will be the principal celebrant of the 12:10 p.m. Pontifical Mass.

On Fridays during Lent, the Stations of the Cross service commemorating the Passion and death of Jesus Christ will follow the 12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral, beginning at 12:45 p.m.

During the Lenten season, the CTV: Catholic Television live broadcasts of the 12:10 p.m. weekday Masses from St. Peter's Cathedral will be interpreted for the deaf and hard of hearing by Sister Mary Beth Makuch, SSCM, Diocesan Director of Ministry with the Deaf and Persons with Disabilities. The Masses are rebroadcast at 3:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on CTV.

Lent is a time of prayer, penance and sacrifice leading to the most sacred time of the Church year, Holy Week, when the passion, death

and resurrection of Jesus Christ are commemorated. The solemn observance culminates in the greatest celebration of the Church, Easter Sunday, which will be observed on April 8.

Ash Wednesday commemorates the ancient rite of placing the sign of the cross on the forehead with the reminder "Remember, you are dust, and unto dust you will return." Lent's invitation to repentance and conversion may also be found in the optional words of this rite: "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel." These ashes are gathered from the burned branches of palm carried the previous year in the Palm Sunday procession.

This Lenten season, which once again reminds the faithful of their sinfulness while being mindful of the great mercy and love of God, St. Peter's Cathedral Parish Community will celebrate the theme "Sow justice in the lives of those we serve" by offering a series of Sunday Evening Prayer services in addition to its regularly scheduled Masses and devotions.

Continuing the practice started in the Advent season, the Cathedral will offer Sung Evening Prayer with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament beginning at 7 p.m. on the Sundays of Lent. The homilists for each service are February 26 - Father Brian J.W. Clarke, V.G.; March 4 - Father Thomas M. Muldowney, V.E.; March 11 - Father Brian J.T. Clarke; and March 25 - Father Philip A. Altavilla, V.G.

On the Fourth Sunday of Lent (March 18), traditionally called Laetare Sunday, a chamber ensemble from St. Peter's Cathedral will offer "Taizé: Prayer, Meditation and Song." Prayer in the spirit of the Taizé community is a meditative form of prayer. Gathered around the cross, the faithful sing uncomplicated, repetitive songs, pray with scripture readings, and meditate in silence, allowing the mystery of God to become tangible through the beauty of simplicity. The service will begin at 7 p.m.

On Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion (April 1, 2012), the first day of Holy Week, the St. Peter's Cathedral Choir will offer "Tenebrae: Song of the Shadows." *Tenebrae*, the Latin word for "shadows," is a prayer service that utilizes scripture and song to retell the story of Christ's passion and death. The ceremony includes seven readings. After each reading, one of seven lit candles is extinguished. Those gathered leave in silence when the service concludes after the Gospel account of the crucifixion with the "hiding" of the seventh candle - symbolizing the burial of Christ in the tomb. Tenebrae will begin at 7 p.m.

### 2012 Regulations for Lent

All faithful of the Diocese of Scranton are reminded of Diocesan Statute No. 41, which addresses the penitential aspect of Lent:

"The season of Lent is penitential in nature and during Lent penance should be not only internal and individual, but also external and social (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, No. 5, 109). Pastors are obliged to avoid scheduling activities in the parishes which in any way could possibly detract from the external and social penance required by Lent."

Ash Wednesday, February 22, marks the beginning of Lent. The following fast and abstinence regulations are observed:

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, April 6, are days of fast and abstinence.

- Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence.
- **All Catholics who have reached their 14th birthday** are to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and on all Fridays during Lent.
- **All Catholics over 18 years of age to the beginning of**

**their 60th year** are bound to the obligation of fasting. Those bound by this rule may take only one full meal and two smaller meals unless dispensed or excused.

### **Lenten Reminders**

Lent is a time for sacrifice and for spiritual renewal as we reflect upon our baptism and the call given to each of us to walk as disciples of the Lord.

We are provided with three personal challenges associated with our individual observance of Lent:

- **Almsgiving** - generously giving to those in need
- **Fasting** - practicing self-discipline and self-denial
- **Prayer**- reading, hearing and reflecting on the Word of God

Lent is also a penitential season. It is a time to seek forgiveness, to look inward, and to admit our shortcomings and failures. It is a time to regroup and to prepare. How can you spend your time during Lent?

- By "giving up" things you hunger after, such as sweets or alcohol; or activities you desire, such as vacations, concerts or movies.
- By "doing" things to help others, such as offering an extra donation to the poor or helping those in need by providing food or clothing.
- By "adding" to our normal routine, such as going to daily Mass, praying the Stations of the Cross and going to confession.

Reverend Brian J.W. Clarke, V.G.  
Vicar General and Chief Canonical Counsel

### **Statement On President's Decision To Revisit Health Coverage Mandate**

Upon learning of President Obama's decision to revisit its U.S. Health and Human Service Administration's (HHS) final rule that forced all employers, including Catholic employers, to offer their employees health coverage that includes sterilization, abortion-inducing drugs, and contraception, the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, acknowledged the efforts of those who have worked to pursue a reversal of the Administration's decision. Diocesan officials, in alliance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, will now carefully analyze the precise implications of the President's announcement along with any amendment made to the HHS's final rule so that the unacceptable elements included in the original mandate are removed and religious liberty is fully restored. Bishop Bambera asked the faithful of the Diocese to continue to commit themselves to prayer and to engagement in all efforts that will allow human dignity to be upheld.

### **ACTION ALERT**

***Protect Religious Liberty and Freedom of Conscience for All  
Urge Congress to Pass "Respect for Rights of Conscience Act"***

Each of the links below provides information about this serious matter and how you can contact your U.S. Representative and Senators in support of legislation designed to protect religious liberty and freedom of conscience.

The **Catholic Bishops of the United States** remain fully committed to the defense of our religious liberty and continue to strongly protest the violation of our freedom of religion. In doing so, they have renewed their call on Congress to pass the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act while offering a renewed call to the Catholic faithful and to all fellow Americans to join together in this effort to protect religious liberty and conscience for all via legislative action:

[www.usccb.org/conscience](http://www.usccb.org/conscience)

The **Pennsylvania Catholic Conference**, the public affairs arm of Pennsylvania's Catholic Bishops and the Catholic Dioceses of Pennsylvania, also urges us to support a legislative remedy:

<http://www.pacatholic.org/religious-liberty/hhs-edict-will-force-catholics-to-violate-conscience>

The **National Committee for a Human Life Amendment** is committed to full legal recognition of the right to life of the unborn child, and respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every member of the human race. The organization's objectives include educating citizens, developing pro-life legislative networks, and offering programs in support of pro-life legislation. The Committee works closely with the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and has developed a unique Action Alert to support advocacy efforts:

<http://nchla.org/actiondisplay.asp?ID=292>

### **Ash Wednesday Day of Reflection at Fatima Center**

Passionist Father James Price, rector of St. Ann Shrine Basilica in Scranton, will serve as the presenter for the annual Ash Wednesday Day of Reflection on Feb. 22 at Fatima Renewal Center, Dalton.

Theme for the day's program is: "Letting God Act During Lent: The Sunday Scriptures of Lent 2012." Throughout the observance of Lent, Christians are called to fast, pray, and give alms, while focusing attention on the following of Jesus in his journey of dying and rising. During the Reflection Day, Father Price will explain how the work of the living God leads us to transformation through the Sunday readings of Lent. Through this transformation of the "living word of God," we can more effectively participate in the great paschal mystery of the Lord's death and resurrection.

Registration fee for the Day of Reflection is \$30, which includes lunch. To register, call Fatima Renewal Center at 563-8500 or the Pastoral Formation Institute Office at 207-2213, ext. 1107.

### **Pastoral Formation Institute Continuing Ed Programs**

#### ***Living the Eucharist (Paulist Evangelization Ministries)***

The Diocesan Pastoral Formation Institute is offering two Lenten

programs entitled *Living the Eucharist*, a series designed to bring Catholics closer to God through a more profound experience of this central mystery of our faith.

The first program, directed by Father James Price, C.P., rector of St. Ann Shrine Basilica, Scranton, invites adults to participate in this faith formation experience once a week during Lent to learn more about the Eucharist, discuss the weekly Gospel reading, and discover ways to live the Eucharist in daily life. This group will meet on the Tuesdays in Lent on Feb. 21, 28, March 6, 13, 20, and 27, from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. at the Diocesan Center, Scranton. Fee is \$30 and includes cost of the workbook.

*Living the Eucharist for Teens* is set for Feb. 20, 27, March 5, 12, 19, and 26, (Mondays) from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. at St. Joseph Oblate Seminary, Pittston. Kathy Yaklic, theology teacher at Holy Cross High School, will be the presenter. This program is an invitation to high school students to discuss ways in which they can grow closer to God through the Eucharist. Each week during Lent, through interaction, reflection and prayer, students will learn what is most meaningful in their lives by getting to know, understand and love the Sacrament of the Eucharist more deeply. The \$20 fee includes cost of the workbook. Five or more students from one parish or school can attend for a total of \$75.

To register for the above programs, call 570-207-2213, ext. 1107.

### ***The Liturgical Year: Celebrating the Mystery of Christ***

On March 18 (Sunday), Monsignor Dale R. Rupert will continue the program, *The Liturgical Year: Celebrating the Mystery of Christ*, that will take place at Fatima Renewal Center, Dalton. The program will center on the Easter Season and celebrate the 50 days from the Sunday of the Resurrection to Pentecost Sunday. Texts on the liturgy will be studied and applications will be made to all the liturgies that may be celebrated in the 50 days of Easter. Time: 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. Fee: \$10, includes refreshments. To register, call 570-563-8500.

### ***Discovering Parish Ministry for Maturing Adults***

The Pastoral Formation Institute will offer "Discovering Parish Ministry for Maturing Adults" as a Continuing Education program on Tuesday evenings, April 10, 17 & 24, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Diocesan Center in Scranton. Program presenters will be David Clarke and Brendan Murphy.

This workshop, designed for parishes who seek to include opportunities for maturing adults within their parish ministries, will explore the three groups of maturing adults common to each parish community.

Participants will also learn the 12 key principles that lead to forming a successful maturing adult ministry in the parish. An essential component of these presentations will center on the essence of spirituality.

Program fee (including the cost of the workbook) is \$15 per person or a group rate of \$50 for four or more persons from one parish. To register, call 570-207-2213.

### **Pastoral Formation Institute Ministry Component**

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

Three opportunities for the training of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at the following sites:

**Diocesan Center, Scranton**

Feb. 27, March 12, 26 (Mondays) 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.  
Monsignor Dale R. Rupert

**Good Shepherd Academy, Kingston**

March 5, 12, 19 (Mondays) 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.  
Deacon Thomas Cesarini

Fee: \$30. To register, call 570-207-2213, ext. 1107.

**Pastoral Formation Institute Courses Offered**

The Pastoral Formation Institute of the Diocese of Scranton announces its offering of Level III courses for the Spring 2012 semester. Level III courses are designed for Catholic school teachers, catechists, parish coordinators, or those seeking personal enrichment. The course schedule is as follows:

**201 - Fundamental Teachings of the Church:** Prince of Peace Parish, Old Forge, Feb. 21-April 24 (Tuesdays); 6 to 9 p.m. Instructor: Father Joseph Elston.

**401 - Introduction to the Spiritual/Moral Life:** Oblates of St. Joseph Seminary, Laflin (Pittston), Feb. 21-April 24 (Tuesdays); 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Instructor: Father Martin Boylan.

**501 - The Church Through the Centuries :** Notre Dame High School, East Stroudsburg, Feb. 28-May 1 (Tuesdays); 3 to 6 p.m. Instructor: Helen Findlay.

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).

**Real Estate Availability**

The Property & Risk Management Division of the Diocese currently maintains a listing of real estate available for sale or use throughout the Diocese. If interested in learning about the available opportunities, please contact Ed Carlin, Property Assets Director, P&RM Division, at 570-558-4310.

**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 Catholic belief about the Church, a look at adult faith formation opportunities around the Diocese, and reviews of the book *Saints: A Closer Look* and the film *Bella*.

Also available on the [Adult Faith Formation](#) page of the Diocesan website is the next installment of *AD: Anno Domini* which looks at the key events occurring in the life of the Church from A.D. 1800-1900 (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 what makes marriage work, a look at the fate of the unbaptized for teens, a review of Lego rosaries for children, and a look at this month's "Friend for Families," Blessed Rafaela Ibarra.

As always, past issues of these newsletters can be found on the [Adult Faith Formation](#) and [Family Life](#) pages of the Diocesan website ([www.dioceseofscranton.org](http://www.dioceseofscranton.org)).

The latest *Disciple Podcast* is also available on the Adult Faith Formation page. This month's episode explains what Catholics believe about the resurrection of Jesus, we talk to Father James Price, C.P., about "Living the Eucharist," and we take a look at the lives of Saints Cyril and Methodius.

### **Wedding Anniversary Mass To Be Celebrated June 3**

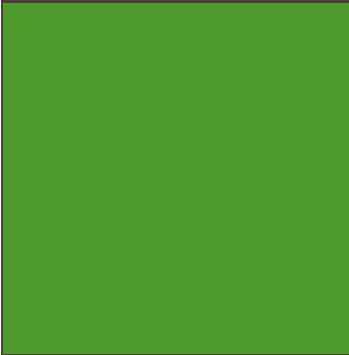
If you and your spouse, or a couple you know, will be celebrating a 25<sup>th</sup> or 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 2012 please contact your parish office to register for the annual Wedding Anniversary Mass with Bishop Bambera. The celebration will take place on Sunday, June 3 at 2:30 p.m. in St. Peter's Cathedral. Participants will receive a commemorative certificate and have the opportunity to pose for a photo with the Bishop while enjoying a light reception. The deadline to register with your parish is March 15.

### **Mark Your Calendar**

**Day of Reflection: "The Saints -- Partners in Holiness,"** March 10 -- 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Fatima Renewal Center, Dalton. Guest presenter: Monsignor John Esseff, who will lead participants in understanding more fully the baptismal call to holiness -- a calling to become saints. Through prayer and reflection, insights will be offered into how, by following the example of the saints, the faithful can be authentic witnesses of the Gospel. The day includes celebration of Mass and opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Fee: \$30 includes lunch. To register, call Fatima Center at 563-8500.

**Interpreted Mass for Catholic Deaf of the Diocese of Scranton,** March 11 -- at St. Joseph's Oblates Seminary, 1880 Highway 315, Laflin. Gathering begins at 1 p.m. with faith-sharing and Sacrament of Penance, followed by Mass for the deaf signed & interpreted celebrated at 2 p.m. in the seminary chapel. Refreshments and social follow. For more information, contact Sister Mary Beth Makuch, SSCM, at 207-2213 ext. 1101.

**Natural Family Planning Class,** March 14 -- offered at 6 p.m. by Megan Murphy, CNFPI in the basement of St. Peter's Cathedral rectory, 315 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton. The cost of the training is \$45, which includes all materials. NFP is a non-contraceptive and morally sound form of family planning. Safe, effective, and completely natural, NFP can be used by all women, whether they have short/long/irregular cycles, are post-partum, or perimenopausal. Major scientific studies on the effectiveness of NFP done by such organizations as the University of Heidelberg, the British Medical Journal, the World Health Organization, and the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare have shown NFP to be over 99% effective in helping couples to postpone pregnancy. Unlike any other form of birth control, NFP can also help couples achieve pregnancy by giving them the tools necessary to identify the most fertile periods in a woman's cycle. To register for the class or to schedule one-on-one instruction, call 207-2213, ext. 1133 or e-mail [Brendan-Murphy@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Brendan-Murphy@dioceseofscranton.org).



**Day of Reflection: "Rediscovering the Journey of Faith,"** April 28  
-- 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Fatima Renewal Center, Dalton. Guest presenter: St. Joseph Oblate Father Paul A. McDonnell, who will lead participants in a program of preparation for the "Year of Faith," proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI, that will begin in October. The day will address how faith-centered persons can deepen their own faith before sharing it with others. Those involved in parish ministries and anyone seeking to deepen his/her faith are encouraged to attend. Includes the Sacrament of Reconciliation and celebration of Mass. Fee: \$30, includes lunch. To register, call Fatima Center at 563-8500.