

# The Catholic Light



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## *Walking with Jesus all these years*

### Mass at Cathedral with Cardinal Rigali Begins Sesquicentennial Celebration

With prayer, gratitude and joy in their hearts, the People of God in this local church of northeastern and north central Pennsylvania began a year-long celebration of the formation of their Diocese 150 years ago.

Worshippers from throughout the 11-county Diocese of Scranton – including delegates from the 120 parishes, representatives from the Diocesan Catholic schools, church officials and viewers of CTV: Catholic Television – gathered for the opening Mass on the First Sunday of Advent, December 3, in the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera was the principal celebrant and homilist, with priests of the Diocese concelebrating. His Eminence, Justin Cardinal Rigali, Archbishop Emeritus of Philadelphia and former Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Scranton, presided.

Cardinal Rigali expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to participate, thanking Bishop Bambera, “and all of you, dear brothers and sisters, who make up this wonderful, this beautiful, this important Church of Scranton.”

In order to grasp the significance of the Sesquicentennial, the Cardinal noted, we must look back to the presence of Jesus, “the presence of Jesus in this community



in a very strong and vibrant way, His presence for a hundred and fifty years, and you and your predecessors in this Diocese have been walking, together, with the Lord Jesus for all these years.”

Cardinal Rigali also offered his “special reasons to rejoice with you and to be with you,” noting that the territory of the Diocese of Scranton was part of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia until it was detached and made its own Diocese by Pope Pius IX in 1868. Cardinal Rigali was Archbishop of Philadelphia for eight years. And for eight months in 2009 and 2010 he was the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Scranton until Bishop Bambera, who served as his Delegate,

was named Bishop.

“I was able, during those months, to be here, to be in the parishes, to be with you on sixteen different occasions, and it was a great grace in my life,” the Cardinal said. “It was likewise my privilege then to be able to ordain Bishop Bambera to the Episcopacy, and to be with all of you in this new moment in the history of this local church, and all of these (experiences) link me with you, actually for as long as I live. I am so honored to be part of your history. I am so honored to be part of your life with Jesus, and today I am honored to walk with you, to begin the walk into the future.”

*Continued on page 3*



Worshippers from throughout the 11-county Diocese of Scranton gathered on the First Sunday of Advent, December 3, in the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton for the Opening Mass of the year-long celebration of the Diocese's 150th Anniversary. Left: His Eminence, Justin Cardinal Rigali, Archbishop Emeritus of Philadelphia and former Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Scranton, presided and offered remarks. *The Catholic Light* Photos/Mike Melisky

### *Prepare for Christ's Coming*

A Nativity scene and a Christmas tree are seen in the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican. Celebrating the third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday, and his own 81st birthday, Pope Francis invited Christians to prepare for Christ's coming through “constant joy, persevering prayer and continual thanksgiving. Joy, prayer and gratitude are the three attitudes that prepare us to live Christmas in an authentic way.”



THIS ISSUE'S 150TH FEATURE

OUR PARISHES WHERE FAITH IS LEARNED AND LIVED



Dear Friends in Christ,

In the gospel passage for the Christmas Mass at Midnight, Saint Luke sets the stage for the events that unfolded at the birth of Jesus. The gospel writer reminds us that Joseph and Mary journeyed to Bethlehem for a census of the whole world. While there, the time came for Mary to give birth to her child and “she wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn” (*Luke 2:7*).

We know the story well. We cherish the image of the newborn Jesus lying in a manger surrounded by animals and visited by shepherds and kings. But as much as we remember the manger, have any of us ever wondered why Jesus was born there and not in the place reserved for travelers journeying to Bethlehem?

Although Saint Luke tells us that there was “no room in the inn,” we will never know the precise reasons surrounding Mary and Joseph’s inability to find safe lodging in Bethlehem. All we know is that an innkeeper in Bethlehem two thousand years ago, for some reason, missed the opportunity to encounter the living God! What also matters is that for all that we believe and profess as people of faith, sometimes we’re like that innkeeper and we too miss opportunities to encounter God.

By embracing our broken humanity in his birth, Jesus filled our world and our lives with God’s grace, love and presence. Yet, the best of us are not always eager to embrace God’s plan for our salvation. Instead, we seek to encounter God on our own terms. We assert all too quickly that there is “no room in the inn” of our lives for those who are different than what we expect them to be, those who are more broken than how we see ourselves to be, or those whose presence is simply less convenient than we would want them to be.

Sadly, conflict and division so often prevail despite the fact that Bethlehem gave birth to the Prince of Peace. People continue to war one with another. Terrorism and the consequences of hatred are rampant in all corners of the globe and even in our own cherished land. Self-centeredness and pride tear apart relationships with those we love. The treasured gift of life is increasingly disregarded, especially in the unborn, the poor, disabled and elderly. And immigrants and refugees seeking a better life are so often forced to the margins of society by discrimination, bigotry and hatred.

Yet, in the midst of a world that, more than ever, seems to have gone awry due to a lack of respect for lives that are made in the very image of the Christ whose birth we celebrate, we have reason to hope. In his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis reminds us of where that hope is to be found, “We are called to find Christ in the poor, to lend our voice to their causes, but also to be their friends, to listen to them, to speak for them and to embrace the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them.”

We are all poor in one way or another, aren’t we? Some of us are poor because of a lack of resources. Many of us are poor due to a lack of welcome, due to unfair judgment by others, and due to loneliness that comes from a lack of love and forgiveness. On our own, we will never be able to provide ourselves with the meaning, purpose and peace that each of us so desperately seeks in life. When we are humble enough, however, to open our hearts to the presence of God, to admit our need for a Savior and to, in turn, follow the pattern of Jesus’ life in service of our sisters and brothers, we discover just how rich we are.

My brothers and sisters, the message of salvation rooted in the birth of Jesus is our hope – a hope not solely to be fulfilled in God’s promise of eternity, but a hope that is given life in so many ways through the goodness of hearts that are open to God, even in the midst of an often-troubling world. So many of you – like those who have gone before us in the 150 years of this blessed local Church known as the Diocese of Scranton – live out your faith in the parishes and communities of our eleven counties as you daily commit yourselves to deepening your relationship with Jesus through your embrace of the promises made at your Baptism. You serve the poorest among us and reverence the presence of God who knocks on the door of your hearts looking for a place to be born. In so doing, you give birth to the Lord Jesus, you embrace the real work of Christmas, and we are richly blessed!

Thank you for the privilege of walking with you in faith as your Bishop. Thank you as well for reflecting the presence of Christ within your lives and for respecting Christ’s presence in the lives of those whom God has entrusted to your care.

With prayers for a holy and blessed Christmas, I am

Faithfully yours in Christ,

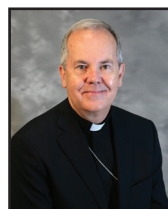
+ *Joseph C. Bambera*

Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.  
Bishop of Scranton



**The Nativity is depicted in this stained glass window at Saint Mary, Help of Christians Church, Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish in Pittston. The window is from Mayer Studio, Munich, Germany, 1924.**

**La Natividad está representada en este vitral en la Iglesia Santa María, Ayuda de los Cristianos, Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de la Eucaristía en Pittston. La ventana es de Mayer Studio, Munich, Alemania, 1924.**



Queridos amigos en Cristo,

En el pasaje del Evangelio de la Misa de medianoche de Navidad, San Lucas establece el escenario de los eventos que se desarrollaron en el nacimiento de Jesús. El escritor del evangelio nos recuerda que José y María viajaron a Belén para un censo de todo el mundo. Mientras estaban en Belén, a María le llegó la hora de tener a su primer hijo y “lo envolvió en pañales y lo acostó en un pesebre, porque no había lugar para ellos en la posada” (*Lucas 2: 7*).

Conocemos muy bien la historia. Apreciamos la imagen del Jesús recién nacido acostado en un pesebre rodeado de animales y visitado por pastores y reyes. Pero por mucho que recordamos el pesebre, ¿alguien de ustedes se ha preguntado por qué Jesús nació allí y no en el lugar reservado para los viajeros que se dirigen a Belén?

Aunque, San Lucas nos dice que “no había lugar en la posada”, nunca sabremos las razones

precisas que rodean la desdicha de María y José para encontrar un alojamiento seguro en Belén. ¡Todo lo que sabemos es que un hospedero en Belén hace dos mil años, por alguna razón, perdió la oportunidad de encontrarse con el Dios viviente! Lo importante es que, a pesar de todo lo que creemos y profesamos como personas de fe, a veces somos como el hospedero y también perdemos oportunidades de encontrar a Dios.

Al abrazar nuestra humanidad quebrantada en su nacimiento, Jesús llenó nuestro mundo y nuestras vidas con la gracia, el amor y la presencia de Dios. Sin embargo, no estamos siempre deseosos de abrazar el plan de Dios para nuestra salvación. Más bien, buscamos encontrar a Dios en nuestros propios términos. Decimos demasiado rápido que no hay “espacio en la posada” de nuestras vidas para aquellos que son diferentes de lo que esperamos que sean, aquellos que están más arruinados que cómo nos vemos a nosotros mismos, o aquellos cuya presencia es simplemente menos conveniente de lo que quisiéramos.

Tristemente, el conflicto y la división a menudo prevalecen a pesar de que Belén dio a luz al Príncipe de la Paz. La gente continúa en guerra con los demás. El terrorismo y las consecuencias del odio se proliferan en todos los rincones del mundo e incluso en nuestra propia preciada tierra. El egocentrismo y el orgullo rompen las relaciones con aquellos a quienes amamos. El regalo preciado de la vida se descarta cada vez más, especialmente en los no nacidos, los pobres, los discapacitados y los ancianos. Y los inmigrantes y refugiados que buscan una vida mejor muchas veces son forzados a los márgenes de la sociedad por la discriminación, el fanatismo y el odio.

Sin embargo, en medio de un mundo que, más que nunca, parece haberse desviado debido a la falta de respeto por las vidas que están hechas a imagen del Cristo cuyo nacimiento celebramos, tenemos razones para esperar. En su exhortación apostólica *Evangelii Gaudium*, el Papa Francisco nos recuerda dónde se encuentra esa

esperanza: “Estamos llamados a encontrar a Cristo en los pobres, a prestar nuestra voz por sus causas, pero también a ser sus amigos, a escucharlos, para hablar por ellos y abrazar la misteriosa sabiduría que Dios desea compartir con nosotros a través de ellos”.

Todos somos pobres de una u otra forma, ¿no somos acaso? Algunos de nosotros somos pobres por falta de recursos. Muchos de nosotros somos pobres debido a la falta de acogida, debido al juicio injusto de los demás, y debido a la soledad que proviene de la falta de amor y el perdón. Por nuestra cuenta, nunca seremos capaces de proporcionarnos el sentido, el propósito y la paz que cada uno de nosotros busca desesperadamente en la vida. Sin embargo, cuando somos lo suficientemente humildes para abrir nuestros corazones a la presencia de Dios, admitir nuestra necesidad de un Salvador y, a su vez, seguir el modelo de la vida de Jesús al servicio de nuestros hermanos y hermanas, descubrimos cuán ricos somos.

Mis hermanos y hermanas, el mensaje de salvación enraizado en el nacimiento de Jesús es nuestra esperanza, una esperanza que no solo se cumple en la promesa de la eternidad de Dios, sino una esperanza que da vida de muchas maneras a través de la bondad de los corazones abiertos a Dios, incluso en medio de un mundo a menudo problemático. Muchos de ustedes, como los que nos han precedido en los 150 años de esta bendita Iglesia local conocida como la Diócesis de Scranton, viven su fe en las parroquias y comunidades de nuestros once condados mientras se comprometen diariamente a profundizar su relación con Jesús a través de su acogida de las promesas hechas en su Bautismo. Ustedes sirven a los más pobres entre nosotros y venera la presencia de Dios que toca la puerta de sus corazones buscando un lugar para nacer. Al hacerlo, dan a luz al Señor Jesús, abrazan el verdadero sentido de la Navidad, ¡y somos abundantemente bendecidos!

Gracias por el privilegio de caminar con ustedes en la fe como su Obispo. Gracias también por reflejar la presencia de Cristo en sus vidas y por respetar la presencia de Cristo en las vidas de aquellos a quienes Dios ha confiado a su cuidado.

Oraciones por una Navidad santa y bendita, Yo soy

Fielmente suyo en Cristo,

+ *Joseph C. Bambera*

Reverendísimo Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.  
Obispo de Scranton





# Sesquicentennial Celebration Begins with Pontifical Mass

*Continued from page 1*

Cardinal Rigali said, “This Anniversary is a new beginning, a new walking together with Jesus. And so with Jesus we also render thanks to his heavenly Father for this gift – a hundred and fifty years has gone by. Now the future opens up, we walk with Jesus in confidence and love and joy and in peace; we walk with Him to the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit.”

On behalf of the clergy, religious and laity of the Diocese, Bishop Bambera told Cardinal Rigali that “we are truly blessed to have you with us today to commemorate this historic moment in the life of our Diocese and to welcome you ‘home’ to a Church that you served so well – even if for a brief period of time.”

Citing the baptismal call of each one of us to build the Church, Bishop Bambera noted that the early settlers in the Diocese knew implicitly that if the faith that they had come to cherish was ever to flourish in this region of our young country, they would be the ones responsible for carrying out the Church’s mission in Northeastern and Northcentral Pennsylvania.

“Much can and should be said about the selfless service of the clergy and religious who laid a solid foundation of faith for this blessed local Church of Scranton,” the Bishop said. “Yet, no matter how heroic or selfless, each of them was only able to fulfill the work entrusted to their care because of the commitment of the faithful souls they served – souls who had been touched by the mercy and love of God and who realized that they too – in their own way – were responsible for proclaiming the good news of the Gospel.

“My friends, those faithful souls are like all of you, who understand that even and particularly today, it is your responsibility – just as much as it is mine – to build the Church, the body of Christ – and to be His hands and voice and heart to a world so much in need of God’s grace.”

Bishop Bambera acknowledged that the number of parishes has diminished in recent years due to changing demographics and cultural challenges, but he asserted that “thankfully, this portion of God’s kingdom that all of you represent so beautifully continues to vibrantly embrace the mission of the Church entrusted to all of the baptized.

“My sisters and brothers, may this blessed anniversary year of celebration and remembrance serve as a time of renewal for each of us who are called to make the mission of Jesus our own. Just like the first missionaries who traveled to our eleven counties in times that were different, but just as challenging as our own, we too have the responsibility to build Church. And, like them, we would do well to remember that if anything profound is to happen through us, it will only happen in relationship with Jesus.”

Referring to the liturgy’s Gospel passage, the Bishop urged us to “‘be watchful! Be alert!’ Continue to look for opportunities to serve the Lord Jesus – in those who have lost their way – in the poor – the suffering – the marginalized – and the brokenhearted. Work for justice. Forgive generously. Give Jesus room to mold our lives into the pattern of his own. Continue to be the leaven of the Gospel in our corner of the world. And give thanks – for all that has been and for all that will be in this local Church through the grace and presence of God in our midst.”

Coinciding with the Mass at the Cathedral, all parishes in the Diocese were encouraged to acknowledge the 150th Anniversary Year at their weekend liturgies. Each parish has received a parish participation kit, with suggestions and resources for celebrating the more local aspects of the Sesquicentennial, which will continue through most of 2018 under the theme, “The Journey Makes Us One.”



**Students representing Diocesan Catholic Schools were among the worshippers who filled the Cathedral for the Opening Mass.**

*The Catholic Light Photos/Mike Melisky*

*“This Anniversary is a new beginning, a new walking together with Jesus. And so with Jesus we also render thanks to his heavenly Father for this gift – a hundred and fifty years has gone by. Now the future opens up, we walk with Jesus in confidence and love and joy and in peace; we walk with Him to the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit.”*

**– Cardinal Rigali**

*“My sisters and brothers, may this blessed anniversary year of celebration and remembrance serve as a time of renewal for each of us who are called to make the mission of Jesus our own. Just like the first missionaries who traveled to our eleven counties in times that were different, but just as challenging as our own, we too have the responsibility to build Church.”*

**– Bishop Bambera**



**The music ministry was composed of choir members from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Our Lady of the Snows Parish in Clarks Summit, and Saint Joseph the Worker Parish in Williamsport, and the Cathedral instrumentalists.**



**Cardinal Rigali warmly greeted Mass participants as they left the Cathedral.**



# Celebrating the Feast of

# Our Lady of Guadalupe

With faithful fervor, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe was recently celebrated, particularly in the areas of the Diocese with large Latino populations. This annual observance commemorates the appearance of the Virgin Mary to a Mexican Indian, Juan Diego, in December of 1531. The Blessed Mother's message of hope continues to inspire people of Hispanic descent, especially those from Mexico. Our Lady of Guadalupe is venerated as patroness of the Americas.

**Our Lady of Guadalupe**, evangelizer of the Americas, mother of God and mother of the Church! You are the pride of our people. Jesus, your son, changed water into wine because you requested it. We implore you, merciful mother, that you obtain for us all the graces that we need from your son. Intercede before Him in order to bless the Americas with many vocations to Priesthood, Religious Life, Christian Marriage, and the lay life. Mother of God, pray for us now and always. *Amen.*



**Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe**, Evangelizadora de las Américas, ¡Madre de Dios y Madre de la Iglesia! Tú eres el orgullo de nuestra gente. Jesús, tu Hijo, cambió el agua en vino porque tú se lo pediste. Te imploramos, Madre Misericordiosa, que obtengas para nosotros todas las gracias que necesitamos de tu Hijo. Intercede ante Él para que bendiga a las Américas con muchas vocaciones al sacerdocio, a la vida religiosa, al matrimonio cristiano, y la vida laical. Madre de Dios, ruega por nosotros ahora y siempre. *Amén.*



**Saint John Neumann Parish, Nativity of Our Lord Church, Scranton**

*The Catholic Light Photos/Mike Melisky*



**Annunciation Parish, Saint Gabriel Church, Hazleton**

*The Catholic Light Photos/Carlos Nunez*





**Pocono Area Parishes,  
Saint Matthew Church, East Stroudsburg**

*The Catholic Light Photos/Ken. Schurman*



**Saint Nicholas Parish,  
Wilkes-Barre**

*The Catholic Light Photos/Mike Melisky*



## Diocesan Annual Appeal at 88% of Goal 38 Parishes Over Goal

The **2017 Diocesan Annual Appeal: Walk Together in the Light of Christ** has raised more than \$4.4 million in gifts and pledges, bringing the campaign to 88% of the \$5 million goal. More than 26,000 donors have made pledges to this year's Diocesan Annual Appeal. Thirty-eight parishes have surpassed their Annual Appeal goal so far.

"I am grateful to so many of the faithful in our Diocese who continue to respond to the Lord's call to build up His Body, the Church, through their devoted commitment to our parishes and our Diocese," said Bishop Joseph C. Bambera.

Parishes over goal are Blessed Sacrament Parish, Throop; Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace Parish, Hawley; Christ the King Parish, Archbald; Corpus Christi Parish, West Pittston; Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, Hanover Township; Holy Family Parish, Sugar Notch; Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton; Immaculate Conception Parish, Scranton; Most Precious Blood Parish, Hazleton; Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Lake Silkworth; Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Wyalusing; Our Lady of Victory Parish, Harveys Lake; Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Brodheads ville;

Queen of the Apostles Parish, Avoca; Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Peckville; Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary Parish, Jermyn; Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish, Hazleton; Saints Peter & Paul Parish, Towanda; Saint Ann Parish, Shohola; Saint Barbara Parish, Exeter; Saint Brigid Parish, Friendsville; Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow; Saint Elizabeth Parish, Bear Creek; Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Swoyersville; Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish, Nanticoke; Saint John Bosco Parish, Conyngham; Saint John Neumann Parish, Lords Valley; Saint John Vianney Parish, Montdale; Saint Joseph Marelllo Parish, Pittston; Saint Katharine Drexel Parish, Pleasant Mount; Saint Luke Parish, Stroudsburg; Saint Mary Parish, Waymart; Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish, Pocono Pines; Saint Michael Parish, Canton; Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton; Saint Peter Parish, Wellsboro; Saint Therese Parish, Shavertown; and Saint Thomas More Parish, Lake Ariel.

Please see the adjacent page for a complete list of the 120 parishes in the Diocese and their progress toward their Annual Appeal goal.

*Continued on page 9*

## Appeal Gifts Support Our Clergy – Serving the Faithful Lifelong

*Editor's Note: This is the fifth in a series on ministries supported by the 2017 Diocesan Annual Appeal.*

For those men who answer God's call to the Diocesan priesthood, the Diocese of Scranton provides direct support for the full scope of their lives, from discernment through pastoral appointment and retirement. A portion of this support comes from gifts donated to the Diocesan Annual Appeal. Currently 103 retired clergy continue living out their priestly vocations in service to God's people in our Diocese.

"Gifts to the Appeal provide much needed support for our retired bishops and priests," Bishop Joseph C. Bambera said. "While the number of priests serving our parishes may not be what is used to be years ago, the care for the people of the Church of Scranton continues on through the generous support of retired bishops and priests."

Bishop Emeritus James C. Timlin has served the Diocese for more than 65 years, with over 40 of those years as a bishop. At 90



**The Annual Appeal supports the operation of Villa Saint Joseph in Dunmore, the Diocesan retirement community for our priests. From left are residents Monsignor Donald A. McAndrews, Monsignor John A. Esseff and Bishop Emeritus James C. Timlin.**

years young, he continues to visit hospice and hospitalized patients each day. Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus John M. Dougherty serves Christ the King Parish in Archbald on a daily basis. Both celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation and represent Bishop Bambera at various liturgies and events.

"Being a priest means everything to me," said Bishop Timlin. "I went to the seminary right after high school and I never looked back. I will be eternally grateful that God chose me as someone to work with Him."

*Continued on page 9*

## Lycoming-Tioga Counties Regional Chairs



**Bishop Bambera with Lycoming-Tioga Regional Chairs Ken and Maria Danielsen, and Father Bert Kozen.**

Ken and Maria Danielsen, Williamsport, accepted Bishop Bambera's invitation to serve as Regional Lay Chairs for Lycoming and Tioga counties for the 2017 Diocesan Annual Appeal. Father Bert Kozen, pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish, Williamsport, and Saint Luke Parish, Jersey Shore, agreed to serve as Regional Clergy Chair.

Ken is a member of the Parish Council and he also serves as a Eucharistic Minister, and Maria serves as a lector at Saint Boniface Parish, Williamsport. The couple maintains a wealth management firm where Ken is a financial advisor and Maria, a former banking professional, is a client manager. Ken is also a veteran of the U.S. Army. He served in the active reserves for 23 years before retiring as a captain.

The Danielsens are the parents of four children. Casey serves the U.S. Army as an obstetrician. Erika and Brent are both college students and Jacob Paul attends Saint John Neumann Regional Academy Elementary School.

"We feel being of Italian descent and coming from big families has a lot to do with our faith," said Maria, a native of Campobasso, Italy, and one of five children. Ken, who was raised in Somerset, N.J., is Italian and Norwegian and one of nine. He added, "We grew up in homes with enormous faith in the Catholic tradition, in God and in Holy Mother Church, and that laid the framework for who we are today."

"The Scriptures are full of reminders, 'Whoever brings blessing will be enriched. I will bless you and you'll bless others,'" Ken said. "We truly believe in showing kindness, mercy and gratitude for the blessings we have. How do you do that if you don't help others? Dare the person who ignores the widow, the orphan."

"In our desire to reach out to people, we don't let a day go by without sharing a Scripture with someone and giving encouragement," said Maria.

The couple became 'enlightened' about the Appeal when their pastor, Monsignor Stephen McGough, invited them to become parish representatives a few years ago. "We were under the assumption that if we gave to the parish in the Offertory collection, we're giving to the Appeal," said Maria. The couple learned so much about the mission of the Diocese supported by the Appeal they decided "we should be doing more," and now whatever they give to their parish, they give to the Appeal.

"The Catholic church is the world's largest charity through agencies like Catholic Social Services. We want that to continue," said Ken. "We also take for granted there will always be a parish, there will be a priest...Bishop Bambera is asking for our help. The only way we can reach the multitude of people and the ministries in need is through the Annual Appeal."

*Continued on page 9*



LACKAWANNA-WYOMING REGION	PLEDGES	GOAL	PERCENTAGE
Ascension - Forest City	\$26,257.50	\$27,000.00	97.3%
Blessed Sacrament - Throop	\$20,002.00	\$17,000.00	117.7%
Christ the King - Archbald	\$77,134.00	\$71,000.00	108.6%
Divine Mercy - Scranton	\$60,735.00	\$67,000.00	90.6%
Holy Cross - Olyphant	\$47,057.00	\$50,000.00	94.1%
Immaculate Conception - Scranton	\$51,682.00	\$42,000.00	123.1%
Mary, Mother of God - Scranton	\$56,458.00	\$60,000.00	94.1%
Nativity of the BVM - Tunkhannock	\$29,575.00	\$34,000.00	87.0%
Our Lady of Mount Carmel - Carbondale	\$22,645.00	\$25,000.00	90.6%
Our Lady of Mount Carmel - Dunmore	\$58,203.50	\$60,000.00	97.0%
Our Lady of the Abingtons - Dalton	\$12,980.00	\$17,500.00	74.2%
Our Lady of the Snows - Clarks Summit	\$85,453.00	\$92,000.00	92.9%
Prince of Peace - Old Forge	\$20,855.00	\$36,000.00	57.9%
Queen of Angels - Jessup	\$20,993.00	\$28,000.00	75.0%
Sacred Heart of Jesus - Peckville	\$45,722.45	\$44,000.00	103.9%
Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary - Jermyrn	\$24,025.00	\$23,000.00	104.5%
SS Anthony & Rocco - Dunmore	\$39,956.91	\$50,000.00	79.9%
SS Peter & Paul - Scranton	\$7,585.00	\$14,000.00	54.2%
St. Ann Basilica - Scranton	\$27,213.00	\$32,000.00	85.0%
St. Catherine of Siena - Moscow	\$74,865.00	\$67,000.00	111.7%
St. Eulalia - Elmhurst	\$26,665.00	\$42,000.00	63.5%
St. Gregory - Clarks Green	\$71,171.15	\$79,000.00	90.1%
St. John Neumann - Scranton	\$37,913.00	\$55,000.00	68.9%
St. John Vianney - Scott Twp.	\$33,355.00	\$32,000.00	104.2%
St. Katharine Drexel - Pleasant Mount	\$17,022.50	\$14,000.00	121.6%
St. Lucy - Scranton	\$8,917.00	\$20,000.00	44.6%
St. Mary of the Lake - Lake Winola	\$7,460.00	\$13,000.00	57.4%
St. Michael - Scranton	\$9,140.00	\$10,000.00	91.4%
St. Patrick - Nicholson	\$8,005.00	\$10,000.00	80.1%
St. Patrick - Scranton	\$33,483.00	\$45,000.00	74.4%
St. Paul of the Cross - Scranton	\$40,078.26	\$55,000.00	72.9%
St. Paul - Scranton	\$55,998.00	\$70,000.00	80.0%
St. Peter's Cathedral - Scranton	\$84,960.00	\$75,000.00	113.3%
St. Rose - Carbondale	\$57,922.00	\$66,000.00	87.8%
Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Dickson City	\$52,358.00	\$59,000.00	88.7%

LYCOMING-TIOGA REGION	PLEDGES	GOAL	PERCENTAGE
Holy Child - Mansfield	\$26,602.50	\$30,000.00	88.7%
Immaculate Conception - Williamsport	\$22,795.00	\$28,000.00	81.4%
Our Lady of Lourdes - Montoursville	\$40,150.00	\$44,000.00	91.3%
Resurrection - Muncy	\$31,635.00	\$35,000.00	90.4%
St. Ann - Williamsport	\$56,166.00	\$63,000.00	89.2%
St. Boniface - Williamsport	\$51,035.50	\$68,000.00	75.1%
St. Joseph the Worker - Williamsport	\$67,118.75	\$80,000.00	83.9%
St. Lawrence - S. Williamsport	\$23,820.00	\$28,000.00	85.1%
St. Luke - Jersey Shore	\$12,460.00	\$17,000.00	73.3%
St. Peter - Wellsboro	\$48,211.50	\$46,500.00	103.7%
St. Thomas the Apostle - Elkland	\$10,895.00	\$14,000.00	77.8%

NORTHERN TIER REGION	PLEDGES	GOAL	PERCENTAGE
Epiphany - Sayre	\$88,264.10	\$90,000.00	98.1%
Holy Name of Mary - Montrose	\$16,640.00	\$21,000.00	79.2%
Immaculate Heart of Mary - Dushore	\$27,750.00	\$41,000.00	67.7%
Our Lady of Perpetual Help - Wyalusing	\$20,655.00	\$20,000.00	103.3%
SS Peter & Paul - Towanda	\$40,270.00	\$33,000.00	122.0%
St. Brigid - Friendsville	\$27,030.00	\$24,000.00	112.6%
St. John the Evangelist - Susquehanna	\$7,620.00	\$13,000.00	58.6%
St. Lawrence - Great Bend	\$7,410.00	\$12,000.00	61.8%
St. Martin of Tours - Jackson	\$9,670.09	\$10,000.00	96.7%
St. Michael - Canton	\$18,467.00	\$13,000.00	142.1%

LUZERNE REGION	PLEDGES	GOAL	PERCENTAGE
All Saints - Plymouth	\$26,537.00	\$40,000.00	66.3%
Annunciation - Hazleton	\$27,068.00	\$35,000.00	77.3%
Corpus Christi - West Pittston	\$35,656.00	\$32,000.00	111.4%
Exaltation of the Holy Cross - Hanover Twp.	\$16,540.00	\$16,500.00	100.2%
Gate of Heaven - Dallas	\$39,764.00	\$50,000.00	79.5%
Good Shepherd - Drums	\$24,183.00	\$26,000.00	93.0%
Holy Family - Luzerne	\$38,785.00	\$42,500.00	91.3%
Holy Family - Sugar Notch	\$20,736.00	\$20,000.00	103.7%
Holy Name of Jesus - West Hazleton	\$18,710.00	\$23,000.00	81.3%
Holy Rosary - Hazleton	\$22,873.00	\$18,000.00	127.1%
Holy Spirit - Mocanaqua	\$28,223.44	\$30,000.00	94.1%
Most Precious Blood - Hazleton	\$47,595.38	\$38,000.00	125.3%
Nativity of Our Lord - Duryea	\$33,470.00	\$42,000.00	79.7%
Our Lady Help of Christians - Wapwallopen	\$18,015.00	\$19,000.00	94.8%
Our Lady of Fatima - Wilkes-Barre	\$30,270.50	\$47,000.00	64.4%
Our Lady of Hope - Wilkes-Barre	\$34,816.67	\$40,000.00	87.0%
Our Lady of Mount Carmel - Lake Silkworth	\$22,056.00	\$20,000.00	110.3%
Our Lady of the Eucharist - Pittston	\$12,732.00	\$17,000.00	74.9%
Our Lady, Immaculate Conception - Freeland	\$22,401.00	\$28,000.00	80.0%
Our Lady of Victory - Harveys Lake	\$42,278.00	\$39,000.00	108.4%
Queen of Heaven - Hazleton	\$24,110.00	\$31,000.00	77.8%
Queen of the Apostles - Avoca	\$26,635.00	\$25,000.00	106.5%
Sacred Heart of Jesus - Dupont	\$18,830.00	\$32,000.00	58.8%
Sacred Heart of Jesus - Weston	\$7,948.00	\$12,000.00	66.2%
SS Cyril & Methodius - Hazleton	\$49,248.00	\$46,000.00	107.1%
SS Peter & Paul - Plains	\$44,654.25	\$70,000.00	63.8%
St. Andre' Bessette - Wilkes-Barre	\$22,520.00	\$32,000.00	70.4%
St. Andrew - Wilkes-Barre	\$14,043.00	\$18,000.00	78.0%
St. Barbara - Exeter	\$34,550.16	\$33,000.00	104.7%
St. Benedict - Wilkes-Barre	\$13,295.00	\$22,000.00	60.4%
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton - Swoyersville	\$48,466.00	\$47,000.00	103.1%
St. Elizabeth - Bear Creek	\$27,433.67	\$25,500.00	107.6%
St. Faustina Kowalska - Nanticoke	\$51,861.71	\$50,000.00	103.7%
St. Frances X. Cabrini - Carverton	\$13,055.00	\$14,500.00	90.0%
St. Ignatius Loyola - Kingston	\$65,539.02	\$90,000.00	72.8%
St. John Bosco - Conyngham	\$64,437.00	\$59,000.00	109.2%
St. John the Baptist - Larksville	\$18,255.00	\$23,000.00	79.4%
St. John the Evangelist - Pittston	\$58,590.00	\$60,000.00	97.7%
St. Joseph Marello - Pittston	\$29,017.00	\$29,000.00	100.1%
St. Jude - Mountain Top	\$83,490.20	\$84,000.00	99.4%
St. Leo - Ashley	\$19,915.00	\$35,000.00	56.9%
St. Maria Goretti - Laflin	\$30,235.00	\$45,000.00	67.2%
St. Monica - West Wyoming	\$31,532.00	\$33,000.00	95.6%
St. Nicholas - Wilkes-Barre	\$42,564.00	\$55,000.00	77.4%
St. Patrick - White Haven	\$10,315.00	\$17,000.00	60.7%
St. Robert Bellarmine - Wilkes-Barre	\$35,481.00	\$36,000.00	98.6%
St. Therese - Shavertown	\$81,484.40	\$75,000.00	108.6%

MONROE REGION	PLEDGES	GOAL	PERCENTAGE
Most Holy Trinity - Cresco	\$51,577.50	\$65,000.00	79.4%
Our Lady of Victory - Tannersville	\$49,780.09	\$55,000.00	90.5%
Our Lady Queen of Peace - Brodheads ville	\$70,566.00	\$62,000.00	113.8%
St. John - E. Stroudsburg	\$52,324.00	\$61,000.00	85.8%
St. Luke - Stroudsburg	\$133,172.00	\$120,000.00	111.0%
St. Matthew - E. Stroudsburg	\$55,100.00	\$70,000.00	78.7%
St. Maximilian Kolbe - Pocono Pines	\$34,325.00	\$26,000.00	132.0%
St. Rita - Gouldsboro	\$13,976.00	\$15,000.00	93.2%

WAYNE-PIKE REGION	PLEDGES	GOAL	PERCENTAGE
BVM Queen of Peace - Hawley	\$86,782.00	\$81,000.00	107.1%
St. Ann - Shohola	\$30,793.00	\$22,000.00	140.0%
St. John Neumann - Lords Valley	\$34,373.00	\$30,000.00	114.6%
St. John the Evangelist - Honesdale	\$62,829.00	\$68,000.00	92.4%
St. Joseph - Matamoras	\$31,750.08	\$40,000.00	79.4%
St. Mary - Waymart	\$30,106.00	\$20,000.00	150.5%
St. Patrick - Milford	\$26,848.00	\$35,000.00	76.7%
St. Thomas More - Lake Ariel	\$54,155.00	\$52,000.00	104.1%
St. Vincent de Paul - Milford	\$31,220.00	\$45,000.00	69.4%



# Feast of the Holy Family

## -- December 31



## SUNDAY AND CHRISTMAS DAY MASS OBLIGATIONS

The liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas offer a wonderful opportunity to celebrate God's gift to us — His son, our Savior Jesus Christ. This year Christmas day, a Holy Day of Obligation, falls on a Monday. When this occurs, attendance at Mass for both the regular Sunday obligation and the Christmas obligation is required. Therefore, the faithful must attend two Masses over the course of this Christmas holiday, one to observe the fourth Sunday of Advent and the other to observe the Nativity of Our Lord.

Also note that the Catholic Church celebrates the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God on New Year's Day, January 1. Though the Marian feast day is usually a Holy Day of Obligation, Catholics are not obliged to attend Mass in 2018 since the solemnity falls on a Monday.

**Monsignor Thomas M. Muldowney, V.G.**  
Vicar General of the Diocese

## Prayer Requests for Priests

The Daily Prayer Request for Priests schedule for the next three weeks is as follows:

December 21, Holy Cross Father Anthony Grasso; December 22, Father Joseph Greskiewicz; December 23, Monsignor Vincent Grimalia; December 24, Father Louis Grippe; December 25, Father Eugene Gunning; December 26, Father Gerald Gurka; December 27, St. Peter Priestly Fraternity Father Simon Harkins; December 28, Passionist Father Lee Havey; December 29, Father Alex

Hazzouri; December 30, Father Robert Hochreiter; December 31, Holy Cross Father Richard Hockman; January 1, Pope Francis; January 2, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI; January 3, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; January 4, Father Joseph Horanzy; January 5, Father Thomas Hudak; January 6, Father Ronald Hughes; January 7, Father Andrew Hvozdevic; January 8, Holy Cross Father Daniel Issing; January 9, Father George Jeffrey; January 10, Holy Cross Father Walter Jenkins.



The Diocese of Scranton

## The Catholic Light

Published Every Third Thursday

2018 PUBLICATION DATES

<b>January</b> <b>11</b>	<b>February</b> <b>1 - 22</b>	<b>March</b> <b>15-29</b>	<b>April</b> <b>19</b>
<b>May</b> <b>10</b>	<b>June</b> <b>7 - 28</b>	<b>July</b> <b>19</b>	<b>August</b> <b>9 - 30</b>
<b>September</b> <b>20</b>	<b>October</b> <b>11</b>	<b>November</b> <b>1 - 22</b>	<b>December</b> <b>20</b>

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## The Catholic Light

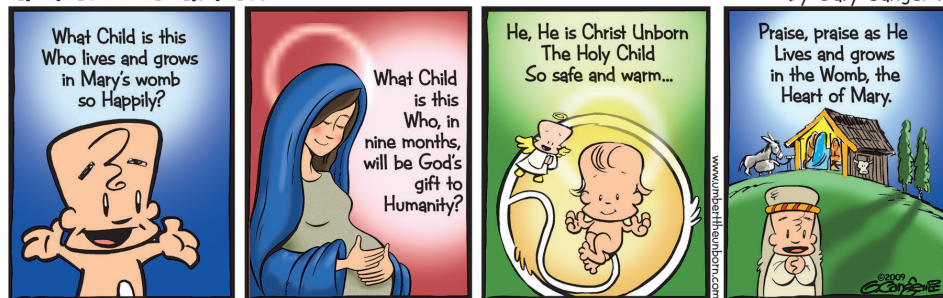
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Diocese of Scranton  
**DIOCESAN**  
ANNUAL APPEAL

Volume 117 Number 17 — Thursday, December 21, 2017

## Umbert the Unborn





# Parish contributions bring Appeal to 88 %

Continued from page 6

"I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have made a gift to the Diocesan Annual Appeal," said Jim Bebla, Diocesan Secretary for Development. "The generosity each year of so many of our parishioners has such a tremendous, positive impact on the lives of our family and friends."

Diocesan ministries supported by gifts to the Annual Appeal include Catholic Social Services; parish social justice programs; Catholic education in our 20 Diocesan Catholic schools and in our parish religious

education programs; care for our current and retired priests and support for seminarians preparing for the priesthood; parish life and pastoral planning efforts; and communication programs such as *The Catholic Light* and Catholic Television.

Parishioners and friends may make an online gift to the Diocesan Annual Appeal by visiting [www.annualappeal.org](http://www.annualappeal.org). Gifts may also be made by calling the Diocesan Development Office at 570-207-2250 or by sending a donation to: Diocesan Annual Appeal, 300 Wyoming Ave., Scranton, PA, 18503-1279.



**Epiphany Parish (Sayre) Knights of Columbus Council 1807 teamed up with the Salvation Army to assist needy families in the valley. As a result, 240 children will be receiving a new winter coat this Christmas. The project is supported by \$4,000 obtained through a request by Father Andrew Hvozdozic, Epiphany pastor, to the 2016 Diocesan Annual Appeal Social Justice Trust Fund. Pictured from left are Knights Gerard Spagnoli, Charles Brown and Bill Hillyard.**



## Appeal funds care for retired priests

Continued from page 6

Bishop Timlin lives at Villa Saint Joseph, Dunmore, a retirement community for Diocesan clergy, currently home to 30 other retired priests. "I'm very grateful to Bishop (J. Carroll) McCormick for establishing the Villa. We live here in relative peace and harmony and we get along very well," he said.

"Retired priests are covering Masses all across the Diocese for pastors who either no longer have assistants, or for times when a pastor is sick or on vacation," said Father Jeffrey Walsh, V.E., Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. "Four of our retired priests are even serving as Sacramental Ministers at parishes led by a Parish Life Coordinator."

"Our retired priests bring a wisdom and joy to their ministry and are a true treasure," Father Walsh continued. "Unlike many dioceses, the Diocese of Scranton provides a residence for retired priests where they share common prayer, meals and fellowship. The Annual Appeal is vital to sustaining the quality of life for many of our retired priests. As the Vicar for Clergy, I have the privilege to work with priests at all different stages of life, and can attest to the vital role played by our 'elder statesmen.' As a Church, we now stand with these men who have stood so long for us!"

Said Bishop Timlin in reflection: "I started the Annual Appeal many years ago ... I go back to the Depression

days, so I know what a penny is. The people of this area are the greatest people you will find anywhere. Thank you for being so generous to the Diocesan Annual Appeal and for taking care of us so well all these years. May God bless all of you."

*"Our oldest priests are so very grateful for all that they have and all that they have done, and so much is being done for them. The Annual Appeal is a very important part of our lives and we want everyone to know how eternally grateful we are."*

**– Bishop Emeritus James C. Timlin**



**Pictured are some of the members of the Annual Appeal Regional Committee for Lycoming and Tioga Counties. From left: Jerry Fischer, St. Boniface Parish, Williamsport; Ken Danielsen, Regional Lay Chair, St. Boniface Parish, Williamsport; Alan Parrotte, Holy Child Parish, Mansfield; Bill Byrne, St. Ann Parish, Williamsport; Father Bert Kozen, Regional Clergy Chair and Pastor, Immaculate Conception Parish, Williamsport, and St. Luke Parish, Jersey Shore; Michael Marceau, St. Ann Parish, Williamsport; Virgil Probasco, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Montoursville; and Tim Gooch, St. Peter's Parish, Wellsboro.**

## Regional chairs discuss Appeal's local impact

Continued from page 6

Father Bert Kozen views the Annual Appeal as an opportunity to be involved in the "larger sense of church," namely, the Diocese of Scranton. "The Appeal reaches out to people across the wide spectrum of needs and allows us to respond to the challenge of not only proclaiming the Good News but also of living it," said the Williamsport pastor.

"In our own area of the Diocese, the Appeal supports Catholic education through Saint John Neumann Regional Academy and the Big Brothers/ Big Sisters Program in Lycoming County," Father Kozen explained. "Future vocations to the priesthood and religious life are also fostered by the local vocation directors and programs fi-

nanced by the Appeal."

As a native of Williamsport and Saint Boniface Parish, Father Kozen said he is enjoying "a bit of a homecoming" since he also has ancestors on his mother's side that came from Bastress and the Church of the Immaculate Conception. In addition to being pastor of Immaculate Conception and Saint Luke's, he is the chaplain for Saint John Neumann Regional Academy and the dean of the Williamsport Deanery, which includes all of the parishes in Lycoming and Tioga counties.

In 2015, he retired from the Pennsylvania Army National Guard after 30 years of service. "The Diocese is doing a good job of keeping me busy," he added enthusiastically.

### Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry Program, 2018

The Office for Parish Life encourages parish leaders to consider **application for the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry for January 2018!**

The *Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry* is a ministry formation program designed to equip and advance the servant leadership capacities of individuals serving their parish in areas such as:

- Pastoral Council,
- Director of Religious Education and Catechist,
- Liturgical Coordinator,
- Parish Staff,
- Volunteer Ministry teams,
- and others!



Through independent online study with the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF), as well as regional skills workshops and opportunities for prayer and reflection, *Diocesan Certificate* candidates enrich their knowledge base, while also learning practical tools for effective parish ministry in their faith communities.

The Office for Parish Life anticipates welcoming new candidates into the *Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry* program in the New Year. **Applications will be accepted until January 15, 2018.**

Prospective candidates are encouraged to contact Kitty Scanlan, Coordinator for Lay Ministry Formation, at 570-207-2213, or by email at [Kitty-Scanlan@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Kitty-Scanlan@dioceseofscranton.org) for application information, materials, and application submissions.



## Ministry of Acolyte for Seminarian

Bishop Bambera was principal celebrant at the Ministry of Acolyte installation for the Class of 2021 at the Pope Saint John XXIII National Seminary in Weston, Mass., on December 6. Among those installed to this ministry, which is one of service at the altar, was Bernard Gardzalla, a seminarian for the Diocese of Scranton. Pictured from left: Reverend Donald J. Williams, Diocesan Director of Vocations and Seminarians; Kevin Miller; Bill Corcoran; Very Reverend Brian R. Kiely, Seminary rector; Bishop Bambera; Reverend Paul E. Miceli, vice rector and dean of men; Bernie Gardzalla; Shawn Simchock and Deacon Ed Casey.



## Shrine rector sees Trinity Dome Mosaic as work of art, work of faith

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In the years since its 1959 dedication, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception has had three main architectural focal points: on the exterior, its Great Dome and Knights Tower over the northeast Washington skyline, and in the interior, its dramatic Christ in Majesty Mosaic behind the main altar.

With the December 8 dedication of its interior Trinity Dome Mosaic completing its original architectural and iconographic plans, the national shrine has a new

dramatic focal point, before it marks the centennial of the laying of its foundation stone in 2020. Bishop Joseph C. Bambera and Monsignor Thomas M. Muldowney, Vicar General, represented the Diocese of Scranton at the dedication Mass.

And Monsignor Walter Rossi, a priest of the Diocese of Scranton who is the national shrine's rector, said in an interview that it is fitting that the Trinity Dome is centrally located in the nation's largest Catholic church, and that the Holy Trinity is central to the new mosaic's iconography.

"The Trinity is central to the mosaic, because the Trinity is central to our Christian life and faith. This is how God has revealed himself to us as Father, Son and Spirit," Monsignor Rossi told the *Catholic Standard*, newspaper of the Washington Archdiocese.

Monsignor Rossi, 56, is in his 20th year at the national shrine. He was named rector in 2005. Before that, he was director of pilgrimages there for eight years.

Opposite the monumental figures of the Trinity in the mosaic is a nearly

three-story high depiction of Mary as the Immaculate Conception, appearing as a beautiful young woman, her arms extended toward a procession of saints and holy people, ultimately pointing to her son Jesus.

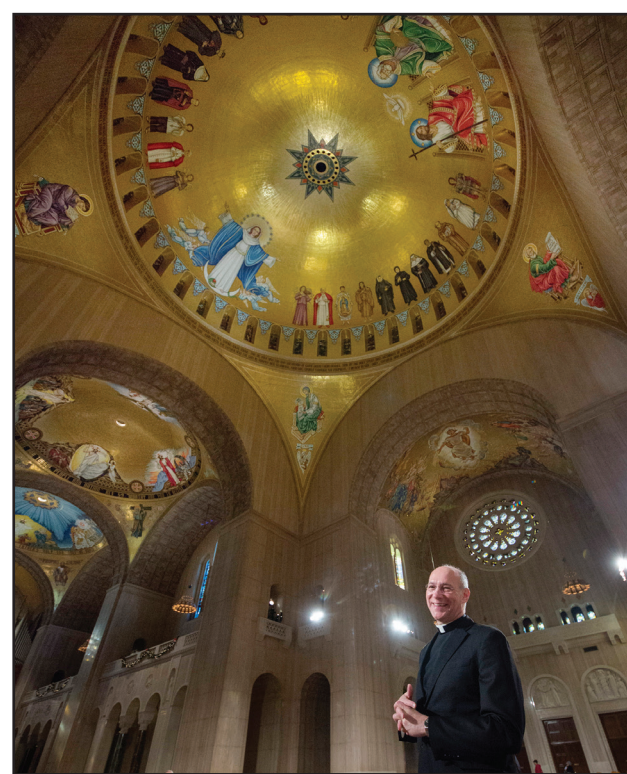
"Mary's arms are outstretched to embrace us, just as the arms of Jesus in Christ in Majesty are outstretched to embrace us," the rector said.

He noted that those two main parts of the Trinity Dome Mosaic are based on 1953 designs by the shrine's iconography committee as plans were underway to complete the Great Upper Church.

"We altered the figures on the east and west sides to include saints of the United States, and saints who had a history with the national shrine, like Mother Teresa and Saint John Paul II, and we also wanted saints that reflect the face of the people who come here," said Monsignor Rossi.

That procession of saints reflects the diversity of the nearly 1 million pilgrims from across the United States and from around the world who come to pray at the basilica each year.

"This without question is the most diverse Catholic church in the United States," the National Shrine's rector said, noting that is why the saints in the mosaic include Saint Juan Diego from Mexico, Saint Lorenzo Ruiz



Monsignor Walter Rossi, a Diocese of Scranton priest who is rector of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, is pictured in a December 1 photo. Monsignor Rossi said it was inspiring to see the work on the new Trinity Dome Mosaic progress, just as it is inspiring to witness the faith of the people who come to pray at the national shrine every day. The dome was dedicated December 8.

from the Philippines, Saint Josephine Bakhita from Sudan in Africa, and Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native American to be recognized as a saint.

Those holy people depicted in the mosaic include Saint John Paul II, who in 1979 became the first pope to visit the National Shrine, where he prayed in the Our Lady of Czestochowa Chapel and addressed a gathering of women religious. Also

pictured is Saint Teresa of Kolkata, who visited and prayed at the basilica many times over the years.

The saint in the mosaic with the most recent connection to the national shrine is Saint Junipero Serra, the noted 18th-century Spanish Franciscan missionary of California who was canonized in 2015 by Pope Francis during a Mass celebrated outside the shrine, the first canonization ceremony held in the U.S.



### BISHOP BAMBERA'S SCHEDULE

**December 21** – Mass for Chancery Staff, St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.

**December 24** – Christmas Vigil Mass, St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton, 4:00 p.m.

Midnight Mass, St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton, Midnight

**December 25** – Mass at the Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center, Scranton, 9:30 a.m.

**January 6** – Mass – Filipino Community, St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton, 6:00 p.m.

**January 8-13** – Bishops' of Pennsylvania Annual Retreat



Diocese of Scranton

# CATHOLIC

SCHOOL SYSTEM

FAITH • ACADEMICS • SERVICE

*The Diocese of Scranton is committed to educating our students in an environment that is academically excellent and facilitates the development of moral judgment and Christian decision-making. We are proud to share the following successes of our students in the classroom and in their service to others. Each day, our schools are fulfilling their mission of preparing today's youth and young adults to become tomorrow's faith-filled leaders.*



Pre-Kindergarten students at **Holy Family Academy in Hazleton** sing and dance in front of a packed audience during the school's annual Christmas pageant.



The Student Council of **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** filled stockings with toys for the patients at Janet Weiss Children's Hospital. Students Paul Stevenson, Jessica Ostrowski, Carsyn Cole, Gisele Falzone and Brielle Scheland gather the variety of donated toys to be placed in the stockings that were made by the students.



The 6th-graders at **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton** recently completed a cross curriculum project combining math and religion. They used what they have learned in math to find the exact measurements of Noah's Ark.



Samantha Rodriguez, Sarah Marino and Anthony DiFonzo, seniors at **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg**, put the finishing touches on the school's Christmas tree.



After celebrating a Liturgy with the students, Monsignor David L. Tressler, Diocesan Secretary for Catholic Education/Superintendent of Schools, stands with the Student Leadership Council of **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre**.





Santa opened a workshop at **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore** so students could purchase special gifts for friends, siblings, parents and other loved ones for Christmas; here some of the students take their care packages back to their classrooms for wrapping.



Students at **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston** recently had an opportunity to shop for Christmas gifts for loved ones at Santa's Secret Workshop sponsored by the Guardian Parent Teacher Organization. Pictured are 4th-graders Sara Williams, Aiden Hannigan and Isabel Williams.



Students at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green** earned a pajama dress-down day by donating a pair of pajamas to Friends of the Poor. Some of the students who took advantage of the opportunity are pictured above.



Students from **Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School in Williamsport** deliver non-perishable food items collected in the LEO Club's Food Drive to Saint Joseph the Worker Parish Food Pantry.



Saint Nicholas visits the students at **Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport**.





Students from **Holy Cross High School in Dunmore** present the 768 pairs of socks they collected to Monsignor Joseph Kelly for the patrons of Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen. Pictured are: Monsignor Kelly, Madelyn Klassner, Caroline Cadden, Jeremy Fick, Justin Walker, Kayla Stelma, Isabel Lopez and Benjamin D. Tolerico, Holy Cross High School principal.



Mary, Joseph and the three shepherds, portrayed by students at **Epiphany School in Sayre**, prepare for the school's annual Christmas Program, which included "Singing the Christmas Story" and "Carols from Around the World."



Students of **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter** assist the Little Sisters of the Poor with a collection to aid their ministry in Scranton. Students collected Kleenex, lotions, body wash, toothpaste, toothbrushes, denture cleaner and mouthwash, and grocery items such as canned fruit and vegetables, soups, unsweetened cereals, coffee and peanut butter. Pictured are: Sister Alice, Michael Oncay, Sebastian Beck, Robert Sedlak, Andrew Phillips, Matthew Prociak, Nicholas Lombardo, Zeb Moses, Liam O'Malley and Sister Marie Therese.

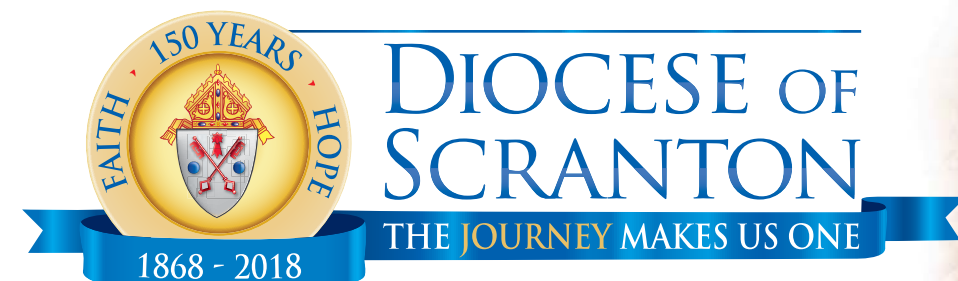


Saint Nicholas (8th-grader Matthew Hassaj) and his Reindeer helper (8th-grader Bryce Betz) visited **La Salle Academy in Jessup** in honor of the saint's Feast Day. Pictured with them are 2nd-graders John Blackledge, Mia Laguzzi, Vinnie Sansone and Isabelle Negvesky.



Eighth-grade students at **All Saints Academy in Scranton** prepare for their annual portrayal of the Living Nativity, proclaiming the birth of Jesus.





Images shown above: Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Luczka and son, early parishioners of Saint Mary Czeszochowa Parish, Polish-speaking congregation, Blossburg, Tioga County. | Choir members of the Saint Joseph's Slovenian Church in Forest City circa 1908. | Opening session of the "Follow Christ" renewal program in March 1980. | Bishop Bambera confirms adults on Pentecost Sunday, 2017.

“The church, not the mine site, was the soul and center of the ethnic community. Only with the formation of a parish did an active community come into existence. In fact, the words ‘settlement’ and ‘parish’ in Polish, Slovak and Lithuanian are identical.”

The Kingdom of Coal  
Donald Miller



Saint Rose of Lima Church, Carbondale (left) and Saint Thomas Aquinas Church, Archbald (below) both in Lackawanna County, are examples of the churches of the mining communities.



## Our Parishes... WHERE FAITH IS LEARNED AND LIVED

Northeastern and north central Pennsylvania was originally considered a missionary outpost of the Diocese of Philadelphia during the 18th and 19th centuries. The Catholic faithful were scattered throughout the area, yet all desired to have access to the sacraments. Missionary bishops from the Diocese of Philadelphia (among whom was the then future Saint John Neumann) and the first residential priests would make the sacraments available three or four times a year to Catholics who lived in those assigned regions.

From seeds planted in 1793 when the first Catholic services were held in a small chapel in French Azilum, the French refugee colony in Bradford County, to the building in 1825 of a church (Saint Augustine) and cemetery in Silver Lake, Susquehanna County, the roots of faith began to grow. Throughout the mid-1800s, parishes would become more formally established as German and Irish immigrants were also settling in the area, prior to the 1868 creation of the Diocese of Scranton. In the following years, Polish, Slovak, Italian, and other ethnic groups would grow in numbers, necessitating formation of “national” parishes based on language needs. In addition to shared heritage, the evolving local industries shaped the lives of Catholics who engaged in trades such as mining, railroading,

farming, lumber and canal building.

After the Diocese of Scranton was formed in 1868 by Pope Pius IX, parish communities began to discern new ways to grow.

The Second Vatican Council called for the Church to re-imagine the concept of “parish.” The focus shifted from *structures* to an emphasis on *members* as “the church,” much like the early faith communities of the region had done. Bishop J. Carroll McCormick, the Sixth Bishop of Scranton (1966-1983), would lead the efforts to implement liturgical reforms and build upon the vision of Vatican II. His labors and those of his successors, Bishop John O'Connor (1983-1984) and Bishop James C. Timlin (1984-2003), would bring to life the many developments which laid the groundwork for the varied aspects of parish life that are so present throughout the Diocese today.

During the tenure of Bishop Joseph C. Martino, the Ninth Bishop of Scranton (2003-2009), with demographics and resources shifted over subsequent years, the process of “*Called to Holiness and Mission*,” beginning in January 2008, called the faithful of the Diocese to examine anew the definition of a “parish” entity and discern in new ways as the People of God how to serve the greater needs through the consolidation of worship sites and development



Parishioners of Saint Jude in Mountain Top participate in the dedication of their new church in 2017.

of wider embracing parish communities.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, the Tenth Bishop of Scranton, would then in his 2011 pastoral letter “*Wounded and Loved, Regathering the Scattered*,” offer a compelling vision for the future of the Church of Scranton when he said: “My greatest hope is that by bringing together strong parish structures and well-formed parishioners, the result will be more growing, life-giving, and vibrant parishes...”

In recent years, newly formed communities have found the pastoral planning process to be a unique avenue for healing, allowing parishioners to identify common hopes and create visions for their spiritual homes. Through a baptismal call to share God-given gifts, clergy, religious, and laity across the 11 counties of the Diocese have partnered

together in order to help direct the Church of Scranton toward realizing its spirit of “co-responsibility,” sharing in the mission and life of God.

One of the fruits of the recent Diocesan-wide pastoral planning has been the strengthening of ministry to Hispanic Catholics, the most recent arrival of new Catholics in the Diocese of Scranton.

Whatever form the local parish community has taken during the long journey of the People of God throughout the Diocese of Scranton, their vibrant faith and vision have been key to moving forward. That same life-giving faith continues to sustain parishes today and will guide us on our journey into the future as one people united by God's love.

## CHRONOLOGY OF ORIGINAL PARISHES (1828-1866)

- 1828 - Saint Augustine (Holy Family), Silver Lake
- 1828 - Saint Joseph (Holy Family), Saint Joseph
- 1828 - Saint Francis Xavier, Friendsville: resident pastor in 1864
- 1832 - Saint Rose of Lima, Carbondale
- 1845 - Saint John, Honesdale
- 1845-1846 - Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Wilkes-Barre
- 1847 - Lanesboro original church (in 1853 was moved to Susquehanna as Saint John Nepomucene with a resident Pastor)
- 1848 - Saints Peter and Paul, Towanda
- 1852 - Saint Basil, Dushore
- 1853 - Saint Vincent de Paul, Scranton (today the Cathedral of Saint Peter)
- 1853 - Saint Mary, Pittston Junction (after five years it was reverted to a mission)
- 1853 - Saint Andrew, Blossburg
- 1853 - Saint Mary Magdalene, Honesdale
- 1854 - Saint Juliana, Rock Lake
- 1854 - Saint John the Evangelist, Pittston
- 1855 - Saint Philomena (BVM Queen of Peace), Hawley
- 1856 - Saint Mary of Mount Carmel, Dunmore
- 1858 - Saint Thomas Aquinas, Archbald
- 1862 - Immaculate Conception, Eckley (1902 moved, and in 1930, Saint Ann, Freeland)
- 1864 - Saint Francis Xavier, Friendsville
- 1864 - Saint John Nepomucene, Susquehanna
- 1865 - Annunciation, Williamsport
- 1866 - Saint Gabriel, Hazleton

List compiled by the late Monsignor John P. Gallagher, Ph.D., former Diocesan Historian based on the assignment of the first pastor.

### CLARIFICATION:

In the previous issue of *The Catholic Light* the reference to the first presence of the Catholic faith in the Diocese was incorrectly stated. The first presence of the Catholic faith was in 1793 at the French refugee colony, Azilum, just south of Towanda in Bradford County. The first parish in the Diocese was Saint Augustine at Silver Lake in Susquehanna County.



1852

Susquehanna County - Father John O'Reilly founds St. Joseph's College for men.

1854

Bradford/Sullivan County - Saints Philip and James Church is blessed by Bishop Neumann, which later becomes the official Saint John Neumann Shrine in the Diocese of Scranton and Towanda.



1858

Susquehanna County - The Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters (I.H.M.) are the first order of women religious to arrive in the area.



1865

Scranton - Cornerstone laid by Philadelphia Bishop James F. Wood for what later becomes the Cathedral of Saint Peter.



2017

Mountain Top - Saint Jude's, the newest Catholic parish, was dedicated in September.



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January 19



## How to Get to the March for Life Buses Scheduled for 45th Anniversary Event in Washington

SCRANTON — Pro-life advocates throughout the Diocese of Scranton will join tens of thousands of their counterparts from across the nation for the 45th annual March for Life on Friday, Jan. 19, in Washington, D.C.

Regional chapters of the Pennsylvanians for Human Life (PHL) will offer round-trip bus transportation. Bus reservations are requested as soon as possible.

In Washington, participants will join together with other activists in a peaceful march to protest the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, which legalized abortion-on-demand in America, resulting in the deaths of nearly 60 million unborn children.

This year the March for Life will convene with the traditional midday rally on the National Mall, between Madison Drive and Jefferson Drive, followed by the march that will proceed down Constitution Avenue and head toward the U.S. Capitol, ending outside the Supreme Court of the United States.

"Love Saves Lives" is the theme for the 2018 march, which has been held every January since 1974. Following the March for Life, participants may visit their local congressional delegations.

The PHL will sponsor buses leaving from communities throughout the Scranton Diocese. Departure times and costs vary. Details on bus schedules and costs throughout the region can be obtained from the following contacts:

### HONESDALE

Contact Saint John the Evangelist Parish, (570) 253-4561.

### MONROE COUNTY (POCONOS)

Contact Joan Berdela, (570) 421-8636.

### SCRANTON

Bus departs Scranton from the Keyser Oak Shopping Center at 6:45 a.m. and returns at approximately 11:45 p.m. Cost: \$40 for adults; \$20 for students. Reservations may be made by contacting Theresa Baux at (570) 687-5329, or the Scranton PHL Pro-Life Center office, located at 400 Wyoming Ave., at (570) 343-5099.

### WILLIAMSPORT

Contact Evelyn Rall, (570) 398-0722.

### WYOMING VALLEY

Contact Chris Calore, (570) 824-5621. (Bus will be departing from the Swoyersville area.)



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## Respect Life Mass January 14 in Nanticoke

The Knights of Columbus of Wyoming Valley will sponsor their annual Respect Life Mass next month to mark the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion in America.

The Respect Life Mass will be offered on Sunday, Jan. 14, at the 11 a.m. liturgy of Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish at Holy Trinity Church, 520 South Hanover St., Nanticoke.

During the Eucharistic celebration, area Knights and pro-life representatives will offer prayer intentions for a greater respect for all human life and an end to abortion.

Father James Nash, host pastor, welcomes all faithful to attend and join in prayerful support of all life, from conception to natural death, most especially the unborn, those with disabilities, and the ill, aged and infirm.





### *Third Eagle Scout for Family from Saint Vincent Parish in Milford*

Saint Vincent de Paul Parish in Milford feels very blessed to have the Michael and Nicole Riccio family as parishioners. The couple's youngest son, Robert, recently became the third Riccio son to complete his Eagle Scout project at Saint Vincent's in order to obtain the highest rank with the Boy Scouts of America. Robert now joins older brothers Nick and Matthew as an Eagle Scout, and younger sister Carmela is a Cadette in the Girl Scouts. At age 14, Robert became the youngest family member to soar to the coveted rank of Eagle — and his rural parish family played a big part in it. Robert's Eagle Scout project entailed the construction of a Stations of the Cross outdoor prayer garden on the grounds of Saint Vincent de Paul Church, which has been well received by fellow parishioners as a long-awaited and peaceful sanctuary for private prayer and reflection. In addition to their current pastor, Father John Boyle, the Riccio family also extends their gratitude to Father Paul Mullen and Father Rich Cirba for their support, as well as the members of Saint Vincent's for their generous donations of resources, help and the tools needed to complete the project. A view of Robert's Stations of the Cross project on the parish church grounds is shown, along with the newest Riccio family Eagle Scout with his parents, Michael and Nicole.

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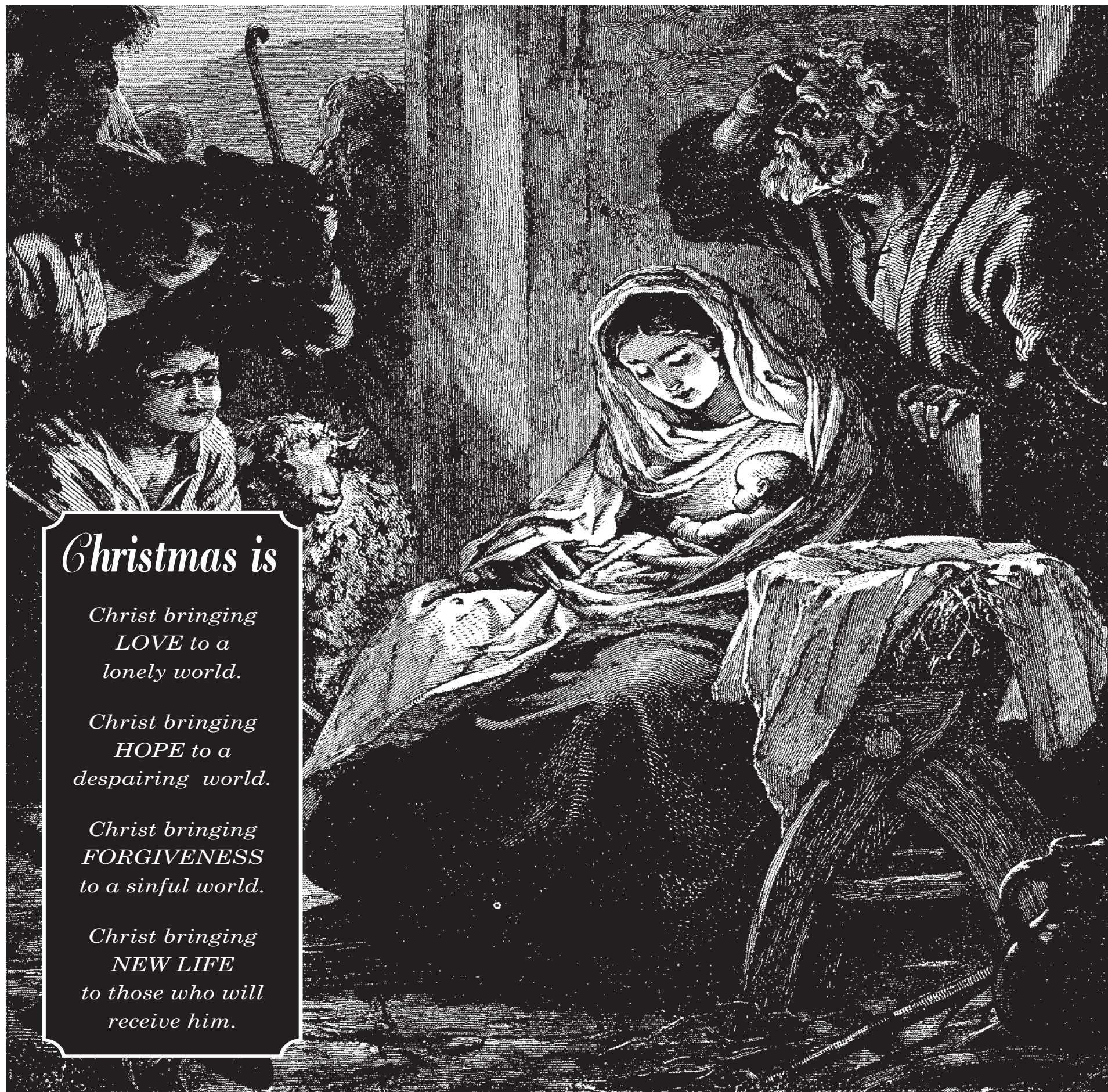
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*Christ bringing  
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*Christ bringing  
HOPE to a  
despairing world.*

*Christ bringing  
FORGIVENESS  
to a sinful world.*

*Christ bringing  
NEW LIFE  
to those who will  
receive him.*

May you know the power, wonder, strength, and joy of God's Love first made visible in a tiny child cradled in His mother's arms.



# Merry Christmas!

*May the peace and hope of Christ's birth be with you now and in the days ahead...*

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Christmas**




*May you have  
the gift of Faith,  
the blessing of Hope,  
and the peace of His Love  
at Christmas and always*





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## Mark Your Calendar — Around the Diocese

### Spiritual Offerings

**Friday Pro-Life Rosary Vigil** — DEC. 22, sponsored by the Catholics Defending Life Prayer & Awareness Team; group resumes weekly gatherings every Friday (except on First Fridays) from 1 to 1:30 p.m. at the Pro-Life Monument located next to St. Peter's Cathedral in Scranton (300 block of Wyoming Ave.). Recitation of the Rosary offered, along with pro-life meditations, Divine Mercy Chaplet and other prayer devotions for the respect and dignity of all human life from conception to natural death. Pro-life signs are welcome.

**Friday Holy Hour for Vocations** — DEC. 22, hosted by the Little Sisters of the Poor at Holy Family Residence, 2500 Adams Ave., Scranton; weekly devotion held every Friday at 4:30 p.m. in the Residence chapel. Holy Hour includes recitation of the Rosary, evening prayer (vespers) and benediction. All faithful are welcome.

**Weekly Bible Study** — DEC. 22, hosted by St. Lawrence Parish in Great Bend; held every Friday at 7 p.m. in the Trinity Center, adjacent to St. Lawrence Church. All are welcome.

**Spiritual Support Group: Scranton Mental Health Ministry** — DEC. 23 & JAN. 13, hosted by the Cathedral of St. Peter in Scranton; providing a safe, supportive space for individuals who are experiencing mental illness. Group meets at 10 a.m. on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month in the Bishops Hall at the Cathedral Rectory, 315 Wyoming Ave. Meetings will be approximately 90 minutes; refreshments provided. Participating Scranton parishes include St. Peter's; Mary, Mother of God; and Immaculate Conception. For more information, contact Deacon Ed Shoener (Cathedral), (570-344-7231); Deacon Jan Mroz (Mary, Mother of God), (570-342-4881); or Deacon Pat McDonald (Immaculate Conception), (570-961-5211).

**Weekly Divine Mercy Devotion** — DEC. 27, hosted by St. Lawrence Parish in Great Bend; Hour of Mercy devotion held every Wednesday at 3 p.m. in St. Lawrence Church. All faithful are welcome.

**Padre Pio Prayer Ministry** — JAN. 3, hosted by St. Faustina Kowalska Parish in Nanticoke; begins with celebration of Mass at 6 p.m. in the parish worship site

of Holy Trinity Church, 520 South Hanover St., Nanticoke, followed by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, intercessory prayers to St. Padre Pio, recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and benediction. All faithful are welcome.

**Scranton Mental Health Ministry: Spiritual Support Group for Family & Friends** — JAN. 4, hosted by the Cathedral of St. Peter in Scranton; providing a safe, supportive space for parents, family members and friends of individuals who are experiencing mental illness. Group meets at 6 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month in the Bishops Hall at the Cathedral Rectory, 315 Wyoming Ave. Meetings will be approximately 90 minutes; refreshments provided. Participating Scranton parishes include St. Peter's; Mary, Mother of God; and Immaculate Conception. For more information, contact Deacon Ed Shoener (Cathedral), (570-344-7231); Deacon Jan Mroz (Mary, Mother of God), (570-342-4881); or Deacon Pat McDonald (Immaculate Conception), (570-961-5211).

**Monthly Monday Night Worship** — JAN. 8, hosted by St. Faustina Kowalska Parish in Nanticoke; monthly devotion begins at 7 p.m. at the parish worship site of Holy Trinity Church, 520 South Hanover St., Nanticoke. All faithful are welcome to join together for a Holy Hour of praise and worship with word and music.

### 'Spiritual Adoption' Program for Unborn Seeks Daily Prayers

The Ladies of Charity of the Diocese of Scranton are inviting all women to join the apostolate in praying for unborn babies who are in danger of abortion.

The "Spiritual Adoption" program enables faithful to make a personal commitment to pray each day for one unborn child.

A brief pro-life prayer is offered daily that the endangered baby in the womb will be carried to term and experience the fullness of life, as intended by God.

For more information, contact Rita Ferrance, 573 Orchard St., Askam, PA 18706. Phone: (570-706-6867).

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# Mark Your Calendar — Around the Diocese

## Spiritual Offerings

**Evening of Marian Devotion** — JAN. 13, hosted by the Diocesan Legion of Mary in response to the Blessed Mother's request at Fatima for prayers for world peace; devotion begins at 6 p.m. at St. Paul Church, 1510 Penn Ave., Scranton. Prayer service will include recitation of the Rosary, Fatima prayers and newly composed Scriptural Mysteries and Hymns led by Ernie Pappa. All are invited to attend and

pray for peace in America and throughout the world.

**Monthly Meeting of Lay Carmelites** — JAN. 13, hosted by Our Lady of the Mountains Lay Carmelite Chapter; meetings held on the third Saturday of each month at Little Flower Manor, 200 S. Meade St., Wilkes-Barre. For more information, contact Rose Bordi at (570-445-5457).

**Sunday Charismatic Mass & Healing Service** — JAN. 14, sponsored by Catholic Charismatic prayer groups in the Scranton Diocese; hosted by Queen of the Apostles Parish at St. Mary Church in Avoca. Rosary recitation begins at 6:30 p.m., followed by celebration of Mass at 7 p.m. and prayers for healing. Celebrant: Father August Ricciardi. Gathering concludes with light refreshments and fellowship.

## Catholic Happenings

**Living Nativity Play 2017: "The Gold Wrapping Paper"** — DEC. 24, original live presentation inspired by the true story of a family's tragedy at Christmas during the Great Depression; hosted at St. John the Baptist Church, 126 Nesbitt St., Larksville. Play begins at 4 p.m., followed by celebration of the Christmas Eve Vigil Mass in St. John Church. Christmas production is written and directed by Father Gerald Gurka, host pastor. For more information, call the parish office at (570-779-9620).

**Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary Bingo** — JAN. 3 & 17, sponsored by Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary Parish, Jermyn; games held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month in the parish center, 624 Madison Ave., Jermyn. Doors open at 5 p.m.; early-bird games start 6 p.m. (regular games, 6:30). Event includes homemade foods and desserts; specialty games, refreshments, door prizes and progressive jackpot. Free admission; for more information, call (570-876-1061).

**Weekly Bingo** — JAN. 8, hosted by Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Dickson City; bingo games held every Monday evening, with doors opening at 4:30 p.m. Early bird games begin at 6:40 p.m.; regular games start at 7 p.m. Admission fee includes 20 games; progressive jackpot each week. Homemade food sold before the bingo; homemade pizza available during the games and for take-out. Return coupon for new players; door prizes awarded each week. Van shuttle service provided free of charge from Carbondale and Scranton. For more information, call (570-489-2091).

**Misericordia Adult Learner Open House** — JAN. 9, hosted by the Center for Adult and Continuing Education at Misericordia University, Dallas, for adult learners who are interested in continuing their education; event held from 4 to 7 p.m. in the Huntzinger and Alden Trust Rooms of Sandy and Marlene Insalaco Hall at Misericordia. Open to adults interested in obtaining more information about the university's

undergraduate and graduate programs and for prospective students considering entering or returning to college. Registration online at

*Continued on Page 26*



## Diocese of Scranton

### Assistant Director of Finance

The Assistant Director of Finance reports to the Diocesan Secretary for Financial Services and will assist in overseeing all fiscal concerns of the Diocese and insuring the integrity of all financial reporting. The Assistant Director will perform duties in the areas of general accounting, budgeting, cash management, development of financial statements and reports, and investments. The successful candidate will also be required to conduct internal control reviews for parishes, schools and other Diocesan institutions. Interested individuals are encouraged to review the comprehensive job description for this position which is posted on the Diocesan website at [www.dioceseofscranton.org](http://www.dioceseofscranton.org). Applicants are asked to submit a cover letter with salary history and a complete resume with a minimum of three (3) references by January 5, 2018, to:

**James Burke**  
**Diocesan Secretary for Human Resources**  
 300 Wyoming Ave. Scranton Pa. 18503  
 Or email [Jim-Burke@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Jim-Burke@dioceseofscranton.org)

EOE

### Who makes house calls?

As of October 2015, I will now meet clients either at their home, or at a location they choose and no longer require clients to meet at my office. I have decided that I would change the way I meet with people so it will be as easy and as convenient as possible for the client.

Based on my practice, which consists of estate planning and administration along with elder law, I find that clients are more comfortable discussing such matters in familiar surroundings. While I know this may seem unconventional to some, I believe I will be able to serve clients much better in this fashion. If anyone is uncomfortable with home visits, I have a few locations where I can meet in an office setting. I look forward to meeting with my existing clients and especially meeting new clients that are looking for any assistance in estate or elder law matters.



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- Wills • Trusts Guardianships



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Papal Intention for January 2018

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Mission Message

**Go  
Forth**

**By Father Brian J.T. Clarke**  
**Diocesan Director,**  
**Pontifical Mission Societies**



*“O dawn of the east, splendor of light eternal, and sun of justice:  
come, and illumine those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.”*

This 21st day of December finds us in the midst of our more immediate preparation for Christmas. As we joyfully await this holy day, the Church provides for us the ancient prayers of the *O Antiphons*, the antiphon verses of the *Magnificat* prayed during Vespers during the last seven days of Advent. These seven antiphons beautifully capture with singular poignancy the longing for our Lord’s coming and the hope that stirred the hearts of many for so long and continues to stir today.

For those who may not have the opportunity and privilege to pray the Liturgy of the Hours of the Church and reflect on these prayers at Vespers, you know these verses well. They are the basis of the recognizable and be-

loved Advent hymn, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*.

This hymn, sung only a few weeks out of the year, presents the hopes and desires of a people awaiting the coming of the Messiah. Each stanza rises to its high point with the call to exult: “Rejoice! Rejoice! O Israel, to thee shall come Emmanuel!” To thee shall come Emmanuel; to thee shall come “God with us!” The entire world, no matter the time or place in which one has lived, desires just that — an assurance that God is with us. He is with us, indeed!

The verse we pray today focuses our hearts and minds on the “dawn of the east...[the] splendor of light eternal.” As days shorten and darkness descends upon us earlier than most of us welcome, we embrace the light, we long for it. That said, we know well that the light most of us long for is not that which comes from the turn of a dial or the flip of a switch.

The eternal light, Jesus Christ, is the Light which illumines that which wattage and LEDs cannot. It’s a Light that penetrates deep within the heart and soul of the believer and nonbeliever alike; it’s the Light that brings hope, brilliance, and resolve to “those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.”

I hope we never overlook that the miracle of the Nativity of Christ two thousand years ago is a present reality as well. We do not — nor should we — only look to the “first” Christmas, but recognize that Jesus is made flesh still as He rends the heavens and comes to us even now. He comes in the seven sacraments and He comes to us in a myriad of other ways He so chooses to give light to the darkness and to call you and me to help make the darkness light for others.

Together, we do what we can in prayer and in sacrifice to bring others to the Light, those who live in seemingly endless shadows: the Rohingya refugees, the Yemeni people suffering persecution and disease, Syria’s besieged communities, the ever-hopeful, yet ever-burdened Haitians, and those who suffer near to us following natural disasters in Puerto Rico, the Gulf Coast, and the devastating fires in Southern California.

We name suffering the worldwide and we also name and lift up to God our personal suffering as well. In all, we pray for Light and we pray we will share that Light — “let your light shine before others” (Mt. 5:16). Join me in praying the hopeful and stirring verse of today’s *O Antiphon*, praying that Emmanuel — born in our hearts anew each day — will disperse the gloomy clouds of darkness:

*O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer,  
Our spirits by Thine advent here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death’s dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! O Israel, to thee shall come Emmanuel!*

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# Advent Wreath-Making in Williamsport



Saint Joseph the Worker Parish in Williamsport celebrated the First Sunday of Advent by inviting all religious education students and their families to gather in the parish center to make Advent wreaths for their homes this year. The children enjoyed personalizing their wreaths with unique decorations and creating other crafts, including an Advent Chain, in which the youngsters count down the days to Christmas by removing a chain daily and performing a corresponding act of kindness or prayer for that day. The festive gathering concluded with Father Brian Van Fossen, pastor of Saint Joseph the Worker, blessing all the wreath creations.

## Blue Army Reparation Vigil



The next monthly First Friday Reparation Vigil, dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary and sponsored by the Blue Army, will be held **January 5** at Saint Joseph's Oblate Seminary, 1880 Highway 315, Laffin (Pittston). Devotions begin Friday evening at 8 p.m. with recitation of the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary, during which time confessions are heard. Mass of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is celebrated at 8:55 p.m., followed by benediction, litany and consecration to the Sacred Heart. The vigil continues with the crowning of the Blue Army Pilgrim Virgin Statue, the Blue Army Pledge, Fatima prayers and Marian hymns, followed by litany and consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The vigil concludes with scapular enrollment at 10:15 p.m.

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# Chapel of Four Chaplains Honors Catholic Faithful

WHITE HAVEN — Saint Patrick Parish served as the site for the recent induction ceremony of The Chapel of the Four Chaplains honoring numerous lay faithful from Catholic parishes in the Wilkes-Barre, Hazleton and White Haven areas.

The induction was hosted by the Saint Patrick's Knights of Columbus Council, White Haven, and the local branch of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Serving as presenters for the Four Chaplains awards bestowed

during the ceremony were James Curto, former master of the PA Central District of the Knights of Columbus, and K of C member and AOH officer Col. Frank Kennelly Jr.

They were assisted by Patrick King and Joseph Kovack, who currently serves as Deputy Grand Knight of the Saint Patrick's Council.

The Chapel of the Four Chaplains was dedicated at Temple University in Philadelphia in 1947 by President Harry Truman to memorialize the courageous actions of four U.S. Army chaplains who sacrificed their lives by giving up their lifejackets to save others when their troopship was torpedoed and sunk during World War II.

Today, the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation recognizes and encourages cooperation, brotherhood and selfless service.

Among the area recipients of the prestigious awards are the following:

Humanitarian Award — Frank Balon, Joan Yankanich, Terence Yonkes, Linda Brant, Brady Brant and Rose Mason.

Life Saving Award — Sarah Lindsey and Richard Lindsey.

Legion of Honor Award — Melissa Curto, William Walsh, Melinda Hayes, Albert Imperiale, Edward Rossi, Jason Volciak, Lee Ann Gera, Lisa Berger, Tammy Gilly, Betty Buchholz, James Monahan, Donte Fanelli, Dr. Renne Monahan, Tom Kashatus, Bruce Dodson, Shannon Garvey, Burton Schafer, Daniel Jones, Lt. Col. Mark Blasko, Esq., and Cal Herring.

Also, Wilson Malloy, Chief Anthony Harris, Christopher Rosenland, Cheryl Graff, James Haber, Phillip Roll, Caitlyn Sitoski, Amanda Sperduto, Janet Brown, Corrine Stone, Sgt. Jody Radziewics, Mary Lloyd, Daniel Dimmit, John Sullivan, Ray Clymer, Regina Drasher and Tom Pagno.

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- 9/11 MEMORIAL MUSEUM & WESTFIELD SHOPPING, NYC APRIL 21, 2018
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The University of Scranton's 9th annual Community Christmas Day Breakfast is planned for Monday, Dec. 25, from 8 to 10:30 a.m. in the third-floor Fresh Food Company of the DeNaples Center on campus.

As a gift to the community for the holiday season, the breakfast is offered free of charge to the elderly or those who are alone or in need. The breakfast will include eggs, sausage, pancakes, Danishes, juice and other foods.

Reservations are not needed to attend. Parking is available for the breakfast in the University's parking pavilion on Mulberry Street.

For additional information, call (570-941-7401).



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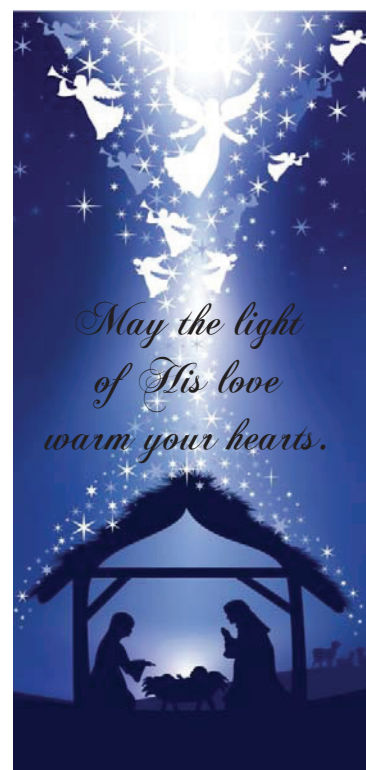


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# Catholic Happenings

*Continued from Page 21*

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**“Soup for the Souls” Soup Sale** — **JAN. 11**, sponsored by the Soup for the Souls Committee at Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, 420 Main Road, Buttonwood section of Hanover Township; sale held from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the church hall (take-out orders

only). Cost: \$8 per quart. Featured soup of the month: clam chowder. Pre-orders requested. For more information or to place orders, call (570-825-6370).

**Free Community Luncheon** — **JAN. 13**, sponsored by Holy Rosary Parish in Hazleton; lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 12 noon in the parish hall at 240 S. Poplar St., Hazleton. Meal is offered to the community free of charge.

**Mardi Gras Celebration** — **FEB. 3**, hosted by Prince of Peace

Parish in Old Forge; held in the Arcaro & Genell Banquet Room, Main St., Old Forge, beginning at 6 p.m. Includes hors d'oeuvres and full-course dinner with choice of four entrees: roast beef, turkey with stuffing, baked haddock Italian-style, or chicken francaise; beverages include beer, wine and soft drinks. Cost: \$30 per person (adults only). Entertainment provided by Frankie Gervasi of The Poets. Seating limited to 125; reservations close Jan. 25. For more information and reservations, call Francis at (570-451-0112).

## Notice Regarding Reporting Sexual Abuse of a Minor

It is the policy of the Diocese of Scranton to report any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor to law enforcement. If you are a victim of sexual abuse committed by a priest, deacon, religious or lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton, you are encouraged to immediately report the matter to law enforcement. If any priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton has cause or reason to suspect that a minor has been subjected to any form of abuse, including child sexual abuse, the matter will be reported to law enforcement.

It is also the policy of the Diocese to adhere to all civil and state regulations. To this end, the Diocese is equally committed to adhering to the norms of the *Code of Canon Law* and to upholding the tenets of the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, which includes supporting victims of sexual abuse in their pursuit of emotional and spiritual well-being. As such, information regarding an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor should also be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator, Mary Beth Pacuska at (570-862-7551) or to Diocesan officials, including the Vicar General, Monsignor Thomas M. Muldowney, V.G., at (570-207-2269).

## Aviso al Respetto de Reportar el Abuso Sexual de Un Menor de Edad

Es la norma de la Diócesis de Scranton reportar cualquier alegación de abuso sexual de un menor de edad a las autoridades. Si usted es una víctima de abuso sexual cometido por un sacerdote, diácono, religioso o empleado laico, o voluntario de la Diócesis de Scranton, usted está obligado a reportar el asunto inmediatamente a las autoridades de la ley.

Si algún sacerdote, diácono, religioso, empleado laico o voluntario de la Diócesis de Scranton tiene sospecha de que un menor de edad ha sido sujeto a cualquier forma de abuso, incluyendo abuso sexual de menor de edad, el asunto será reportado a las autoridades de la ley.

Es la norma de la Diócesis defender todas las regulaciones civiles y del estado. Al fin de que la Diócesis esté comprometida igualmente a defender las normas del Código de Derecho Canónico y defender los principios de la Carta Para la Protección de Niños y Jóvenes (Conferencia de los Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos), lo cual incluye apoyar a las víctimas de abuso sexual en pos del bienestar emocional y espiritual.

Por eso, información respecto a una alegación del asunto sexual de un menor de edad, debe ser reportada a la Coordinadora Diocesana de Asistencia para Las Víctimas, Mary Beth Pacuska, a (570-862-7551) o a los oficiales diocesanos incluyendo El Vicario General, Monseñor Thomas M. Muldowney, a (570-207-2269).

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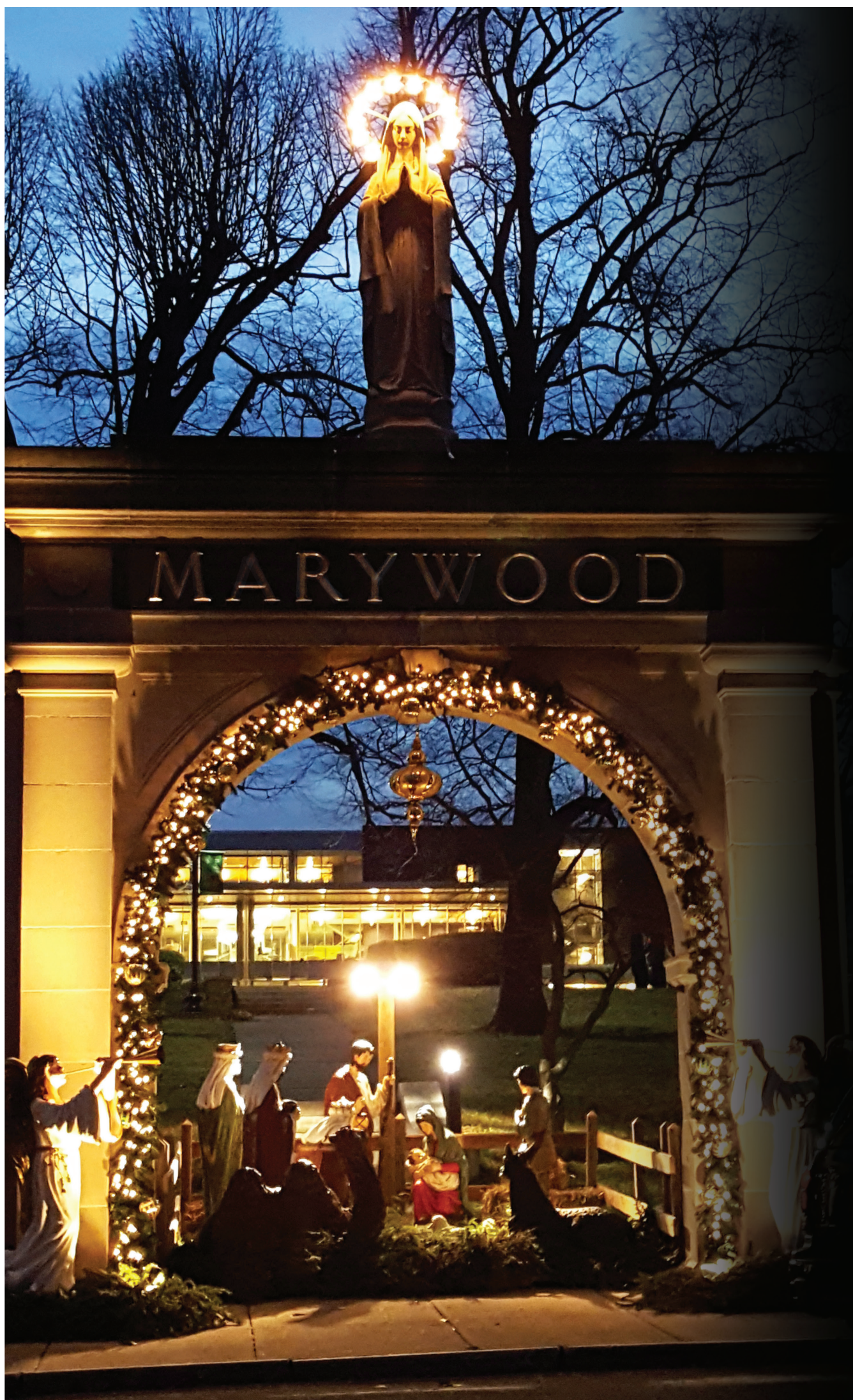
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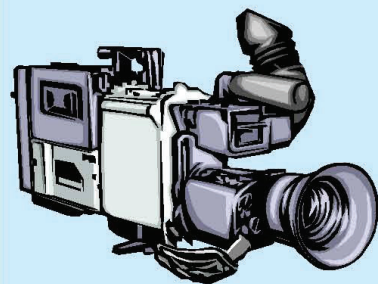
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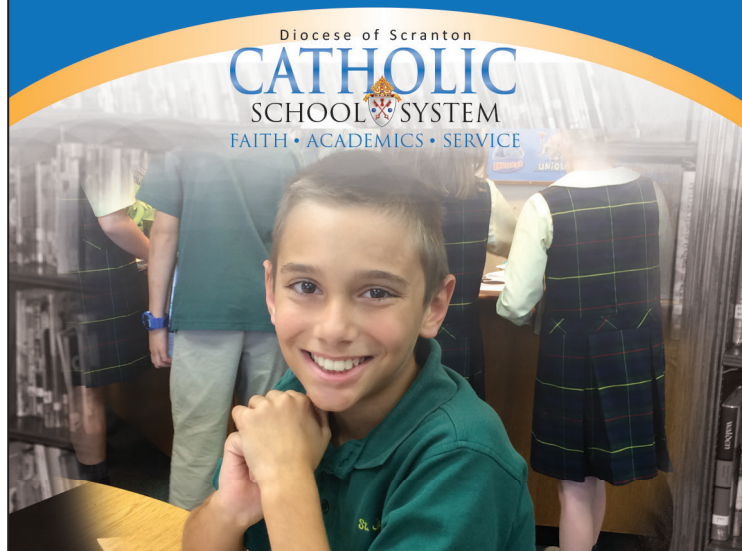
The Diocese of Scranton’s website includes video of certain programs broadcast by CTV: Catholic Television. The programs include the Daily Mass from St. Peter’s Cathedral, the monthly news program “Our Faith, Our Diocese” and other special programs. To watch the videos, go to [www.dioceseofscranton.org](http://www.dioceseofscranton.org). Click on “News & Events” tab and then click on Catholic Television.

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