

Diocese of Scranton News Briefing



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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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Ash Wednesday Retreat with Father Joseph Sica

The Office for Parish Life will offer a Retreat on Ash Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at the Diocesan Pastoral Center, 330 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton. The day will begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at 2:30 p.m. The faithful of the Diocese are invited to share in this day of prayer.

Father Joseph F. Sica, a priest of the Diocese of Scranton for more than 36 years currently serving as Senior Priest at Immaculate Conception Parish in Scranton, will lead the retreat. He is the author of several books including *Embracing Change: 10 Ways to Grow Spiritually* and *Forgiveness: One Step at a Time*. He has also published booklets of daily prayer and reflection for Advent and Lent. Father Sica is a well-known speaker and retreat leader.

The Ash Wednesday Retreat will be planned around the theme:

Unhappy with Life? Change It!

It takes a combination of confidence and courage to step away from what isn't adding to your life or isn't working and change it! Do it now! Ignore the critics who will tell you, "You'll never change - you were always this way."

Father Sica will offer the retreat in three parts with time for reflection and personal prayer. The day will include the 12:10 p.m. Mass celebrated at Saint Peter's Cathedral with distribution of ashes. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available prior to Mass and lunch will be served after Mass.

The fee is \$30, which includes lunch. To register, call Mary Ann Malone at the Office for Parish Life, 570-207-2213 or e-mail Mary-Anne-Malone@dioceseofscranton.org.

Regulations for Lent 2019

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, March 6, 2019 marks the beginning of Lent. The following fast and abstinence regulations are observed:

- **Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, April 19, 2019, 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.

As faithful followers of Jesus, we are traditionally encouraged to honor the sacred season of Lent by embracing the three pillars of Lenten observance:

- **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.

One of the greatest opportunities given by the Church to assist us in our response to the Lord's invitation to conversion is found in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Once again, the Diocese of Scranton is participating in "*The Light Is On for You.*" Beginning on the first Monday of Lent, March 11, and continuing through Monday of the last full week of Lent, April 8, confessions will be heard in every parish from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

For more information, please visit the Diocesan website at: www.dioceseofscranton.org and go to the Office for Parish Life page.

Monsignor Thomas M. Muldowney
Vicar General of the Diocese



March XLT

*Eucharistic Adoration - Speaker - Praise & Worship Music - Reconciliation
- Social*

Monday, March 11, 6:30 PM

Saint Nicholas Parish, 226 S Washington Street, Wilkes-Barre

Monday, March 25, 6:30 PM

Saint Boniface Parish, 326 Washington Blvd., Williamsport

For more information, visit vocations.dioceseofscranton.org or call 570-780-2996.

Developmental & Intellectual Disabilities Awareness Sunday

The Diocese of Scranton is celebrating Developmental & Intellectual Disabilities Awareness Sunday with a Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Sunday, February 24, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will be the principal celebrant and homilist. The Mass will be sign-language interpreted for the hearing impaired.

This liturgy prayerfully celebrates the many gifts those with developmental or intellectual disabilities bring to the Church and the community.

Partners in this celebration include Saint Joseph's Center in Scranton, the Diocesan SPRED community (Special Religious Education), the ARC of NEPA, the Catholic Deaf Community of the Diocese of Scranton and the Order of the Alhamra.

All are welcome.

CTV: Catholic Television will also broadcast the Mass.

Office for Parish Life

The Light Is On For You

The Church encourages us to make confession a regular part of our spiritual life, especially during the holy season of Lent, as we reflect on our baptism and repentance. Again this year, parishes are participating in a Lenten initiative called *The Light Is On For You*. Every Monday evening during Lent, March 11 and continuing through Monday of the last full week of Lent, April 8, confessions will be heard in every parish from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. so that Catholics can come to or return to this incredible source of God's grace, mercy and healing.

Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry Accepting Applications

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

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:

- Parish Pastoral Councils,
- Directors of Religious Education and Catechists,
- Liturgical Coordinators,
- 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.

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 for application information, materials, and application submissions.

Disability Ministries

In the coming months, the Diocese of Scranton will be hosting Open House opportunities for persons with disabilities and their families. We want to learn more about your experiences and see how we can develop ministries to welcome all members of our parish communities.

If your parish is interested in hosting one of these sessions, or would like to offer any suggestions on the development of these ministries here in the Diocese of Scranton, please contact Katy Windels at Katy-Windels@dioceseofscranton.org.

Senior Isolation Workshop

The Scranton Area Ministerium will host a Senior Isolation Workshop at the Diocesan Pastoral Center on Saturday, March 30, from 10 AM to 1 PM. The morning will begin with a presentation from Prof. Jim Siberski of Misericordia University addressing the challenge of senior isolation in our communities. Lunch will be provided with an opportunity for fellowship and discussion of pastoral solutions.

We encourage any community member to attend this event. All pastors, youth ministers, and advocates of any faith tradition who are interested in combatting this serious challenge in our communities are welcome.

Postcard Campaign

The Diocese of Scranton is hosting a postcard campaign for to represent out Pro-Life values! Please consider signing a postcard at your parish to support the protection of life from conception until natural death. Parishes should return the postcards to the Office for Parish Life by the end of the month so that the postcards will be delivered to our national legislators during the month of February. Especially during this important month for Respect Life, we thank you for your personal advocacy efforts on these issues!

Couples Invited To Participate In Wedding Anniversary Celebration

On June 30, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will celebrate the Wedding Anniversary Mass at 2:30 p.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, for couples celebrating their 25th or 50th year of marriage in 2019. This is an occasion to recognize the role married couples play in the Church's mission to bring God's faithful love into the world. Couples will have the opportunity to renew their commitment to marriage and to receive a blessing on their marriage from the Bishop. A reception will follow in the Diocesan Pastoral Center, where anniversary couples will be able to have their picture taken with the Bishop. Eligible couples should give their names and an April mailing address to their parish office before April 2. Parish lists are due to the Office for Parish Life by April 9.

***Have you attended a Marriage Encounter Weekend?
Would you like to gather with other WWME alumni in a
small group sharing community?
Would you like to extend an invitation for others to join a
current WWME Share Group?***

There is a new WWME Share Group being hosted by John and Joanie Walsh of St. Lucy's Parish. If your spouse and you have attended a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend, gathering with a WWME Share Group could be a great way to extend the benefits of the Weekend for your marriage. If you would like to attend this gathering in the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre area, please contact John or Joanie at (719) 339-9970, joaniewalsh528@hotmail.com.

If you are already involved with a WWME Share Group in the Diocese of Scranton, and would like your group to be listed on our Marriage Support webpage so that others might join you, please contact Jennifer Housel, Director of Community and Family Development, (570) 207-2213 x 1104, jhousel@dioceseofscranton.org

Living Your Strengths Workshops Coming Soon!

Do you envision a parish community in which every member is valued for his or her unique gifts and talents? Could your parish benefit from having parishioners serve in ways they enjoy and in which they can do a great job? Would you like to see parishioner engagement move from a "slots to fill" approach into a strengths-based ministry approach?

When parish members serve in the ministries that are well-suited to their God-given unique strengths and abilities, a dramatic shift in parishioner engagement can occur. In order to help facilitate strengths-based parishioner engagement, the Office for Parish Life will be offering Living Your Strengths Workshops beginning in early 2019. These workshops can help your parishioners identify their unique strengths, and explore the ways in which those strengths can be used to best serve the parish community. A workshop can also serve to help your ministry teams learn how the strengths of each team member can complement and enhance the strengths of those with whom they serve. This knowledge can lead to greater understanding, appreciation, and productivity within ministry teams.

To learn more about Living Your Strengths Workshops, or to schedule a workshop for your parish group, please contact Jennifer Housel, Director for Community and Family Development, (570) 207-2213 x 1104, jhousel@dioceseofscranton.org .

Looking to Have a Workshop for Your Liturgical Ministers?

Are your cantors or choir members in need of training on the basics of the ministry? Could your lectors or extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion use a "refresher" course or a day of reflection? Board Members of the Scranton Chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians are here to help and are willing to travel to provide a workshop or session for your parish ministers. Some potential topics include:

- **Choir Basics: Making the Most of Out of What You've Got**
- **The Body of Christ: Our Identity and Purpose**
- **Fostering Sung Prayer: Synchronizing the Organist, Cantor, Choir and Assembly**
- **Not Just a Pretty Voice: The Cantor as a Leader of Prayer**

Please contact David Baloga at 570-207-2213, ext. 1158 or at David-Baloga@dioceseofscranton.org to discuss how we can help address your parish's needs.

Prayer Resources for Those Suffering from Addiction

The Diocese of Erie is providing a variety of resources for parishes and individuals to help pray for those suffering from addictions. Although designed with the opioid crisis in mind, these resources could also be helpful for those suffering from other addictions as well, including alcoholism and gambling. Visit <https://www.eriecd.org/opioid.html> to access the prayer services on the Diocese of Erie website, or visit <https://store.faithcatholic.com/meditations-and-prayers> to order a booklet of Catholic prayers for family members whose loved ones are suffering from addiction.

Echoes of Faith

Do you want to know more about your faith? Are you a catechist or DRE who is looking for a way to earn a certificate in catechesis? Can you spare an hour a week? The Echoes of Faith 3.0 is for YOU!

Created by the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) and published by RCL Benziger, *Echoes of Faith* is an online education program offering basic adult formation in the Catholic Faith.

With fourteen modules divided into three categories, the Echoes of Faith Learning Center can be used for parish Adult Faith Formation and for Basic Catechist Certification. It is also one way to complete the prerequisites for the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry.

An Introduction to the Echoes of Faith Program will be held on Wednesday, March 27 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Diocesan Pastoral Center in Scranton for anyone who is interested in online Adult Faith Formation.

Contact Mary-Anne-Malone@dioceseofscranton.org for information on how to get started for an affordable \$15 a year.

Resources for Atonement and Healing

Resources for ongoing prayer for atonement and healing for victims of sexual abuse in our Diocese, including a sample rosary with reflections on the Sorrowful Mysteries, sample intercessions and prayers can be found on the [diocesan website](#). The Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) has also provided a resource which can be found on its website, <https://fdlc.org/> under 'resources.'

Scranton NPM 2019 Events

Mark your 2019 calendars now and plan on attending the upcoming spiritual and informative events of the Scranton Chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. Here is a listing of what's in store:

¢ **Evening of Reflection on Lent** -Tuesday, March 12 at 6:00PM at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Swoyersville

¢ **Cathedral Art, Music & Architecture Tour** -Monday, May 13 at 6:00PM at the Cathedral of St. Peter, Scranton

¢ **42nd Annual NPM Convention**-July 16-19 in Raleigh, NC

¢ **Resources for Selecting Liturgical Music**-Monday, September 16 at 6:00PM at St. John Neumann Parish (Holy Name site), Scranton

¢ **Creating Effective Worship Aids**-Tuesday, November 12 at 6:00PM at Holy Name of Jesus, West Hazleton

For more information about any of these events or to download the 2019 Scranton NPM Events flyer, visit <https://scrantonnpm.com/>

Advocacy Team

The Diocesan Advocacy Team met for the first time in late November. The team is dedicated to serving the Church by promoting values of Catholic Social Teaching on a local, state, and national level. If you are interested in advocacy (from letter-writing to in-person lobbying) please consider signing up for our listserv. Contact Katy Windels at Katy-Windels@dioceseofscranton.org for more information.

Save the Date: Intercultural Music Ministry Workshop

Mark your calendars now and invite your music directors, instrumentalists, cantors and choir members to join us for an **Intercultural Music Ministry Workshop on Saturday, March 30 at St. Nicholas Parish, Wilkes-Barre**. Damaris Thillet, Associate Director of Worship & Christian Initiation for the Diocese of Camden, Director of Liturgy and Music at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Camden, will be leading the day-long workshop that will focus on the liturgical formation of music ministers serving in parishes with Hispanic and Latino populations. More details to come!

Rite of Election

The **Rite of Election will be celebrated by Bishop Bambera on Sunday, March 10 at 2:30PM**. RCIA Coordinator Information and

Enrollment forms will be available after January 15, 2019 on the diocesan website under [Christian Initiation Resources](#). Parishes with new RCIA Coordinators are asked to contact Nancy Valtos at the Office for Parish Life and provide their new contact information.

Mark Your Calendar

For a listing of Diocesan and parish events, go to: [Calendar](#)

Follow the Diocese on Social Media

www.facebook.com/DoS150/

www.twitter.com/BishopBambera

www.twitter.com/DioceseOfScr

www.facebook.com/DioceseOfScranton

You are also encouraged to visit the Facebook pages of other Diocesan departments. They are listed on our website at:

<http://www.dioceseofscranton.org/media/social-media/>

Thank you for connecting with us!

Diocese of Scranton, 300 Wyoming Ave, Scranton, PA 18501

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