

Bishop Bambera celebrates Holy Redeemer Opening School Liturgy

WILKES-BARRE – Mother Teresa, now known as Saint Teresa of Calcutta, may have died before students at Holy Redeemer High School were even born, but Bishop Joseph Bambera is hoping her story and example will inspire the next generation of Catholic School students.

Bishop Bambera celebrated Mass with the entire student body at Holy Redeemer High School on Thursday, September 12, helping to kick off the new school year.

“She was an extraordinary person, an extraordinary woman. She got up every day, prayed and then she would walk the streets of Calcutta, reaching out to the poor and sick and would attend to the dying,” Bishop Bambera said.

In reflecting on the day's Gospel message in his homily, the Bishop challenged the students to think about why Mother Teresa would lead such an extraordinary life – literally begging for food for the orphans that she cared for.

The Bishop preached that God helped Mother Teresa lead an extraordinary life and he told the students that with God all things are possible.

“Mother Teresa knew she had to give God, Jesus, room in her life. She knew at some point



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera celebrates Mass at Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre to open the new school year on September 12, 2019. (Photos/Eric Deabill)

she had to hand herself over to a power much, much bigger than herself because she knew on her own she couldn't really make that difference,” Bishop Bambera said. “She gave God space in her life. She allowed God room to work.”

The Bishop said that being a Christian is more than simply avoiding certain things in our lives. In contrast, the Bishop said being Christian demands we engage the life of the Gospel in a positive and proactive way.

“Being a Christian demands that we commit ourselves to a way of life that reaches out

beyond ourselves,” Bishop Bambera said. “We are called by Jesus to open our lives to the presence of God, to recognize the need for all of us to give God space when we can't sort things out.”

The Bishop ended his homily with words of inspiration for the students.

“Every one of us has some particular gift and talent and ability that has the power to make a difference for good in our world. Own those things and share them generously with the world in which we live!” Bishop Bambera said.

The Bishop's words certainly inspired many of the students.

“It was a unique experience. The homily was great,” senior Abigail Lavinski said.

“I thought it was a great message, especially helping the poor,” senior Ryan Williams said. Williams is currently the Student Body President at Holy Redeemer High School.

In appreciation for all the Bishop does for the Catholic School System, the Student Leadership Council donated a Day of Sponsorship in the Bishop's name at Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen. The facility, which is operated by Catholic

Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton, is located just a few blocks away from the school.

Over the last few years, students at Holy Redeemer have donated nearly \$6,000 to the kitchen through its yearly Thanksgiving collection. The school has also donated more than 14,000 food items to the needy.

“The kitchen is very important to us here at Holy Redeemer, perhaps because as Saint Vincent de Paul himself said, ‘the poor have much to teach us and we have much to learn from them for when we go to the poor, we will find God,’” Williams said.



Bishop Bambera blesses Mrs. Doreen Dougherty, as she is installed as the new principal of Holy Redeemer High School.

Diocesan educators begin academic year with professional development

Educators from the Diocesan School System will gather at Holy Redeemer High School, Wilkes-Barre, on Monday, September 23, to focus on educational initiatives that will foster continued academic learning and professionalism among approximately 400 educators in Diocesan schools.

The day will commence with a Liturgy celebrated by the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., at the Church of the Immaculate Conception. The Bishop will also deliver the homily. Concelebrants will include priests of the Diocese.

Students from all of the schools will comprise the Catholic Schools Choir, directed by Thomas Hanlon, music director at Holy Redeemer and Good Shepherd Academy, Kingston. In addition, faculty and students from the schools will serve as

participants at the Liturgy.

At the conclusion of the Liturgy, nine teachers will be honored for their 25 years of service to Catholic education in the Diocese of Scranton. Teachers who will be recognized are:

Rebecca Basse, Saint Agnes School; Maryanne DeMark, La Salle Academy; Mary Finkernagel, Holy Redeemer High School; Marinell Harding, Saint Clare/Saint Paul School; Sister Dorothy Kibler, IHM, Notre Dame Elementary School; Christy Litchfield and John Litchfield, Saint John Neumann Regional Academy; Ann Mullen, Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School; and Dianne Ruch, Good Shepherd Academy. The awards will be presented by Bishop Bambera, assisted by Jason Morrison, Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Education/Chief Executive Officer.

The professional aspect of the day will include a presentation by Susan M. Ferguson, M.A., director of the University of Dayton Center for Catholic Education. Prior to her present position, Mrs. Ferguson served as an elementary teacher and school psychologist, a lecturer at the University's Department of Education, and then began scholarly research and professional development for teachers and Catholic school leaders.

STREAM...Why and How! will serve as the topic of her presentation. STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics), is an educational initiative that, recognized by the National Catholic Educational Association, “encourages problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration and innovation, along with developing essential technology skills.”

Michele Long, assistant superintendent, and coordinator for the implementation of STREAM within the Diocese notes, “STREAM demonstrates how faith, individual academic disciplines and life itself work together. It not only provides a challenging trans-disciplinary learning environment focused on the integration of the STREAM content areas through the lens of our Catholic faith, but it also builds 21st century competencies needed for success in school and future careers including collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity.”

In the afternoon, breakout sessions will be conducted for teachers to further discussion on the presented topic.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL



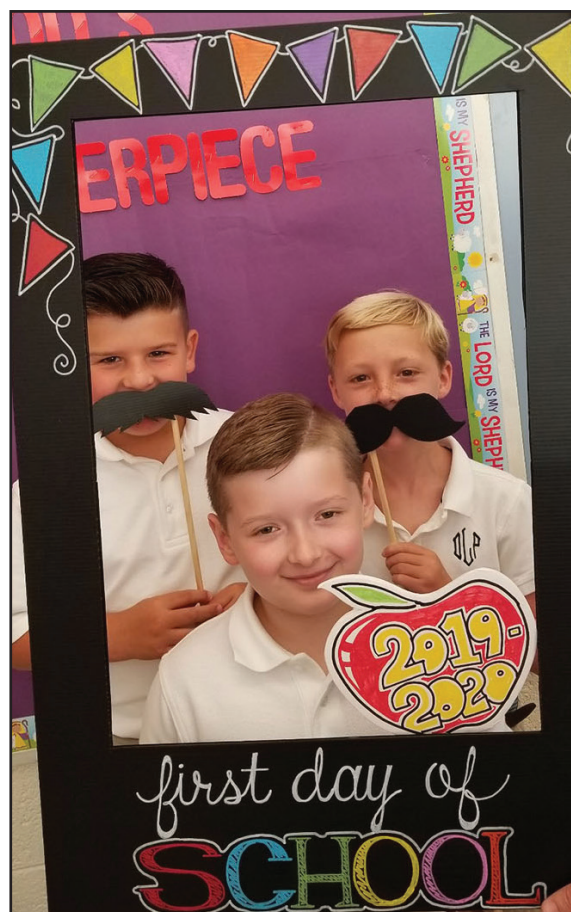
All Saints Academy in Scranton



Holy Cross High School in Dunmore



Epiphany School in Sayre



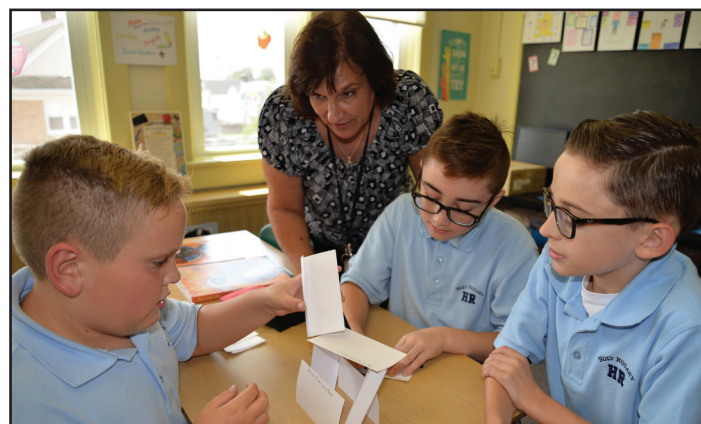
Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green



Holy Family Academy in Hazleton



Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre



Holy Rosary School in Duryea



Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston



Saint Agnes School in Towanda



Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton

2019 - 2020



**Wyoming Area Catholic School
in Exeter**



Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore



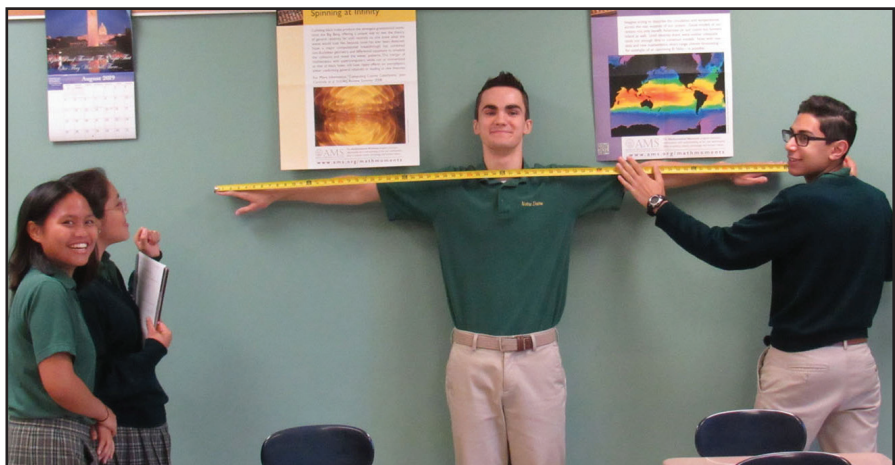
**Saint John Neumann Elementary School
in Williamsport**



**Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr.
High School in Williamsport**



Saint Jude School in Mountain Top



Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg



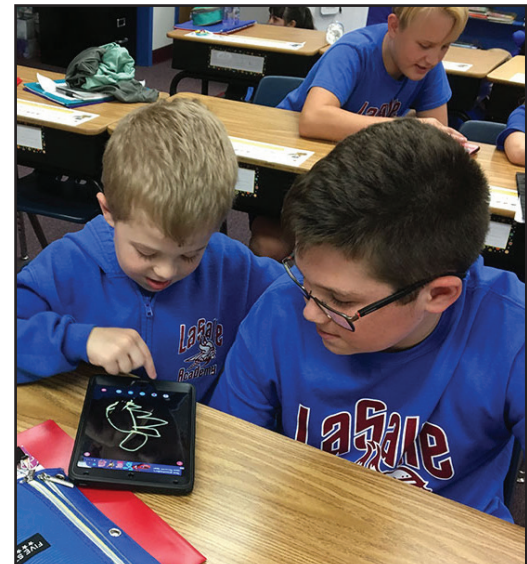
**Holy Redeemer High School
in Wilkes-Barre**



Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg



Monsignor McHugh School in Cresco



La Salle Academy in Jessup