



GoodNewsNotes

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON OFFICE FOR PARISH LIFE

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Parishes Regathering

This edition of Good News Notes features the best resources for parishes as they move to the “yellow phase” of gradually reopening and resuming worship and ministry. For additional resources, please visit the diocesan website, under [Parish Life/Resources for a Time of Social Distancing](#).

Along with all of the of the diocesan liturgical guidelines for parishes in counties currently in the red phase and yellow phases, pastors and parish life coordinators are encouraged to consult the [Parishes Regathering Workbook](#). This resource includes topics, questions and checklists that are designed to help parish leadership teams recognize and prepare for the many aspects of opening up to more public interaction at Church. It is envisioned that you would utilize this abundant material in a series of conversations, or perhaps divide it among teams concerned with a certain dimension of readiness. Members of the Office for Parish Life Team, and all other diocesan departments, are available to help you as you make plans suited to your particular parish setting. The following topics addressed in this comprehensive resource:

- How do we begin planning?
- Workplace norms
- How do we prepare our facilities and grounds?
- Communication Strategies
- How do we begin inviting people back to worship?
- How do we continue to proclaim the word and nurture faith formation?
- How do we sustain the community while distanced?
- How do we continue to engage people in service?
- Appendix A—Prevention and safety protocols for all facilities
- Appendix B—Ongoing liturgical norms for Red Phase Counties
- Appendix C—Detailed liturgical norms for Yellow Phase Counties

Transitional Diaconate Ordination
Saturday, May 23, 2020
at 10:00AM
Cathedral of Saint Peter

Wedding Anniversary Mass
Sunday, June 14, 2020
at 2:30PM
Cathedral of Saint Peter

Presbyteral Ordination
Saturday, June 27, 2020
at 10:00AM
Cathedral of Saint Peter



Family Prayer during the Pandemic

Looking for a way to keep your families prayer life going during the Pandemic?

Sadlier Religion is excited to announce Morning Prayer Live! their daily prayer service with Deacon Matt Halbach, PhD, Executive Director of Catechesis. In these 10-minute live sessions, we will encounter and share Christ during these difficult times.

Tune in every day, Monday-Friday, at 9 a.m. EDT.

To join, go to www.facebook.com/SadlierReligion/ (see "Events") OR <https://zoom.us/j/466025075>.

If you're unable to view these events live, a recording will be posted to Sadlier Religion's YouTube page at www.youtube.com/SadlierReligion.

Remember to check out our free resources and online learning support at www.SadlierReligion.com/OnlineLearning. Our prayers are with you!

Small Group Religious Ed

Consider bringing your Religious Ed families together during the Pandemic. Everyone can be in a Small Group! Small Groups are where our large church gets small and can stay home. Groups are 6-12 people who virtually connect to discuss faith, go deeper in the weekly message, and support one another in their relationship with Christ. This is the place to care for others and be cared for; a place to impact our community and the world. Small Groups are a great place to explore, ask questions, and grow.

If you are interested in starting small groups for your RE families, a good resource is Life After Sunday.

Life After Sunday has eternal customer support! Do you have questions about using Life After Sunday Catholic resources for small groups? Need help getting your small group started? Call 800-473-7980 or e-mail them at marybeth@lifeaftersunday.com. They are committed to supporting you and your small group anytime, in any way, for any reason. They want you to eternally enjoy your Life After Sunday!

Facebook or Instagram Challenge

Calling all DRE's/Catechists or anyone that has been part of the Religious Education program at their parish, please join the challenge of posting a photo of your ministry. Just one picture, no description. Please copy this text to your status, post a picture and take a look at some great memories/pictures. We are all missing our ministry right now! **#REScrantonstrong** **#catholicstrength** **#catholicproud** **#faithforlife**

Staying Connected

You are cordially invited to our weekly Zoom Chat with Jacki and Shannon. Our next meeting is Wednesday, May 6th we would like to invite personal reflection and some faith-sharing as well as some best practices during the pandemic. The link for the meeting is below.

We have an amazing opportunity in these days to remember the faithfulness of God and ask people to put their confidence in him and him alone. We would love to have you join us.

Topic: DRE/Youth Minister Check In

Time: Wednesdays at 11:00 AM Eastern Time

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/621325740>

Meeting ID: 621 325 740

Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation

Looking to learn more about your faith, or gain enrichment for your parish ministry?

Even in the midst of this pandemic, you can still take advantage of the opportunity to learn about your

faith, and strengthen your ministry through diverse course offerings. Members of the faithful across the Diocese of Scranton are invited to consider taking a course through the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation! The VLCFF is vehicle for on-going adult faith formation in parish communities. Any member of the Diocese may enroll in any course, and the fee is significantly reduced because of our Diocesan partnership with them.

VLCFF Cycle 5 dates are **July 12 - August 15, 2020** (Registration: Opens May 27; Closes July 8). [Click here](#) to view the Course Calendar for 2020 or visit the course catalog link in [English](#) or in [Spanish](#).



First Communion and Confirmation

All parishes should consult the directives for celebrating First Communion and Confirmation found in the "[Yellow Phase](#)" [Liturgical Guidelines](#). These may be celebrated in groups no greater than 25 when the county of the parish has moved into the Yellow Phase. Parishes may also choose to wait for a larger communal celebration when their county has moved into the "Green Phase." All of directives before, during, and after the public celebration of Mass must also be observed.

Mass in Time of Pandemic

Pope Francis approved the new Mass formulary, "In Time of Pandemic." The Mass texts and readings for this Mass are available in both English and Spanish and can be found on the diocesan website under [Parish Life/ Resources for a Time of Social Distancing](#).

National Association of Pastoral Musicians

National Convention—The National Association of Pastoral Musicians is proud to share that this year's 2020 National Convention **taking place on July 7-10 will now be 100% virtual**.

In light of the ongoing public health crisis and the uncertainty that remains, we have decided to convert our 2020 convention into a virtual experience – an event that our members and pastoral musicians across the nation – and even the world – can participate in from the safety of their homes. [Click here](#) to watch a video and learn more, or visit [NPM.org](#) for more information.



Technology in Ministry Webinar—The National Association of Pastoral Musicians will offer a three day webinar on Technology in Ministry for Liturgy and Beyond, June 1 -3. The registration deadline is June 1. For more information [click here](#) or visit [npm.org](#).

Music Licenses and Hymnals at Home

Parishes that are currently live-streaming Masses are reminded that they need a license to livestream any copyrighted music at those Masses. This would be a separate license from the one that permits the reproduction of music in printed worship aids. [OneLicense.net](#) offers a podcast/streaming license for music owned by the main Catholic liturgical music publishers of GIA Publications, Oregon Catholic Press and World Library Publications.

Both OCP and GIA are both offering deals and incentives on their hymnals for the faithful to purchase and use at home. Visit [ocp.org](#) or [giamusic.com](#) for details.

FDLC List of Resources during Pandemic

The Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions has compiled a list of resources offered by individuals and dioceses to use during the pandemic. Here are some highlights of resources available on their website, [www.fdlc.org](#):

- **"A New Birth to a Living Hope: Praying Through the Pandemic"** – a flexible resource by liturgical music composer Steve Janco for individual or group prayer, focused on praying about—and through—the COVID-19 pandemic. Available both in English and Spanish
- **"Shelter Me"**—a new song by Michael Joncas written for the current health crisis. The hymn is published by GIA, but is available for a free download before March 31 of NEXT year. Joncas suggests that you donate what you might have paid for a new piece of music to your favorite charity that is serving people during the pandemic.
- **"Preparing for Homecoming Sunday"** --These free webinar sessions from GIA Publications are led by outstanding guest speakers and will cover topics such as planning, hospitality, rehearsing, technology, outreach, inclusion and representation, grief support, ideas for parents of small children, mental health, and more. Previous sessions are archived at [this link](#).
- **"Prayer and Connection in Times of Crisis"**—Liturgy Training Publications is offering several of their prayer resources for free including prayer services at home for those who are sick from COVID-19, children and family prayer, Liturgy of the Hours and more.
- **Interlude: Resources for Worship and Teaching at Home** —GIA Publications has compiled all of their resources for prayer during COVID-19 on their Interlude website. Whether you are a parent or teacher looking for resources for children, a pastor or music director needing guidance on how to pray virtually with your congregation, or are just looking for guided prayer at home, they have something for you!

Tips for Livestreaming Masses

Check out these links for ideas on how to enhance your parish's livestreamed Mass:

- [USCCB Tips on Livestreaming the Mass](#)
- [Livestream Resources from the Diocese of Albany](#)
- [Tips for Participating in a Livestreamed Mass at Home](#)

"My friends, the Church is a gathering of the wounded. It always has been, and it always will be...While the heart of the message of the Gospel has always been to call believers to embrace the life of Jesus, we can't do so without first acknowledging the reality of our human condition. We simply cannot embrace the hope of Easter without first experiencing Good Friday and the wounds of our lives and brokenness of our world. Indeed, to embrace our brokenness and wounds is not to wallow in self-pity or bitterness. It is to reveal an honesty that leads to reconciliation and hope. It is to take the first step to healing, wholeness, life and authentic faith. It is to proclaim Christ Crucified, the power of God who is our hope!"

—Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, *Wounded and Loved, Regathering the Scattered*

Opportunities to continue to be servant leaders within our communities, to be the presence, the voice, and the heart of Jesus to one another:

Wedding Anniversary Mass/ Marriage Enrichment and Support

The Wedding Anniversary Mass will take place this year in a different format due to ongoing social distancing guidelines. The Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Bambera on Sunday June 14, at 2:30PM. The Mass will be live-streamed and anniversary couples will be invited to participate in the Mass from home, using the Wedding Anniversary Mass Program which they will have received in the mail. Anniversary Packets, with updated information for celebrating couples, have been mailed to all couples whose names were submitted by parish offices.

Because the Mass will be live-streamed, all married couples in the Diocese are invited to participate in the Mass from home as well. The Wedding Anniversary Mass Program will be made available on the Diocesan website, so that any married couple can follow along with the liturgy and speak the words of recommitment to one another when invited to do so. Particularly considering the stresses of the pandemic, this a valuable opportunity for all of us to pause and reflect upon the beauty of the vocation of marriage in our lives and in the life of our church. Guidelines will be sent to all parishes which will share ideas to help every community participate in this celebration of sacramental marriage.

For additional marriage enrichment and support resources, please see our [Diocesan Webpages for Marriage](#) and the *Care for Marriages* section of our updated [Diocesan Resources for a Time of Social Distancing](#)

PreCana Days of Reflection

A number of our PreCana Days of Reflection have had to be canceled due to social distancing restrictions. We hope to be able to resume live classes soon, with appropriate safety measures in place. Until then, PreCana sacramental preparation can continue in other formats. To review PreCana options, please see our [PreCana Webpage](#). During social distancing restrictions, online PreCana can be a good option for sacramental formation, as can the FOCCUS Assessment when it is facilitated virtually (through Skype, FaceTime, etc.).

Grief Support

We in the Diocese of Scranton, and all of us as brothers and sisters within God's creation, are suffering through a collective grief in this pandemic. Losses both minor and intensely tragic continue to accumulate, and many of the ways in which we normally cope with grief are inaccessible due to social distancing restrictions. You can read this [blog, "Psychologist Sr. Maryanne Loughry on coping with our collective grief"](#) for a deeper reflection and for ideas about coping.

Our bereavement ministries are needed now, more than ever. We can all continue to safely reach out to our communities through phone calls and letters. Also, at least one of our parish communities, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, has been continuing to gather their Bereavement Group virtually, using Zoom videoconferencing. Though face-to-face interactions are the ideal, virtual gathering (Skype, FaceTime, Zoom, etc.) is another way we can continue to meet the grief and bereavement needs of our faithful during social distancing.

Another option you can extend to your community is a new resource offered through our Diocesan Office for Parish Life. It is a video streaming service provided through Paraclete Press. Through this subscription, any of our Diocesan faithful can access 40 different videos on topics such as grief and social issues (and faith formation for adults and children).

For more details and resources, please see our [Diocesan Webpage for Grief Support](#) and the [Grief Support section of our updated Diocesan Resources for a Time of Social Distancing](#).

*For questions about this information,
about any of these resources,
or to gain help in finding other resources,
please contact Jennifer Housel:
jhousel@dioceseofscranton.org
or (570)207-2213 x 1104.*

"I CALL us to be servant leaders who engage in SERVICE to our neighbors near and far and who work for justice and stewardship to hasten the Reign of God."

SERVICE

Parish Social Justice Grants

The Parish Social Justice Grants for 2020 will be offered as planned. Thank you to parishes whose application has already been received. Because of the circumstances, all parishes are still invited to submit your application, up to the new deadline of June 15th. We will strive to still award the grants by the end of June.

Fifth Anniversary of *Laudato Si*

When we hear "the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor," we understand that everything is connected. Unite with Catholics from around the world for the Fifth Anniversary of *Laudato Si* ([#LaudatoSi5](https://twitter.com/LaudatoSi5)).

Our faith calls us to do more together and collaborate to protect our common home. Discover more at www.laudatosiweek.org

National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM)

The NFCYM recognizes these are uncharted waters. During this time, we are ALL called to minister to young people and each other. They are here to assist you in light of the changes brought about by COVID-19. Browse their webpage for numerous resources on how to minister virtually to teens during this time. For resources on Ministry during Crisis, Tools and Resources for Virtual Ministry, Messages of Hope, Resources for Parishes and Priests and more, go to nfcym.org/covid19/

Additional Youth and Young Adult Ministry Resources

This is a [crowd-sourced working list](#) of resources to assist in the work of ministering with young adults remotely through federal and state-mandated quarantines. It has been compiled by the USCCB National Advisory Team on Young Adult Ministry (NATYAM), in collaboration with the Loyola New Orleans Institute for Ministry (LIM), and with contributions from Catholic ministry leaders from across the United States.

ProjectYM Live—An Online Catholic Youth Night

It's simple: teens are able to log on Sunday nights from 8:00 to 9:00pm for a free live broadcast! They even have additional resources for parents and youth ministers to have follow up conversations with your teens after the broadcast. Each broadcast is an hour long and includes games, music, and a teaching from one of the top Catholic youth ministry speakers in the country. Teens will be able to watch the live stream from any device and be part of the BIGGEST Catholic youth night ever! [Go to projected.com/live/](http://Go.to/projected.com/live/)

Office for Parish Life Calendar Updates

- **Spring Confirmations**—all Spring Confirmations which were scheduled with Bishop Bambera have been cancelled - see liturgical guidelines for "yellow phase" regarding how the celebration of Confirmation will proceed this year.
- **Pre-Cana**—the Spring dates were cancelled and all couples have been contacted to either re-schedule or to participate in an online marriage preparation; remaining 2020 dates are still shown on Diocesan website
- **Youth Retreats and Rally**—parish youth ministry leaders will receive updates about virtual experiences for this summer - or contact Shannon-Kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org
- **June 7 Scout Mass**—cancelled for 2020; Scouts will still receive awards, and will be invited to the Mass in 2021
- **June 9 Ministry Formation Evening of Reflection**— cancelled
- **June 14 Wedding Anniversary Mass**—2:30pm live streamed with Bishop Bambera -- couples celebrating have received a packet through the mail -- Pastors and PLCs received materials through email -- worship aid for all who desire to participate available on website
- **June 17 Ministry Formation Commissioning**— postponed until further notice
- **June 20 Diocesan Women's Conference** — cancelled, stay tuned for June 2021 Conference
- **June 24 Light the Fire Youth Rally**—cancelled, stay tuned for alternate youth events
- **June 24-25 Center for Ministry Development Certificate Course Days**—online opportunity being arranged with candidates
- **June 26-27 Diocesan Pastoral Council Retreat**— postponed until further notice
- **July 16 Mass of Remembrance**—will be offered this year in some format -- stay tuned for information about submitting names -- we will especially recognize COVID-19 deaths.

Safe Environment Tips for Conducting Remote Ministry Activities

Due to the recent and unexpected health crisis, our typical means of interacting with youth has been suspended. In order to maintain communication, the Diocese of Scranton lists the following directives on creating safe contacts with those under the age of 18.

1. Prior to initiating communication thru remote transmission, the parish representative must obtain approval from the Pastor, Parish Life Coordinator or their designate. The individuals must have appropriate background checks and training as per Safe Environment protocols. The mandates of the *Code of Pastoral Conduct* of the Diocese of Scranton should always be observed.
2. The Parent/Guardians of youth under age 18 should be made aware of and consent to virtual contact between the parish representatives and the youth. Any meeting times, dates and agendas should be shared with the responsible adult. The parent/guardian has the right to refuse participation.
3. Parents/Guardians will serve as the primary contact for the information needed to join the conference. Information should be sent thru the formal contact list and not via social media where those who are not invited are able to access. Meetings should not be conducted on a public platform. Parents are encouraged to attend.
4. Do not make meetings or classrooms public. Use a meeting password or a "waiting room" feature to control the admission of guests.
5. Do not share a link to a teleconference or classroom on an unrestricted publicly available social media post. Provide the link directly to specific people.
6. Manage screensharing options so that they are set to "Host Only".
7. Religious education activities target the age group 6 (first grade) and older. Youth ministry activities focus on young people ages 11 (middle school) and older.
8. Parent must be informed that the video portion of the broadcast is optional. They can choose to receive only audio transmission.
9. Video conferences should be recorded. If possible, two adults should conduct the meeting. If that is not feasible, recording is mandatory, and parents must be notified.
10. Contact with youth will occur only between the hours of 9 am and 9 pm. Direct, private contacts with youth are not allowed.
11. The individuals hosting the conference are reminded that this is a professional activity thus they are expected to dress appropriately. When possible, the setting of the meeting should be in an office or classroom. If that is not feasible, the physical location, including the background, should be void of any objects that the viewer might find objectionable or inappropriate.
12. In addition, before beginning the conference, youth should be advised of the rules for participation. Appropriate clothing, setting and language should be enforced. The device should be in a public area of the home.
13. Mandated reporting procedures apply. If the adult facilitator knows or suspects that a youth is being abused, they are required to report to ChildLine. The 24/7 number is 1-800-932-0313.

WE VALUE YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE YOUTH OF OUR DIOCESE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

OPL TEAM MEMBERS

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