

The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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A fourth grade classroom at Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton is set-up to show physical distancing measures put in place to protect the health of students and faculty.

Diocesan schools preparing for safe return to in-person instruction

SCRANTON – In just a matter of weeks, students will return to Catholic schools for in-person instruction across the Diocese of Scranton.

As students resume classes five days a week, the experience will be different at both the elementary and high school level with numerous safety and health protocols being put into place.

“We have put together a comprehensive plan that, above all else, prioritizes the best interest, safety and health of all students, faculty, staff and school families,” Jason Morrison, Chief Executive Officer and Diocesan Secretary of Education, said. “We are excited to welcome our students back to the classroom to provide the academically excellent and faith-filled experience that our families have come to expect.”

The last time students were in class was March 13. As cases of COVID-19 began to spike in Pennsylvania, Governor Tom Wolf ordered all schools closed as a precaution. Catholic schools in the diocese quickly transitioned to distance learning the following school day.

The back-to-school plan is being spearheaded by a Diocesan Health and Safety committee, which is comprised of diocesan and local school administration and clergy along with medical professionals

with expertise in pediatrics, healthcare administration and quality assurance. Each school has also created its own committee to help implement and guide the reopening process in its respective building.

“Catholic schools are inherently a partnership between the parent and the school. This is never more important than at this time and an even greater partnership is now needed,” Catholic Schools Superintendent Kristen Donohue said. “Each day will actually begin with parents monitoring their child’s health. With parental cooperation, we will be able to keep the schools open and safe.”

Some of the key components of the Diocese of Scranton’s reopening plan include the use of cohorts, physical distancing, masks and enhanced cleaning procedures.

Cohorts, or small groups of students in the same grade, have been recommended by many health organizations as an environmental measure to prevent the spread of disease. Students will remain together for the entire day, including attending lunch, recess and classes as a cohort.

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Religious education programs taking shape for the fall

Diocesan Office for Parish Life offering Faith Alive! platform to parishes

HAWLEY – For the last decade, Mary Kennedy has been heavily involved in coordinating the faith formation program at Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace parish in Hawley. Due to COVID-19, planning this year’s religious education classes has been unlike anything she has ever experienced.

“It was definitely a daunting task,” Kennedy said.

With approximately 150 kids in her parish program, Kennedy is just beginning the registration process at this time and hopes to begin classes in October. While the process is beginning a little later than normal, the big question she has faced all along has been – how do you do it safely?

“We are looking to do a hybrid model,” she explained, saying elementary students will most likely participate in synchronous lessons virtually while middle school students will hopefully be able to attend faith formation classes safely in person.

“I love the idea of bringing faith formation into the home, especially in those formation years of elementary school. It is so important,” she added.

To assist religious education directors across the Diocese of Scranton, the Diocesan Office for Parish Life is partnering with Faith Alive! powered by Edmodo, a web-based learning management system, and encouraging parishes to consider using it in any way they choose.

“Parishes have so many different variables in them: their location, the number of students, the room they have to hold classes and their ability to sanitize and disinfect after classes have ended, so we knew we had to have options for them to explore,” Jacki Douglas, Diocesan Director of Word and Lifelong Faith Formation, said.

Since March, Douglas has been exploring different platforms for religious education and meeting with various publishers. While recognizing that some parishes might be looking to return to in-person faith formation classes while following all guidelines from the Diocese, Centers for Disease Control and

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A sampling of various religious education materials used by parishes in the Diocese of Scranton.

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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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With opening day approaching, teachers energized to return to the classroom

KINGSTON – For the last 34 years, Janet Lyons has been shaping the hearts and minds of Catholic elementary school students at Good Shepherd Academy. With diocesan schools preparing to reopen soon for in-person instruction five days a week, she is excited to return to the classroom.

“I really, truly miss the children. It’ll be nice to get back to some kind of normalcy,” the veteran educator said.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Lyons feels the safety procedures put into place by the diocese will help mitigate any potential risks of the virus.

“I do believe they’re in the safest place they could be. They’re like my own children. As a teacher, you do treat them like that, you look at them like that. You protect them and they will be protected in this school,” she added.

Lyons teaches second grade at the Luzerne County school with her colleague, Jennifer Jones, who is also excited to get back to in-person instruction.

“The kids thrive on routine. I’m excited to make eye contact and there is nothing like that conversation one-on-one with somebody, face-to-face and just making the kids feel back to normal and comfortable,” Jones said. “It’s an opportunity to get back to teaching our faith and living our faith with these kids side-by-side. We always made that connection through distance learning but now I feel it’s a better opportunity to really embrace our Catholic identity and our Catholic faith and do what we love.”

The last time teachers were in the classroom was Friday, March 13. On that day, Governor Tom Wolf ordered all schools to close as the coronavirus began to spread in Pennsylvania. On the following Monday, March 16, the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System launched its distance learning initiative.

Five months later, Jones, a parent of two children herself, will be sending both kids back to Catholic Schools in the diocese in addition to being back in the classroom herself. Both teachers and students will need to wear masks and desks will be physically distanced from one another.

“I think everything is a teachable moment. This is an opportunity to teach selflessness and showing the kids that these small sacrifices that we’re making are going to pay off for everyone and it really goes back to our Catholic identity and the golden rule – Love God and love others – and you do what you can to show your love for others in small, selfless ways,” Jones added.

At La Salle Academy in Jessup, teachers came together in person last week for a professional development day in the school’s gymnasium. With each teacher seated at their own table, the educators were learning how to use technology most effectively.



Shaina Dougherty, math teacher and technology coordinator at La Salle Academy in Jessup, helps lead a professional development program for her fellow teachers on Aug. 5, 2020. The session, which is one of three planned before school reopens, focused on ways to use technology more effectively. (Photos/Eric Deabill)

Furniture has been moved around inside the library at Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre to add additional desks for larger classroom space if needed. Teachers and administrators from all school buildings have been measuring their spaces to ensure physical distancing can be achieved.



“I really feel that we have been afforded a lot of opportunities with the Diocese of Scranton in the years that I’ve worked here at least, for having those professional development sessions that are enhancing our abilities to teach the most effective practices,” teacher Shaina Dougherty said.

Since March, Dougherty said she has missed the ‘noise’ of her classroom.

“A lot of people that aren’t teachers may see that ‘noise’ as noise, a lot of loud kids in a class. For me, it’s all about creating a community and allowing every voice to be heard and sometimes out of that noise comes incredible things,” she added.

Cody Opalka, a social studies teacher at Holy Redeemer High School, agrees that there is a special energy behind teaching and welcomes the engagement that goes along with in-person instruction.

“I’m excited and I’m positive about making it work,” Opalka stressed.

When reflecting on what the first day of school will be like this year, a smile came over his face.

“I’ve had a lot of first days. This one is going to be different so the butterflies are going to be there like always but it’s going to be a good different. It’s going to be about making it safe for the students, making sure they have what they need on that first day, that reassurance, so it’s going to be more of a comforting kind of entry,” he said.

In addition to in-person instruction, families in the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System also expressed a desire for a virtual option for instruction.

The Diocesan Virtual Academy will provide those families with the opportunity to begin their instruction completely online, or to transition into the Diocesan Virtual Academy, if desired, during the year.

Both options have the mission of providing an academically excellent and faith-filled experience for students.

Ben Tolerico, principal of Holy Cross High School, says if parents choose a virtual education, their students will remain an important part of the Catholic school community.

“If a Holy Cross student chooses to take part in the Diocesan Virtual Academy, they’re still a part of Holy Cross. If we have any kind of activities, for example a virtual Mass, they would still be a part of that,” he said.

Tolerico has spent countless hours over the summer preparing to welcome students back.

“Since May really we have been going non-stop in planning, the changing of plans, trying to figure out the right formula and it has been a lot of work. It has certainly been worthwhile work and it has just been an amazing effort and a team effort all the way throughout the top of the Diocese down to the schools in making sure we are committed to having a quality education in the safest environment possible,” Tolerico added.

A life-long educator, Tolerico said since March his teachers have been willing to go above-and-beyond.

“I will never, ever be able to thank them enough for their efforts,” he said.

Q. What safety measures will schools take to protect students, teachers, administrators and staff?

A. Each school has developed procedures based on the “Five Fundamentals of Sharing Good Health” listed below. To the extent possible, students will remain with a set cohort, usually their homeroom class, stay in one desk, and responsibly manage their own personal items to minimize the sharing of items.

- 1) Daily Temperature Checks: Temperature readings will be required daily for every person entering a school building.
- 2) Promoting Proper Handwashing & Good Hygiene: Proper handwashing and using hand sanitizer will be stressed upon entering and leaving a building or classroom, before and after lunch and at the end of the day. The uniform policy will be altered so that clothes can be laundered daily.
- 3) Physical Distancing Measures: Classroom spacing is being developed to ensure physical distancing. Emphasis will also be placed on distancing in hallways, cafeterias and at recess (if applicable). Access by visitors and volunteers will be limited and only considered when absolutely necessary.
- 4) Masks will be Required: By Order of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, students will be required to wear a mask except when eating or drinking.
- 5) Cleaning and Disinfection: Every school will increase the cleaning of classrooms, common areas and frequently touched items including door handles, light switches, counter tops, etc. There will also be increased disinfection during nightly cleanings.

Q. Will my child’s classroom look different?

A. Schools will spread out desks and tables in classrooms as much as possible to achieve safe physical distancing. Some furniture that is not essential to teaching may be removed to enhance usable space. Desks and tables will also be arranged so that they face the same direction. Additionally, some nontraditional classroom space may be utilized.

Q. Will students share school supplies?

A. No. Students will not be able to share school supplies (e.g., books, crayons, technology, etc.), including for such subjects as art and music. For any supplies that still may be shared, like computers, these will be cleaned after every use.

Q. Will the academic program be different this year?

A. All schools will continue to offer the rigorous academic program our students deserve and that parents expect. This year, teachers will take additional time at the beginning of the school year to assess student skills to determine what students are ready for academically as they begin a new school year. This will include the NWEA assessment tool that was used last year. If the assessment data indicate it is necessary, the elementary curriculum may be adjusted in specific grades and schools, as determined by the principal, to prioritize English/Language Arts, Math, and Religion. In addition, instructional time for each class may be adjusted to accommodate the additional time that some health and safety measures may require. In elementary schools, all major subjects will continue to be taught. There may be some adjustments to minor subjects as determined by the principal and planning teams at each school.

Q. Will there be a set schedule for the students who are attending the Diocesan Virtual Academy (DVA)?

A. Yes. Students will be engaged in a set schedule that will consist of a combination of live and recorded instruction from teachers. Live class time will include direct instruction, as well as time for activities and student engagement. Recorded sessions will be 40 minutes and will include the recorded instruction and activities. Assignments, “at-the-bell,” and “exit tickets” will be submitted by the end of the recorded class period.

Q. Will my student be able to participate in after school activities or sports with the school in which he/she is enrolled if I select Diocesan Virtual Academy as the method of instruction?

A. Yes. When possible, DVA students may participate in school events and activities at their respective schools outside of the school day. If a student participates in a school related activity, the parent will need to complete the health screening tool prior to attending the activity in-person. DVA students will be eligible for all special recognition, awards, honor, and ceremonies at the school where he/she is enrolled.



For additional Questions and Answers, as well as the guidelines and procedures for reopening schools, visit: www.dioceseofscranton.org/Catholic-Schools

Diocesan schools reopening plan includes masks, cohorts and physical distancing

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“If we can keep that smaller group of students together, our individual students are not exposed to as many other children on a given day. If someone gets sick we know what students were near that student or teacher or individual,” Dr. April L. Troy, Board Certified Pediatrician and Pediatric Regional Education Coordinator for Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, said. Dr. Troy is a member of the Diocesan Health and Safety Committee and is also a parent with children in the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System.

By order of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, all students, faculty and staff will be required to wear face masks when in school. Masks will be able to be removed for eating and drinking and additional mask breaks will occur at specified times outside, when appropriate

physical distancing can occur.

Physical distancing will also be a fundamental practice as students return to school. It will apply not only to the classroom, but also other spaces within the school building, including but not limited to hallways, cafeterias and gyms.

“Every school in the Diocese is already working on moving desks apart and having children face the same way, because we know the risk of transmission is less in those set-ups. Each principal and their administrative support team have been wonderful in coming up with new and innovative ways to use the space inside the schools,” Dr. Katherine Lincoln, Wound Care Specialist and Chair of the Clinical Quality Care Committee at Guthrie Hospital, said. Dr. Lincoln is also a parent and member of the Diocesan Health and Safety Committee.

Even though all schools are expected

to reopen for in-person instruction, some families have expressed a desire for a virtual option for instruction. As a result, the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System is also offering a Diocesan Virtual Academy for the 2020-2021 school year. It will provide families the opportunity to begin their instruction completely online or transition into the DVA, if desired, during the year.

The Diocesan Virtual Academy will include both live and recorded instruction that will follow a set schedule similar to an in-person school day. Parents interested in the DVA were asked to express their interest in that option by last week.

Just like in-person instruction, the Diocesan Virtual Academy will be intentional about the inclusion of a Catholic identity across all grade levels and subject matters. Virtual academy teachers will provide instruction for Virtual Academy students.

“Whether parents have chosen the in-person or virtual option, we will be able to partner with them to ensure their child achieves his or her God-given potential because we know each family and child so well,” Morrison said.

“Our smaller environment and assessment tools allow us to deliver a differentiated approach to each child’s education,” Donohue added. “Our dedicated faculty and administrators know each child personally and will be able to help him or her navigate the challenging nature of this time.”

More information on the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System’s safety plan for resuming in-person instruction as well as the Diocesan Virtual Academy can be found at www.dioceseofscranton.org.

The diocese’s Catholic schools serve students in four high schools and 15 elementary schools.

Joyful celebrations of First Communions, Confirmations & Sacraments of Initiation underway

TOWANDA – There is no masking the joy experienced by parish families – and the parishes themselves – as the sacraments of initiation are now taking place in faith communities around the Diocese of Scranton.

First Holy Communions and Confirmations, traditionally held as springtime events, had to be postponed to the summer months as COVID-19 wreaked havoc with the scheduling of such momentous occasions.

“The pandemic has provided challenges,” Marie Seibert, director of religious education at Saints Peter & Paul Parish in Towanda, said after the parish celebration of First Communion and Confirmation were pushed back to mid-June and late July, respectively.

As the milestone liturgies were limited to participants and close family members in order to stay within the CDC safety guidelines, Seibert said there was somewhat of a silver lining in the COVID-19 cloud.

“While we missed having a

big event, the small groups meant we could focus more closely on each person receiving the sacrament, and perhaps be a little less stressed,” she remarked. “The Masses were both peaceful and joyful.”

Father Ed Michelini, pastor of Saints Peter & Paul, who conferred the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation to his young parishioners, echoed the sentiments of his DRE and added how pleased he and all who were involved are, now that the “spiritual rites” of passage were able to be accomplished amidst the fluctuations of the pandemic.

“The (sacraments) were respectfully and reverently done by all in attendance,” he said. “God causes good to happen even in the midst of chaos.”

Saints Peter & Paul parishioner Sara Nash had two children receive their First Holy Communion, noting, “My daughter wore my First Communion dress that was 30 years old.”

“I love that we were able to have (First Communion) with the



The First Holy Communion Class at Saints Peter & Paul Parish in Towanda

entire class, with precautions,” she said. “I felt it went very well. What I appreciated most was that we waited, because it’s a milestone and should be enjoyed.”

Noting the unprecedented times and the need for creative scheduling, Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Susan “Suzie” Armbruster explained the first priority was the celebration of First Eucharist for the children of Saint John Neumann Parish in Scranton’s South Side.

The Saint John Neumann pastoral associate noted four separate First Holy Communion ceremonies needed to take place this summer to provide for gatherings of small groups of first communicants and their parents. But the essence of the occasions was never compromised.

Sister shared, “The children were excited and ready to see their friends and family and to finally come to the Feast!”

The Scranton city parish followed with the Rite of Baptism for those ranging in age from children to adults. Confirmation ceremonies originally slated for the end of May for 35 young parishioners and adults were first rescheduled for October but ultimately celebrated earlier this month.

“Our philosophy was to be flexible with all of our celebrations and to make them a priority while maintaining the safety of everyone,” said Sister Suzie. “We know that this was not easy for families, but hopefully it helps all of us to grow and recognize that it is our faith that will bring us through these times.”

She added, “All of our families have been grateful, and many remarked that the simplicity made it special and recognized that the emphasis is on the sacrament.”

At Blessed Sacrament Parish in Throop, First Holy Communion and Confirmation were administered a day apart by their pastor, Monsignor Michael Delaney, who felt the month of July presented the best opportunity for the celebration of the sacraments.

Referring to the First Communion ceremony and the small class size that enabled the children to receive as one body, Blessed Sacrament DRE Karen Doyle stated the parish broke from tradition as students sat with their parents, with social distancing and mask requirements in place.

Continued on next page



With his family looking on, Mason Kelly receives his First Holy Communion at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Throop from Monsignor Michael Delaney, pastor.



A young First Communicant, donning his “Holy Communion Best,” receives from Father Michael Bryant, pastor of Saint John Neumann Parish, at Nativity of Our Lord Church in South Scranton.



Adult Baptism at Saint John Neumann in Scranton.

God's power, love and mercy sustain us wherever we find ourselves

Bishop Bambera spreads message of hope during closing Mass of 2020 Solemn Novena to Saint Ann

SCRANTON – Wearing a mask and sitting on a lawn chair directly in front of a sign encouraging social distancing, Kim Derbin waited patiently for the closing Mass of the Solemn Novena to Saint Ann to begin on Sunday, July 26, 2020.

"I'm blessed. I try not to ask for too much. I do ask for patience," Derbin said.

The 96th Novena at the National Shrine of Saint Ann in West Scranton was unlike any other for many reasons. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all Masses and services were held indoors where seating capacity was limited and sanitization a constant priority.

But for Derbin, the 2020 Novena was different for another reason, it was the first since her mother passed away last summer.

"She is close to me now. She is with me all the time like God is with me," Derbin added, saying she was thankful the ten days of prayer and devotion were allowed to go on. "I think some people think 'it's so different,' but different is okay."

Traditionally, Novena crowds number in the tens-of-thousands. This year, the numbers were just a fraction of that. Many chose to watch Novena services on CTV: Catholic Television or social media.

"I watched it on TV. I made a point to watch this past week," Antoinette Varvaglionne of Pittston said.

Varvaglionne attended the closing Mass of the Novena. It was her first time at the Basilica this year which she said was unusual.

"You hope and pray all of this goes away and we can get back to our lives," Varvaglionne explained.



In order to maintain social distancing, people sat in specifically marked pews during the closing Mass of the 96th Solemn Novena to Saint Ann in West Scranton. (Photos/Eric Deabill)

The preachers at this year's Novena focused on the theme "By His Wounds, We Are Healed."

During the closing Mass, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera focused on hope – saying despite the pandemic – God is woven into our lives and His power, love and mercy sustain us wherever we find ourselves and whatever the challenges facing us may be.

"If you stop and consider what we've been up against for the past five months, we've been immersed in a global pandemic that continues to wreak havoc throughout the world. We've been isolated one from another, afraid for our own well-being and that of those we love. We've been confronted with loss, grief and pain...yet through it all, something quite miraculous has occurred. We have been living out our faith – even and especially in the midst of adversity," Bishop Bambera said. "So many among us have

looked beyond themselves and their own comfort and well-being to serve the most vulnerable. Many of you have reached out to the lonely and have sought to care for the brokenhearted. Countless numbers of you have shared from your bounty with those who have lost so much. In so responding to our suffering world, countless numbers of you have acknowledged, almost instinctively, where the true and lasting treasures of God are to be found. They are found within us and among us, aren't they?"

During his homily, the bishop noted that while this year's Novena looked much different, the Novena prayers can truly be said anywhere. He used an example to illustrate his point.

"I went into the doctor's office for a check-up the other day at 7:15 a.m., and as I signed in at the desk, the woman sitting behind it held up her Novena prayers,

reminding me that they can be prayed wherever we are," he illustrated.

Al and Madaline Lori of Waverly listened to the bishop's homily while maintaining social distancing outside the Basilica.

During a normal year, the couple would attend services up to five or six days. This year, they only came in person twice.

"I feel peace here. It brings me right back to my childhood and I strongly believe in the Blessed Virgin and Saint Ann," Madaline Lori said. "Over the years, there have been so many medical things we've laid before her and asked for help, and she has come through all the time."

While noting that only about 65 people sat outside during the closing Mass, Al Lori said the precautions in place didn't dampen the experience.

"We have to be safe. It makes sense to be more careful," he added.



People continued the tradition of participating in the closing Mass outside by sitting socially distant from one another on the grass outside the Basilica of the National Shrine of Saint Ann.

Parish families around diocese celebrate First Sacraments

Continued from Page 4

"When it was time for the children to come to the table of our Lord and receive



Assisted by their families, Ryan Fagan, left, and Ava Merrifield receive First Holy Communion in Saint Anthony Church at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Throop.

the Eucharist for the very first time, their parents accompanied them," she said. "It was beautiful to see parents assist their child in such a special way," explaining that



parents stood on either side of their First Communicant and helped with removing his or her mask to consume the Eucharist.

"The days were special days for all our families," remarked Doyle. "We did not dwell on what we could not do or what we had to do. We were in the House of the Lord, and I know we were blessed to see the children receive their sacraments."

Posing with her family in the pews of Nativity of Our Lord Church at Saint John Neumann Parish in Scranton, a girl in her Communion finery awaits, with joyful anticipation, to receive her First Holy Communion with her class.



'Repair My House....' — The Lord's Words to Saint Francis of Assisi in the 13th Century

Parishes renovate, revitalize their houses of worship throughout the Diocese

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has certainly put a hold on or outright cancelled many parish activities and traditions faithful have come to enjoy and appreciate each year without much second thought. However, one component of parish life the coronavirus cannot stand in the way of is the continuous need for upgrades and renovations to our beloved houses of worship and essential church facilities.

Parish refurbishment projects have abounded recently around the Diocese of Scranton. Several notable physical restoration campaigns reached their celebrated conclusions, while others remain ongoing with joyful anticipation.

Ready to Celebrate at Peckville Parish

The parish community of Sacred Heart of Jesus in Peckville eagerly awaits the celebration of the 50th anniversary of their present church edifice in Lackawanna

County's Mid Valley region, which has undergone significant improvements to fittingly host the jubilee occasion.

According to parish pastor Father Andy Kurovsky, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church will showcase its new look during the upcoming Labor Day Weekend on Sunday, Sept. 6, when a Golden Jubilee Mass of Thanksgiving will be offered to commemorate the dedication of the unique church structure in 1970.

Referring to Sacred Heart of Jesus as "that round church" he heard it called when he first arrived to shepherd the Peckville parish faithful nearly three years ago, Father Kurovsky said the house of worship was considered "avant garde" when it was built 50 years ago under the guiding hand of Sacred Heart's founding pastor, Father Joseph Gilbride.

"As a presider, it is one of the greatest places to celebrate liturgy," the pastor said of his "sanctuary in the round," originally



Saint Basil's in Dushore

built to accommodate 700 worshippers. "As you look out at the congregation, you have people all around you, a wonderfully welcoming community of faith."

Father remarked the parish embraces the church's signature intimacy and charm and thrives on their unofficial epithet: "The Round Church...where there's room for everyone!"

"By the grace of God, this phrase has been given flesh by the 300-plus families who have joined in recent years, as well as by long-standing members who have welcomed them with open arms."

Father Kurovsky noted that in the past 50 years, Sacred Heart Church had undergone just one major renovation project — in 1984. With the church showing its wear, preparations for its 50th anniversary year provided the ideal opportunity for upgrades and updates and a \$450,000 jubilee restoration campaign was launched.

"While the work in the interior of the church and the sanctuary have been completed," he said, "other renovations are still ongoing."

Of note, colorful carpeting in the sanctuary has been replaced by wooden flooring and the overall interior of the church has been shaded with more earthy tones to match the new ceiling with its wood-like look. Also, something

old became new again when the original tabernacle from the parish's beginnings in 1946 was discovered, and the decision was made to refurbish the age-old altar piece and restore it to prominence in the sanctuary.

The former baptismal font that contained a small bowl has been reconfigured to provide flowing water for the Sacrament of Baptism.

"The hallways leading into the nave (of the church) have been brightened and an office has been added for our newly created position of Minister of Worship," Father commented. "We have also put in a separate reconciliation room as an addition to our private prayer chapel, which is used for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and private Eucharistic prayer and reflection."

The 50th anniversary

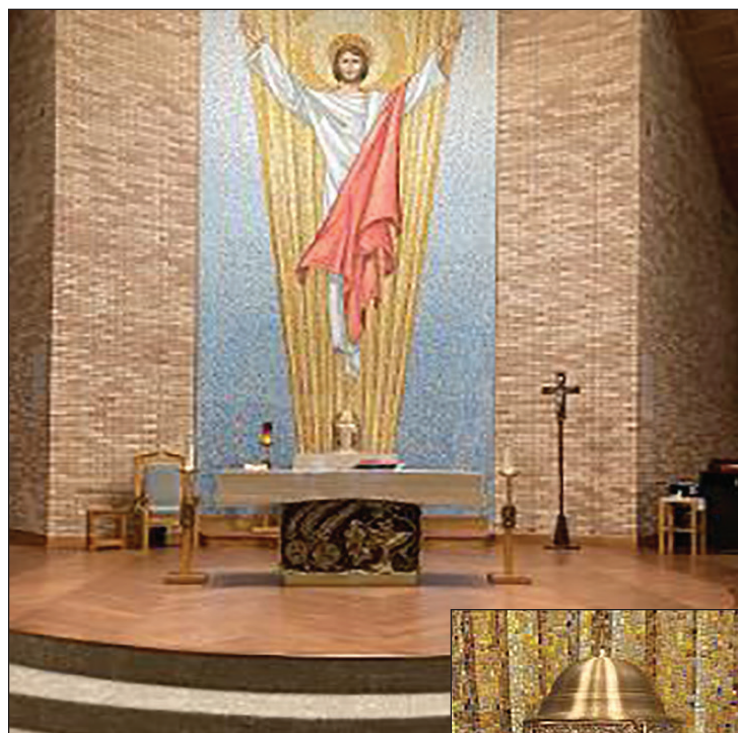
church celebration in September anticipates the 75th Jubilee of the founding of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in 1946, which, it is hoped, can be observed with a Pontifical Mass of Thanksgiving on April 24, 2021.

Venerable Church in Pittston Restored

The Pittston parish community of Saint John the Evangelist entered the new year of 2020 with a clear vision of promise and hope for their iconic house of worship on William Street, which has dominated the city's skyline for 130 years.

According to Father Joseph Elston, pastor of the Pittston parishes of Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Joseph Marello, the extensive restoration

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Renovations in preparation for the 50th anniversary celebration of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Peckville included a complete restoration of the tabernacle from the original church when the parish was founded 75 years ago.



One of the highlights of the extensive renovations at Pittston's Saint John the Evangelist Church is the new baptismal font imported from Italy.

Marello, the extensive restoration project of Saint John Church began in earnest in January as the parish launched its “2020: Bringing Our Faith into Focus” campaign.

The generosity of parishioners and friends of Saint John’s spearheaded the massive renovation undertaking, which



The recently refurbished interior of Saint John the Evangelist Church in Pittston features restoration work affecting every aspect of the majestic house of worship on William Street.

would close the church doors and move liturgical celebrations and the faithful to the nearby church hall for six months.

“The final Mass before the project got underway was held on the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6,” Father Elston related, “work began the very next day.”

Saint John’s would be revitalized in its entirety, with a complete repainting of the church’s interior and installation of new flooring. An ornate baptismal font imported from Pietrasanta, Italy, now graces the center aisle, accented by commemorative floor tiles in homage to the four parish communities Saint John the Evangelist currently encompasses.

New sanctuary chairs were provided by Saint Meinrad Archabbey in Indiana. The presider’s chair has been placed in honor of Monsignor John Bendik, Saint John’s pastor emeritus who is an alumnus of Saint Meinrad School of Theology.

When the first public Mass in the newly restored Saint John the Evangelist Church was celebrated on July 18, proud parishioners and friends once again enjoyed the angelic tones of the 1920s George Kilgen and Son pipe organ, which underwent a thorough cleaning and refurbishing. One of the organ’s trumpet ranks was applied with gold finish, remounted

horizontally and renamed the “Evangelist Trumpet” in tribute to the parish patron saint.

Other aspects of the renovation included restoration of the church’s marble work and pews and complete refurbishment of the edifice’s imposing wooden front doors.

Founded in 1854, Saint John the Evangelist Parish constructed

The words of Father Thom Major proudly proclaim the completion of a daunting restoration project for Saint Basil Church at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Dushore.

When a tornado struck Saint Basil’s on April 14, 2019, it came on the heels of the parish already facing major expenses as the furnace in the church hall stopped working two months before and needed to be replaced.

“We lost our steeple and roof of the church,” Father Major said of the fierce Palm Sunday night storm. “Trees were uprooted and tombstones toppled as the storm hit the church roof and rectory directly.”

That made the need to raise money for capital improvements greater than ever and, as Father Major explained, the roof restoration project proved more expensive than originally believed.

“Meanwhile, furnaces and hot water heaters needed to be replaced,” he said, “and we as a parish had just completed restoration of the Saint John Neumann Shrine in Sugar Ridge,” with the help of the Habitat for Divinity young corps of volunteers from the Diocese of Scranton.

As the Immaculate Heart of Mary pastor related, the parish’s capital campaign efforts proved truly remarkable as faithful made the necessary sacrifices and raised nearly \$200,000 for the urgent repair and replacement work.

“Bad weather and the COVID virus delayed construction several times, but (we) were able to complete the work for July 4, in time for us to open the churches with our summer Mass schedule,”



The iconic steeple of Saint Basil Church in Dushore, along with its roof, has been completely replaced following the devastating Palm Sunday night tornado in 2019.



Scaffolding covers the exterior of the facade of the cathedral-like Church of Saint Gabriel at Annunciation in Parish Hazleton.

said Father Major, who credited numerous local professionals, parishioners and even a crew of men from the Amish community for assisting with the tornado clean-up and rebuilding of the church.

Historic Saint Basil Church dates back nearly 150 years to 1873. “We are now ready to serve well into the 21st century,” the pastor remarked.

Restoring Saint Gabriel’s Magnificence in Hazleton

Faced with the impending closure of an aged and deteriorating — yet still magnificent — Saint Gabriel Church, the Annunciation Parish community in Hazleton embarked on a major capital campaign in late 2018 to save their venerable house of worship.

The “Restore His House” campaign continues its efforts to complete the \$1 million restoration of Saint Gabriel Church, explained Saint Joseph Oblate Father Mariusz Beczek, Annunciation’s pastor.

Often referred to as having the appearance of a grand cathedral, Saint Gabriel’s, Father Beczek noted, “testifies to the grandeur of the Catholic faith, not only because of the beauty of the sacred

space, but also because of the determination of the poor Irish immigrants,” who built the church at the beginning of the last century.

During the end of the 20th century and into the new millennium, the Hazleton Catholic community has benefited from the support and devotion from a new wave of immigrants — those of Hispanic and Latino origin — who have been welcomed and embraced by Annunciation Parish.

According to Tom Kennedy, chairman of the Annunciation capital campaign, the parish has been blessed with enough financial support to get the prodigious church restoration project off the ground. Numerous donations and pledges have come not only from the faithful in the pews, including the growing Hispanic congregation, but former parishioners, graduates of the former Saint Gabriel School, and area residents.

“More money needs to be raised,” Kennedy said, “but the generosity of the faithful will certainly allow Saint Gabriel’s Church at Annunciation Parish to be, once again, a sparkling presence in Hazleton and, more importantly, the spiritual home for all who choose to worship here.”

Closure of Villa of Our Lady Retreat ends Bernardine Franciscan Sisters' Ministry of Service in the Diocese

MOUNT POCONO — When the doors of Villa of Our Lady Retreat House closed earlier this month, it closed an historical chapter of long and distinguished service in the Diocese of the Scranton by the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters dating back nearly 100 years.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera served as principal celebrant and homilist for a final Mass of Gratitude and Thanksgiving on August 1 in the Villa of Our Lady chapel. A group of Bernardine Franciscans joined the last three nuns in residence at the well-known retreat house — Bernardine Franciscan Sisters Jean Anthony Rodgers, Josandra Ciucci and Anna Mae Milus.

Several local clergy concelebrated the closing liturgy attended by friends, volunteers and co-workers who supported the Bernardine community in their landmark ministry in the diocese, which began in 1905. Their ministerial service stretched from catechetics to all levels of education; elder care to outreach to the poor; and pastoral, prison and retreat ministry to spiritual direction.

Reflecting on the passing of Villa of Our Lady Retreat House as the last mission entrusted to the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters in the diocese, Bishop Bambera lauded their far-reaching apostolic works.



Bishop Bambera with Sister Marilisa da Silva, congregational minister for the Bernardine Franciscan religious community, at the Mass of Thanksgiving officially closing Villa of Our Lady Retreat House in Mount Pocono on Aug. 1, 2020.

"After more than 125 years of service in the Diocese of Scranton, you are being called to serve in different ways and places," Bishop Bambera said, "yet, with the same commitment to spreading the good news of God's love and mercy to the faithful entrusted to your care."

He continued with a nostalgic reflection on his own personal encounters with the Bernardine Franciscan congregation.

"Of course, as a priest and bishop, I've had many opportunities to engage the Sisters of your community — the happiest of which were my years as pastor of Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary parish in Dickson City, where your Sisters staffed the parish school since its beginning days," the Bishop recalled.

According to Bernardine Franciscan Sister Rosemary Stets, congregation historian, the first mission of the OSF congregation in the Scranton Diocese was to serve Saint Stanislaus Parish School in Nanticoke in the early 1900s, followed by ministry at Saint Mary Parish in Nanticoke.

In the succeeding years, the Bernardine Sisters would teach in 32 elementary schools and six high schools; staff orphanages in Nanticoke and Elmhurst, two health care facilities in Hazleton, and their signature Villa of Our Lady Retreat House in Mount Pocono.

By the mid-20th century, the religious community's presence increased and a need arose for a provincial headquarters in the Diocese. The OSF Sisters established Saint Francis Province in Scranton on Clay Avenue. The provincial house would be the central location for the Bernardine Franciscans in Eastern Pennsylvania until 1958 when it was relocated to Reading.

The closing remarks of Bernardine Franciscan Sister Marilisa da Silva, congregational minister, included praise and gratitude for the trio of Villa of Our Lady Sisters who orchestrated the closure process during the past six months. "We realize that this enormous task was possible through the generosity of our lay employees who worked tirelessly with the Sisters," she said.



Sister Marilisa's remarks served as the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters' farewell address to the Diocese as she offered, "This day is one of joy for all the many blessings we have received through our ministry at Villa of Our Lady Retreat House, dating back to our foundress who sent Sisters to this area shortly after the congregation was settled in the United States.

"We know our spiritual legacy in the diocese will not be forgotten, and we will treasure the memory of having served so many people that accompanied us on this journey. We move on with hope, knowing that closure can also mean a new beginning, according to the plan of God."



Above, the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters arrive at Saint Joseph Church in Hazleton to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Saint Joseph Hospital, Hazleton, on Sept. 8, 1974. Below, in an undated photo, Sister Laetissima Grula and Sister Jan Marie serving in the Pediatric Department at Saint Joseph Hospital.



In this undated photo, Bernardine Franciscan Sister Manuelita Jankowski with students in the library at the former Saint Mary School in Dickson City.



The Together Project brings young adults together during pandemic

SCRANTON – At a time when young adults are being encouraged to remain physically distant from one another due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, they are still finding ways to come together spiritually.

On Monday, July 27, the Diocese of Scranton Office for Parish Life launched *The Together Project*, an opportunity for high school students to join together in a virtual community building experience.

“The ultimate goal of *The Together Project* is to keep us all together. We’re building a community by small group discussion,” Shannon Kowalski, Diocesan Director for Service and Mission, said during the opening session of the virtual experience. “We’re all in this together and staying open to the spirit.”



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera takes part in the launch of *The Together Project* via videoconference on July 27, 2020. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera joined the initial meeting of *The Together Project*, leading the young adults in prayer, joining them in their discussion on faith and answering questions that they had.

The Together Project was started and designed by young people who didn’t want to give up the new and old friendships they would have fortified at summer camps, retreats and parish events. “I’m so glad we’ve gotten

together,” student leader Annabelle Callis said.

For the last several weeks, the students have continued the momentum of the opening session by taking part in weekly small group discussions and prayer opportunities.

High school students from around the diocese are taking part in *The Together Project*. Some of their hometowns include Moscow, Scranton, Clarks Summit, Williamsport, Dallas, East Stroudsburg, Wilkes-Barre, Tunkhannock and Mountain Top.

During the initial meeting of *The Together Project*, the young adults focused on what they are most grateful for – and what has been the most challenging part – during the COVID-19 pandemic.

One student said she was thankful that her entire family

has been able to be together while under stay-at-home orders which is highly unusual. When discussing the challenges, students focused on having extra down-time and not being able to go to Mass in person.

As the conversation continued, one young adult said she has now been blessed with extra time to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet daily and even start a blog for Catholic teens.

As the initial session wrapped up, Bishop Bambera reminded the young adults that God is always there for them, especially during these difficult times, and they should never hesitate to call on him.

“I’m so incredibly struck by all of you and the profound things that you have shared,” the bishop said.

To learn more about *The Together Project*, visit www.dioceseofscranton.org.

Faith Alive! platform being offered to parishes for religious education

Continued from Page 1

Prevention and Pennsylvania Department of Health, she knows many others would need a virtual option.

Since many parishes across the Diocese use a wide variety of materials, Douglas felt the Faith Alive! platform would provide the most flexibility for parishes looking to institute any type of virtual learning.

“Our goal was to find a platform that is user-friendly and interactive for children and their families, a landing page for all of their religious education needs. Parishes are able to use Faith Alive! for religious education, RCIA, adult formation, and a wide variety of other options. That means the pastors, DREs, catechists and RCIA coordinators can all utilize this platform,” Douglas explained.

While no parish will be required to utilize the Faith Alive! resource, all parishes have been invited to consider it and learn about the many possible uses it could bring.

“They can do live sessions, they can record a session and send it out, they can do anything that works in their parish. They can do a hybrid program, bringing students in one week and working remotely the next week,” Douglas explained.

Besides its flexibility, Douglas says the Faith Alive! platform also allows for increased collaboration between parishes in the Diocese.

“Faith Alive! can really open up a lot of opportunities and faith

sharing at a time when we need it more than ever. Everything that is on the diocesan platform learning site enables the directors of religious education access to what they need for weekly classes. All the information can be shared amongst the parishes,” she added. “As diocesan administrators we have the ability to load in curriculum or activities for parishes to access including YouTube videos, a prayer service, Mass recordings and at-home family formation activities.”

Throughout the course of the pandemic, Douglas has been coordinating weekly meetings of religious education directors across the Diocese to discuss opportunities and strategize for the fall.

“In our weekly meetings with the DREs, it was often said that it gave them great peace to know they were not alone in trying to figure out how to conduct classes remotely,” she added.

At Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Mary Kennedy says her pastor, Rev. Richard Beck, has taken an active role and is in full support of taking part in the Faith Alive! platform. She believes using it will help fulfill their mission of having each student create and then deepen a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

“It would have been so hard for each individual parish to try and come up with that on their own. I have some technical experience, but not a great deal, so their support is what is really making this experience happen,” she said.



The Diocese of Scranton Office for Parish Life is happy to announce that it will be having a Remote Catechist Camp this month.

The theme is: “Bloom Where You are Planted!”

The two-day camp will be held on Tuesday, August 18 from 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. and Wednesday, August 19 from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Chris and Linda Padgett will be joining us virtually for this program.

Chris married his high school sweetheart Linda more than 26 years ago. They have nine children, two grandchildren and live north of Syracuse, NY. Chris is a lay evangelist, author, musician, and teacher traveling the world offering missions, lectures, keynotes, and concerts.

Together, Chris and Linda provide marriage retreats, Pre-Cana courses for their home diocese and are constantly looking for new ways to encourage families and marriages. Chris’s most recent books are *Holy Marriage, Happy Marriage* (Franciscan Media), *Why the Eucharist Matters for Your Life* (The Word Among us), and *I’m Not Ok, You’re Not Ok, but it’s Ok* (Dynamic Catholic). Chris also teaches university courses for Catholic Distance University.

Who could attend Catechist Camp?

- A person who loves God and desires a deeper knowledge of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- A person who has a childlike spirit and understands the wisdom of teaching children by example, and using words, when necessary
- A person who ponders the Gospel and finds the joy sharing life stories that echo the Good News of Jesus
- A person who participates in the Eucharist and is humbly aware of living the Works of Mercy
- A person who is a practicing Catholic and feels an inner nudge to learn more about our faith
- A person who is a parent, grandparent, godparent, single person, college student and is not necessarily a person who has studied theology and Scripture, or an experienced teacher

To learn more about Remote Catechist Camp or to register, please contact Jacki Douglas, Director of Word and Lifelong Faith Formation, at jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org or call (570)207-2213 x-1100.



Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time: August 16, 2020



FIRST READING
IS 56:1, 6-7

Thus says the LORD: Observe what is right, do what is just; for my salvation is about to come, my justice, about to be revealed.

The foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, ministering to him, loving the name of the LORD, and becoming his servants — all who keep the sabbath free from profanation and hold to my covenant, them I will bring to my holy mountain and make joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar, for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM
PS 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8

Response: O God, let all the nations praise you!

SECOND READING
ROM 11:13-15, 29-32

Brothers and sisters: I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I glory in my ministry in order to make my race jealous and thus save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable. Just as you once disobeyed God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now disobeyed in order that, by virtue of the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy.

For God delivered all to disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all.

GOSPEL READING
MT 15:21-28

At that time, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, “Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon.”

But Jesus did not say a word in answer to her. Jesus’ disciples came and asked him, “Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us.”

He said in reply, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

But the woman came and did Jesus homage, saying, “Lord, help me.”

He said in reply, “It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs.”

She said, “Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters.”

Then Jesus said to her in reply, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And the woman’s daughter was healed from that hour.



Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time: August 23, 2020



FIRST READING
IS 22:19-23

Thus says the LORD to Shebna, master of the palace: “I will thrust you from your office and pull you down from your station. On that day I will summon my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiah; I will clothe him with your robe, and gird him with your sash, and give over to him your authority.

“He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. I will place the key of the House of David on Eliakim’s shoulder; when he opens, no one shall shut when he shuts, no one shall open. I will fix him like a peg in a sure spot, to be a place of honor for his family.”

RESPONSORIAL PSALM
PS 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8

Response: Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands.

SECOND READING
ROM 11:33-36

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!
How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways!

For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has been his counselor? Or who has given the Lord anything that he may be repaid?

For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

GOSPEL READING
MT 16:13-20

Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi and he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

They replied, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

Simon Peter said in reply, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus said to him in reply, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Then he strictly ordered his disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.



Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time: August 30, 2020



FIRST READING
JER 20:7-9

You duped me, O LORD, and I let myself be duped; you were too strong for me, and you triumphed. All the day I am an object of laughter; everyone mocks me.

Whenever I speak, I must cry out, violence and outrage is my message; the word of the LORD has brought me derision and reproach all the day.

I say to myself, I will not mention him, I will speak in his name no more. But then it becomes like fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones; I grow weary holding it in, I cannot endure it.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM
PS 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9

Response: My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.

SECOND READING
ROM 12:1-2

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living

sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship.

Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.

GOSPEL READING
MT 16:21-27

Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised.

Then Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him, “God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you.”

He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.”

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his life? For the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father’s glory, and then he will repay all according to his conduct.”



Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time: September 6, 2020



FIRST READING EZ 33:7-9

Thus says the LORD: You, son of man, I have appointed watchman for the house of Israel; when you hear me say anything, you shall warn them for me.

If I tell the wicked, “O wicked one, you shall surely die,” and you do not speak out to dissuade the wicked from his way, the wicked shall die for his guilt, but I will hold you responsible for his death. But if you warn the wicked, trying to turn him from his way, and he refuses to turn from his way, he shall die for his guilt, but you shall save yourself.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

Response: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

SECOND READING ROM 13:8-10

Brothers and sisters: Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; you shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Love does no evil to the neighbor; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law.

GOSPEL READING MT 18:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples: “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that ‘every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.’

If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector.

Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Again, amen, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”



Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time: September 13, 2020



FIRST READING SIR 27:30-28:7

Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight. The vengeful will suffer the LORD’s vengeance, for he remembers their sins in detail.

Forgive your neighbor’s injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.

Could anyone nourish anger against another and expect healing from the LORD? Could anyone refuse mercy to another like himself, can he seek pardon for his own sins? If one who is but flesh cherishes wrath, who will forgive his sins?

Remember your last days, set enmity aside; remember death and decay, and cease from sin! Think of the commandments, hate not your neighbor; remember the Most High’s covenant, and overlook faults.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12

Response: The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger, and rich in compassion.

SECOND READING ROM 14:7-9

Brothers and sisters: None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself.

For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.

For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

GOSPEL READING MT 18:21-35

Peter approached Jesus and asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?”

Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants.

When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt.

At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.’

Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan.

When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, ‘Pay back what you owe.’

Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ But he refused.

Instead, he had the fellow servant put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?’

Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart.”

Faith wobbles sometimes; what counts is calling for God’s help, Pope Francis says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Everyone, including the pope, experiences trials that can shake his or her faith; the key to survival is to call out to the Lord for help, Pope Francis said.

“When we have strong feelings of doubt and fear and we seem to be sinking, (and) in life’s difficult moments when everything becomes dark, we must not be ashamed to cry out like Peter, ‘Lord, save me,’” the pope said Aug. 9, commenting on the day’s Gospel story in his Angelus address.

In the passage, Matthew 14:22-33, Jesus walks on the water of the stormy

lake, but the disciples think they are seeing a ghost. Jesus reassures them that it is he, but Peter wants proof. Jesus calls him to walk on the water as well, but Peter gets frightened and starts sinking.

Peter cries out, “Lord, save me,” and Jesus takes him by the hand.

“This Gospel narrative is an invitation to abandon ourselves trustingly to God in every moment of our life, especially in times of trial and turmoil,” Pope Francis said.

Like Peter, he said, believers must learn “to knock on God’s heart, on Jesus’ heart.”

“Lord, save me” is “a beautiful prayer.

We can repeat it many times,” the pope said.

And believers also should reflect on how Jesus responded: immediately reaching out and taking Peter’s hand, showing that God “never abandons us.”

“Having faith means keeping your heart turned to God, to his love, to his fatherly tenderness amid the storm,” the pope told his visitors.

“In dark moments, in sad moments, he is well aware that our faith is weak; all of us are people of little faith – all of us, myself included,” the pope said. “Our faith is weak; our journey can be troubled, hindered by adverse forces,” but the Lord

is “present beside us lifting us back up after our falls, helping us grow in faith.”

Pope Francis also said the disciples’ boat on the stormy sea is a symbol of the church, “which in every age encounters headwinds, very harsh trials at times: we recall certain long and ferocious persecutions of the last century, and even today in certain places.”

“In situations like that,” he said, the church “may be tempted to think that God has abandoned her. But, in reality, it is precisely in those moments that the witness of faith, the witness of love, the witness of hope shines the most.”

"I am thankful for whatever I get"

Catholic Social Services' emergency food distribution helps hundreds of families

CARBONDALE – Even before the emergency food distribution was slated to start outside the Catholic Social Services Carbondale office on July 17, cars were lined up down River Street.

"The need is so intense, I've never, never seen it so diverse," Michelle Santanna, Catholic Social Services Carbondale manager, said.

For more than two hours, volunteers and employees handed out boxes of fresh produce and other food items to people in need.

"The need is enormous. We get phone calls every day," Catholic Social Services receptionist Eileen Roman said. "Wherever somebody comes from, we don't question them. We just say it's here for everyone to have."

At the end of a two-hour time period, the emergency food distribution event had helped 338 families. That includes 286 adults, 161 children and 153 seniors.

"The stories are just overwhelming. We know there is a great, great need and a great suffering in a lot of people that come for food here," Roman added.

The beneficiaries of the food distribution were thankful for the helping hand.



Volunteers and employees from Catholic Social Services distribute fresh produce during an emergency food distribution event on July 17, 2020. (Photos/Eric Deabill)

"I'm thankful for whatever I get," Raymond Ward of Carbondale said.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Ward said he has had to make difficult choices between paying bills and buying food.

"It means I'll be able to pay all my bills," he added.

Seeing all of the volunteers and workers braving the July heat to help their neighbors in need left a lasting impression on Ward. He expects the food he received would be able to last for months.

"It's like Christmas when you go home, opening it up," he

explained. It'll probably last three, four months. I'll stretch it out."

The Catholic Social Services Carbondale office distributes food five days at its pantry but since the COVID-19 pandemic started has also held four emergency food distributions to help individuals and families who are struggling.

Santanna says many people have lost jobs, are experiencing long delays in getting unemployment compensation or faced hardships feeding children when schools closed abruptly in March. Since the beginning of the



A volunteer places a bag of food in the trunk of a car during an emergency food distribution outside the CSS office on River Street in Carbondale.

coronavirus, she estimates serving between 1200-1500 families each month just from her office in Carbondale.

"Thank God for the Weinberg Regional Food Bank because we have bags ready on a consistent basis and we are seeing a lot of the same people week by week, it is how they're feeding their families," Santanna explained.

Organizers say that recipients don't need to be Catholic or even live in Carbondale to get assistance. They stress they are a community resource open to anyone in need.

"Anyone that needs it can come here to see us for it (food). I'd say there is a great need and we're here to try and fill that need for all the people that we can," Roman said.

If you would like to assist the efforts of the Carbondale office of Catholic Social Services to help feed people in our community, monetary donations can be made at www.dioceseofscranton.org/emergencyfund or by mailing a donation to Catholic Social Services, 34 River Street, Carbondale, PA 18407.

Cargill awards \$60,000 grant to Catholic Social Services in Hazleton

HAZLETON – Cargill Protein recently awarded a \$60,000 grant to Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton to support the Saint Joseph Food Pantry and Divine Providence Shelter in Hazleton and provide essential resources to the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The grant money was made available to help CSS's Hazleton office respond to several urgent needs as requests for assistance continue to grow. The funding came from Cargill's corporate offices in Minnesota, and the leadership team at the Hazleton facility chose to make the donation to Catholic Social Services, a front-lines social-services responder to hunger and other human needs. In addition to its food pantry and homeless shelter in Hazleton, Catholic



Shown, from left: Aaron Humes, general manager, Cargill Protein, Hazleton; Neil Oberto, director, Catholic Social Services of The Diocese of Scranton serving the greater Hazleton area; Kristen Stuft Adams, operations superintendent, Cargill Protein; Ted Smith, maintenance manager, Cargill Protein; Danielle Matarella, office manager, Catholic Social Services/Hazleton.

Social Services also operates a Family Center, through which it regularly serves meals to those in need.

The Hazleton office of Catholic Social Services has seen a significant increase in requests for

food and other assistance during the pandemic and has shifted its service models to respond quickly and accordingly.

During the month of May 2020, the Saint Joseph Food Pantry served 751 families. In June 2020,

that number increased to 789 families. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pantry typically served an average of 400-425 families per month.

The Divine Providence Shelter has also taken numerous safety precautions to ensure the health and safety of all clients. During the months of May and June 2020, a total of 430 nights of shelter were provided to people in need in the Hazleton community.

Cargill is working with nonprofit and NGO partners around the globe to help address food security, health and safety needs and industry challenges due to the spread of COVID-19 and has committed \$35 million to COVID-19 relief and recovery efforts.

"We are inspired by the medical professionals, first

responders, workers and farmers in our communities who are making sure our essential needs are met," said Aaron Humes, general manager of Cargill Protein's Hazleton plant. "Thanks to our partner organizations, such as Catholic Social Services, for ensuring no one goes hungry during these unprecedented times."

For more information about the programs provided by the Hazleton office of Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton, call (570) 455-1521

Holy Cross graduates urged to put Jesus' message of love into action

PECKVILLE – As she welcomed her Holy Cross classmates to their graduation ceremony at Valley View's John Henzes/Veterans Memorial Stadium on July 20, 2020, salutatorian Leslie O'Connor also gave them a mission moving forward.

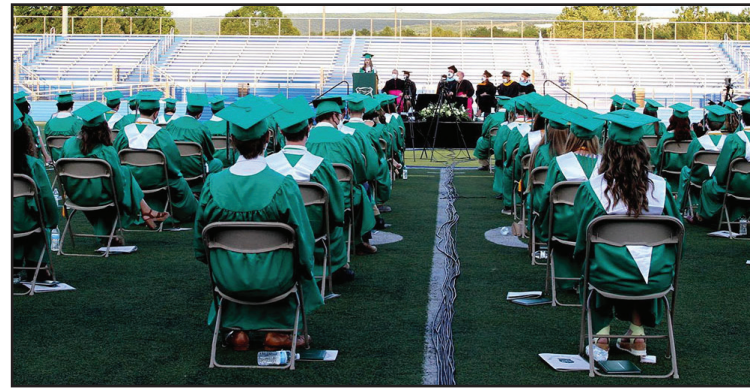
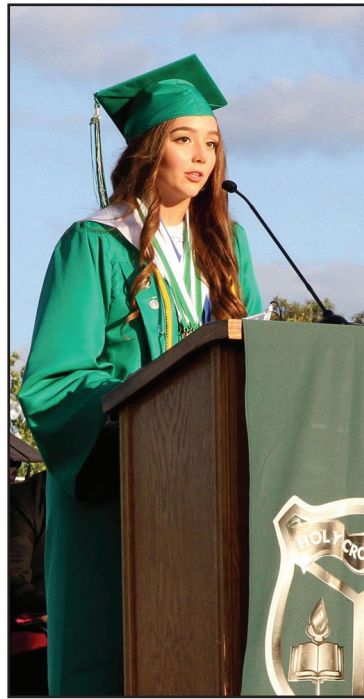
"Let us all work harder at healing the world than we ever have at anything else in our lives," the Archbald native challenged her peers.

During her speech, O'Connor tackled a difficult topic – the fact that many people refuse to listen to one another and refuse to understand people who have different ideas.

"We surround ourselves solely with those who agree with us and seek to isolate ourselves from those with different points of view. We stigmatize, marginalize, generalize and stereotype those whose beliefs challenge our own without taking the time to learn the realities of these individuals, their situations or the basis for their opinions," O'Connor said.

True to her Catholic faith and what she learned at Holy Cross High School, O'Connor reflected on the life and message of Jesus to inspire her fellow graduates. She said Jesus' message of "uncompromising, indiscriminate love" should be a guiding principle.

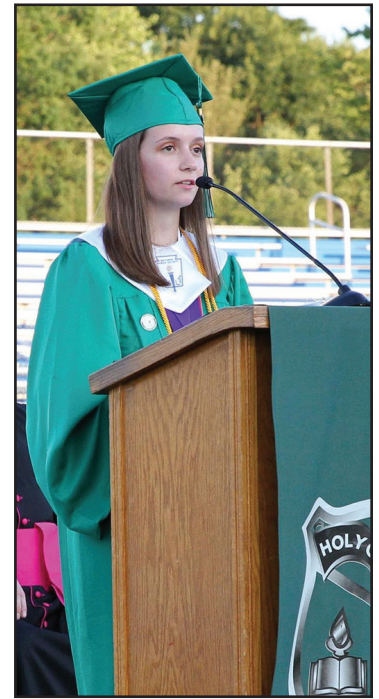
"What will produce healthy change, however, is truly putting



Left: Leslie O'Connor delivers the Salutatorian address during the Holy Cross High School graduation ceremony on July 20, 2020.

Above: Graduating seniors sit physically distanced from one another on the football field at Valley View's John Henzes/Veterans Memorial Stadium in Peckville.

Right: Tori Kovalchick delivers the Valedictorian address during the Holy Cross High School graduation ceremony. (Photos/Karin Dorman Images)



Jesus' message into action; loving those who don't love us. Loving everyone. Treating our neighbors as we would want them to treat us. Being willing to spread our message to all and being even more willing to allow all other messages to be spread to us," the Holy Cross salutatorian said. "If we are willing to consider, listen to, and love the beliefs of all people, especially those opposing ourselves, our hearts and our communities will have no room for hate or division, as they shouldn't."

A total of 71 graduates received diplomas at the Commencement ceremony,

which featured students wearing masks and sitting socially distant from each other in chairs on the football field due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Family and friends were able to watch from the stadium seats and dozens of others watched a livestream provided by the school.

During her valedictorian address, Tori Kovalchick said it would be impossible to summarize the experiences of the Holy Cross Class of 2020 with a single story, but emphasized the well-rounded education all of the graduates received.

"What makes our story at

Holy Cross especially unique is our ability to celebrate and explore our Catholic faith each day. We have been afforded the privilege to discern our character while deepening our relationship with God," the Factoryville native said. "We've shared the sacraments as a school community and learned the power of prayer."

Kovalchick added that the Holy Cross educational experience motivated the Class of 2020 to serve God by serving those around them and taught them that genuine discipleship goes far beyond attending Mass on Sundays.

"It involves treating God's creation and children with respect every day," Kovalchick explained.

Of the 71 Holy Cross graduates, 60 of them will be attending four-year colleges or universities, more than half of which are Catholic colleges or universities. Five other graduates will attend two-year colleges, two will immediately enter the workforce and one plans on entering military service.

The Holy Cross Class of 2020 was awarded 406 scholarships, equating to an amount of \$16,183,079.

Church leaders seek aid for Catholic students in coronavirus relief bill

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Some of the country's most prominent church leaders appealed to Congressional negotiators to include financial support for families to continue to send their children to Catholic and non-public schools in a coronavirus relief bill currently being negotiated.

Explaining how the deep economic recession caused by the pandemic since March has "made it impossible for many struggling families to continue paying tuition," five cardinals, an archbishop and a bishop called for the aid in an Aug. 5 letter to Republican and Democratic leadership in the House of Representatives and Senate.

The letter, released Aug. 6, implored for "robust" assistance "to ensure that the education needs

of all children are met, including children in Catholic and other non-public schools."

Singing the letter were Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York; Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago; Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston; Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston; Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey; and Bishop Michael C. Barber of Oakland, California, chairman of the bishops' Committee on Catholic Education.

The correspondence was the third plea for support in recent weeks by church leaders as Republican and Democratic

congressional leadership and the administration were locked in days of negotiations over specific measures in the relief bill.

House Democrats ushered through a bill in May that contained a broad array of relief measures. Called the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act, or the HEROES Act, the House bill offers a \$3 trillion package, including \$58 billion for grades K-12.

The Republican-led Senate July 27 introduced its stimulus package, Health, Economic Assistance, Liability and Schools, or the HEALS Act, totaling about \$1 trillion. It includes \$70 billion to K-12 schools that open for in-person classes. It would redirect some coronavirus-relief funding

to school-choice programs, so families can continue to send, or choose to send, their children to nonpublic schools they feel offer the best education for them.

The latest letter is the most recent attempt by church leaders to convince Congress to support families choosing to send their children to non-public schools.

On July 29, Cardinal Dolan, Cardinal O'Malley and Archbishop Gomez made a similar appeal to President Donald Trump and Congress. Their request came in a commentary for the National Catholic Register.

The Aug. 5 letter said the recession had forced 140 Catholic schools to permanently close "and hundreds more are in danger of being unable to open in the fall."

They also noted how each student educated in a Catholic or non-public school saves local school districts "thousands of dollars."

"Nationwide, Catholic schools save state and local government more than \$20 billion annually," the letter said.

Noting that Catholic and non-public schools educate about 10% of students nationwide, the prelates requested funding for such schools at the same percentage of the total financial support for public schools in the aid package.

"The aid is essential for ensuring that Catholic and non-public schools that want to open for instruction have the means to do so, because families have the ability to send their children to those schools," the letter said.

Congratulations Catholic High School Graduates!

Class of 2020

HOLY CROSS

Maille Rose Allardyce
Svetlana Anne Baron
Katrina Josette Beaver
Clara Miriam Bergman
Logan Nathaniel Bocker

* Valedictorians

John Peter Hartridge
Madison Rose Havirlak
Andrew Christopher Healey
Camus E. Howie

† Salutatorians

HOLY REDEEMER

Kimberly Ann Aldrich
Destiny Joy Andes
Joshua John Andrejko
Amanda Armstrong
Anna Elizabeth Brigid Bagnall
Meredythe Chessa Baird
Vanessa Elizabeth Barrett
Cassandra Teresa Benderavich
Caitlin Elizabeth Blaum
Sean Thomas Boland
Alexander Scott Bonk
Jacob Anthony Brennan

Joseph Anthony Delaney
Matthew Dinh

Molly Elizabeth Dugan
James Daniel Dunleavy
Emily Ann Duris
Maria Elizabeth Egidio

Caton Fahey
Aidan Joseph Fitz
Jillian Marie Foley
Anthony John Gallis

Ryan Gardjulis
Sonal Garg

Brandon Nicholas Gebenus *
Jacob Rodney Gibbon



Jenna Leeanne Bradley
Maeve Elizabeth Brostoski
Kieran James Burrier
Caroline Rose Cadden
James Peter Calciano
Caleb Timothy Callejas
Ashley Rose Capone
Kelly Clark
Elizabeth JL Cooper
Anya Jolie Covalleski
Shelby Gabriella Davis
Gabriella Rose DiGiulio
Eric Michael Dixon
Nadiya Stephanie Dobushak
Meghan Rose Doherty
Camryn L. Domiano
Felicia Jean Domiano
Kenneth David Francis III
Alivia Grace Gallagher
Evan Richard Gedrich
Timothy B. Gilhooley

Adam Johnson
Fiona Elizabeth Jordan
Matthew R. Kelly
Madelyn Ann Klassner
Michael John Kobierecki
Tori Rose Kovalchick *
Michael Mellen Lee
Joseph P. Lennon
Jordan Christopher Levan
Thomas Jeffrey Liuzzo
James William Marsh

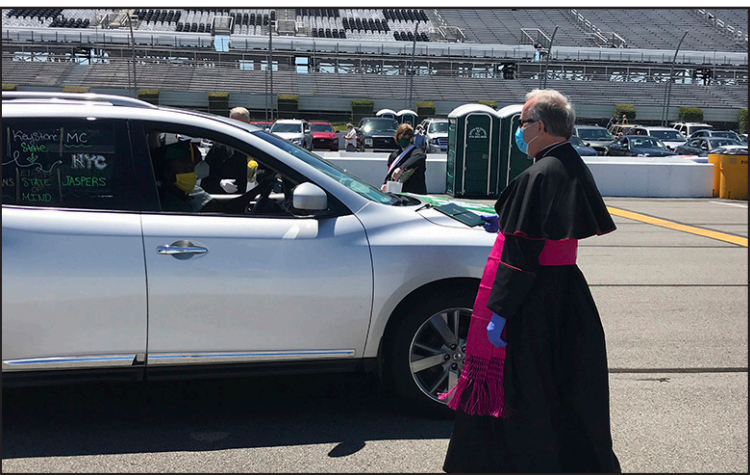
Jordan Thomas McAndrew
Sarah Catherine Mies
Christian Drake Mitchell
Kathryn Elizabeth Nealon
Angelo Timothy Norella
Leahy Patrick O'Connor
Leslie Lane O'Connor †
Joseph Patrick Osborne
Gabriella Elizabeth Parise
Allison Nicole Pavlowski
Samantha M. Pykus
Molly Elizabeth Repecki
Katherine Ann Rogers
Joseph J. Rossi Jr.
Keelin Ann Schimelfenig
Emily Marie Schultz
Sydney Elizabeth Skrutski
Olivia Noelle Smith
Mary Margaret Stec
Andrew Michael Straka
Michaela Georganna Strasburger
Ryan Joseph Strony
Elizabeth Ann Talbot
Emily Tansley
Alexandra Christen Tomaine
Jori Emanuel Vega
Kathryn Veronica Walsh
Rory Pio Walsh
Gabriella Williams
Amanda Ann Yanul



Margaret L. Breznay
Aoife Marie Burke
John Fredrick Callaghan
Rene Elizabeth Caruso
Carly Nicole Cavanaugh
Ethan John Cegelka
Abigail Sarah Charneski
Tristan Patrick Chronowski
Dana Marie Cichy
Joseph Andrew Colavitti
Colin Carl Conway
Martin James Cryan
Casey D'Elia
Kasey Lynn Danko
Jack Daoud
Anarose Keren Davidson

Tyler Robert Irace
Sidney Lynn Jacobs
Peter Andrué James
Jacob J. Janosky
Marissa Elizabeth Jason †
Luke Paul Kintz
Mary Elizabeth Kishbaugh
Erick Paul Klass
Rachael Ann Kohl
Lauren Riley Kozicki
Abigail Madison Lapinski
Kristopher Edward Latoski
Ashanti Becky Leon
Angel L. Mandoza
Cameron Paige Marcinkowski
Cole Michael Mayhue





- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cloe Victoria Mazzatosta | Ryan John Reedy |
| Caitlyn Ann McIngvale | Rebecca Ann Revitt |
| Riley Claire McLaughlin | Brandyn Lewis Rivas |
| Conrad James Middleton | Jacob Charles Roguskie |
| Katherine Margaret Middleton | Tessa Regina Romani |
| Regan Elizabeth Mishanski | Luigi Gerard Romano |
| Madeline Margaret Mohutsky | Nathan Garrett Roppelt |
| Livia Meles Moore | Olivia Paige Roth |
| Richard Andrew Morris | Ryan Thomas Sankey |
| Lauren Shea Mullery | Benjamin Walter Schell |
| Michael Anthony Murray | Gabrielle Elizabeth Scovish |
| Leonard Ethan Nardozzo | Kayla Ann Serafin |
| Leah Marie Natt | Peter Edward Shay |
| Ivy Rose Norton | Alexandra Mary Gianna Strickland |
| Ashlyn Marie O'Donovan | Brynn Anne Ellen Suda |
| Samuel Oley | Jacob Joseph Terrana |
| Aryan Jigneshkumar Patel | William Michael Tietje |
| Jacob Pawlowski | Justin John Toporcer |
| Alesha Marie Pekarovsky | Julia Marie Vnuk |
| Nicholas Lawrence Pikul | Olivia Nicole Vnuk |
| Christopher J. Pinkowski | Olivia Anne Wagner |
| Jared Ralph Piontkowski | Charles Robert Wallace |
| Kyle Thomas Potorski | Margaret Edith Walting |
| Dalton Douglas Preston | Kyler Andrew Williams |
| Alyson Paige Price | Ryan Matthew Williams |
| Rocco Carlo Pugliese | Fengqiao Wu |

- Carl Michael Yastremski
Samantha Anne Yencha
Andrew John Young
Michael Andrew Zarola

NOTRE DAME

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JeanRobert Adrien
Jason Apreku
Amanda Arostegui
Catherine Lee Bahara
Timothy Adam Beers
Dylan G. Brogna
Patrick Timothy Carney
Kevin Patrick Castner Jr. ✱
Robert Connors
Elvin Saputalo DeLaCruz Jr.
Juliana Hope Evans
Madilyn R. Fornataro
Alexander Fouad ✱
Jose Mari C. Gonzales
Aidan D. Graber
Colin Scott Kissell ✱
Jakob Shane Leonard
Natalia Aleksandra Lic
Alexa Nicole Loiodice



- Caitlin Lillian Love
Anna Grace Marino
Heidi Rose Martens
Raquel Martins DeAguiar
Kelly Moore

- Sebastian A. Niestepski
Anthony Joseph Nostro
Emily Ortiz
Charlotte Elizabeth Palacio
Ricardo Christopher Pastrana
Justin Michael Peeney ✱
Lauren Aleysha Peterson
Bianca Denise F. Pigon ✱
Kacy Ramirez
Bailey Anne Reilly
Kenneth Alexander Rogel
Connor Peyton Romes
Nicole Marie Siciliano
Sydney Lynn Smith
Ryan St. Leger
Gwenndolyn Grace Strasser
Noah Ethan Strauch
James Christian Tondt
Claire Marisa Toomey
Madison Elizabeth Torregrossa
Jonathan Gerard Buenaseda Torres

- Gavin Robert Tucker
Anthony Vargas Jr.
Edward Joseph Wess
Grace Elizabeth Williamson
Christian Stephen Wolfe



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Mrs. Kristen Donohue, M.Ed., Superintendent of Catholic Schools

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Mission Message

Go Forth

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



Auld Lang Syne! The phrase and its accompanying tune have long stirred our hearts each new year to look back with gratitude and to anticipate the future with hope.

The poem is of Scottish origin and was written by Robert Burns in 1788 and those who hear and sing it feel the uplifting tone and typically swell with simultaneous tears and smiles.

The song itself was never terribly nostalgic for me, nor is it for most of my generation, I suspect. That changed for me just a few days ago when I heard of a Lebanese woman living in Beirut who, in the aftermath of the deadly explosions in her city, returned home and sat down at her undamaged grand piano and played that very song

which inspires both nostalgia and hope. Her daughter, Hoda Melki, videoed this moment in time and the clip is now viral. Just a brief 90 second video is becoming an anthem of peace and also an anthem of perseverance and hope in the midst of strife and chaos. Amid the broken windows, shattered glass, and shell-shocked apartment, she played her song of nostalgia and peace.

Isn't that what we need right now? For months — arguably years — our country and our world has suffered the torments of division. We are a people who live in a world that is in perpetual discord. We ask many questions, we come up with some answers, but it continues to seem that we're not making much progress.

The problem from my perspective is that we use the teachings of the Bible and the Church as anecdotes, not as a true remedy. Politicians, celebrities, and larger-than-life figures, quote the words of the Lord, but aren't living them out. As missionary disciples, we are more than just a mission

statement; we are people of action and of firm resolve. It's not enough to quote a verse or to refer to a teaching. We are a people of action. In the words of Saint Paul, if we do not have love, we are "a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal" (cf. 1 Cor 13).

Love is more than words. Love means that in the midst of division and strife we sow love (cf. Hosea 10:12). Love means that we become ambassadors of peace and mercy. Love means that while the world is caving in around us or that while we are in the midst of chaos, we continue to play *Auld Lang Syne* — that we find the time and the will to drown out the evil around us with words and actions of peace.

Never should the message of the Gospel be an anecdote or a tool to garner a group of people's support. Now, more than ever, we need quiet, but bold acts, which draw others to Christ and to His Church. Anything less will only put a band-aid on a gaping wound. We need more and we should expect more.

Apostleship of Prayer

Papal Intention for September 2020

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Knights of Columbus support parishes



Knights of Columbus Council 6611 recently made monetary donations in support of Our Lady of the Abingtons Parish, Dalton, and Saint Patrick Parish, Nicholson. Shown during the Knights' check presentation to Father Arbogaste Satoun, pastor of both parish communities, are from left: K of C Council Grand Knight Anthony Dalasio; Father Arbogaste; and Council Chancellor Bob Liples.

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.

Aviso al Respecto 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.

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Comcast Cable TV, Williamsport: channel 16 Metrocast Cable TV, Berwick: channel 20
Service Electric Cable TV, Wilkes-Barre: channel 18 • Service Electric Cablevision, Hazleton: channel 97

AUGUST SCHEDULE

CTV LOCAL ORIGATION IS BOXED IN BOLD BORDER, OTHER PROGRAMMING IS FROM EWTN

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
12:00: AM	DAILY MASS	SUNDAY MASS (Encore)	DAILY MASS (Encore)					
1:00 AM	AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	(1:10AM) LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART	THE JOURNEY HOME (Encore)	MOTHER ANGELICA LIVE CLASSICS	EWTN LIVE (Encore)	THE WORLD OVER (Encore)	FR. SPITZER'S UNIVERSE	
1:30 AM	ICONS SPOTLIGHT	EWTN GALLERY						
2:00 AM	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN		EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Encore)					
2:30 AM	FUNDAMENTALS OF CATHOLICISM		EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	
3:00 AM	EWTN GALLERY	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY	SPECIALS	REAL LIFE CATHOLIC	LIFE ON THE ROCK	BATTLE READY	WHAT IS GOD'S WILL?	
3:30AM		DEFENDING LIFE		PAPAL AUDIENCE	SAINTS VS SCOUNDRELS	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOG	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY	
4:00 AM	EWTN LIVE (Encore)	SUDAY VESPERS	HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH	LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH	BOB AND PENNY LORD PRESENT	WEB OF FAITH 2.0	SAVORING OUR FAITH	
4:30 AM		(4:35)SUNDAY BEST WITH FR GROESCHEL	THE CHURCH:GOD'S PLAN		(4:40)ANGELUS FROM NAZARETH	THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS	LIFE IS WORTH LIVING	EXTRAORDINARY FAITH
5:00 AM	PROPHESY IN SONG	EWTN BOOKMARK	THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL	LETTER AND SPIRIT	EWTN SPECIALS	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY	CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS	
5:30 AM	DECISION POINT	JOURNEY THROUGH SCRIPTURE	APOSTOLATE FOR FAMILY CONSECRATION	FUNDAMRNTALS OF CATHOLICISM			CATHOLICS COME HOME	
6:00 AM	ANGELUS WITH POPE FRANCIS	EWTN ORIGINAL PRODUCTIONS						
6:30 AM	WHERE GOD WEEPS	G.K. CHESTERTON	CHURCH AND THE POOR	FR. RUTLER: CHRIST IN THE CITY	ICONS SPOTLIGHT	THE CHOICES WE FACE	SAINTS vs. SCOUNDRELS	
7:00 AM	THE CHAPLET OF ST. MICHAEL					STATIONS OF THE CROSS	CHAPLET OF ST. MICHAEL	
7:30 AM	THE ROSARY WITH MOTHER ANGELICA	HOLY LAND ROSARY					THE HOLY ROSARY FROM LOURDES	
7:50 AM		LITANY OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	LITANY OF THE HOLY NAME	LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH	LITANY OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD	PAPAL AUDIENCE		
8:00 AM	SUNDAY MASS (Live)	DAILY MASS (Live)						
9:00 AM	(9:20AM) LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART	HOLY ROSARY WITH THE FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIES OF THE ETERNAL WORD						
9:30 AM	EWTN ROSARY FRANCISCANS	SUNDAY BEST WITH FR. GROESCHEL	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY	SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION (ENCORE)	EWTN LIVE (ENCORE)	THE WORLD OVER (Encore)	THE FRIAR	
10:00 AM	SUNDAY MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL	HOLY MASS FROM NAZARETH		LIVE WITH PASSION	CTV SPECIAL	SALT & LIGHT TV SPECIALS	WEEKLY NOVENA TO ST. ANN	STORIES FROM THE BIBLE
10:30 AM			MY CATHOLIC FAMILY					
11:00 AM	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY	THE CHOICES WE FACE	WEEKLY NOVENA TO ST. ANN	MUSIC AND SPOKEN WORD	FOCUS	LIVE WITH PASSION	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY	
11:30 AM	VATICANO	WOMEN OF GRACE					BOB & PENNY LORD PRESENT	
12:00 PM	SUNDAY MASS (Encore)	THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, LIVE AT 12:10 p.m.					EWTN DAILY MASS (Encore)	
12:30PM		"DIOCESAN DATEBOOK" airs before and after Mass.						
1:00 PM	(1:10PM) LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART	AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	PRO LIFE WEEKLY	AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	THE DOMESTIC CHUR CH	AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	
1:30 PM	IN CONCERT	SAINTS OF CHINA	ST.FAUSTINA: DIVINE MERCY	SPECIALS	DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH	OUR FATHER'S PLAN	EWTN BOOKMARK	
2:00 PM		CALLED TO COMMUNION	SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION	FR. SPITZER'S UNIVERSE	THE JOURNEY HOME		STATIONS OF CROSS	EWTN ON LOCATION
2:30 PM								
3:00 PM	THE CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY IN SONG							
3:20 PM	REFLECTIONS							
3:30 PM	THE HOLY ROSARY IN STAINED GLASS	THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, (Encore)					ROSARY FOR LIFE	
4:00 PM	LIFE IS WORTH LIVING	THE HOLY ROSARY DIOCESAN DATEBOOK					SUNDAY VIGIL MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL	
4:30 PM	SAVORING OUR FAITH	MASTERPIECE DONUT SHOP	WE ARE CATHOLIC	MY TIME WITH JESUS	CAT CHAT	BUGTIME ADVENTURES		
5:00 PM	THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL	EWTN BOOKMARK	THE CHOICES WE FACE	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	BOB & PENNY LORD PRESENT	GENESIS TO JESUS	DECISION POINT	
5:30 PM	SUNDAY MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL	SPECIALS					LETTER AND SPIRIT	
6:00 PM		EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Live)					THE JOURNEY HOME	
6:30 PM	(6:35)SUNDAY BEST ...	CATHOLICS COME HOME	REAL LIFE CATHOLICS	CHURCH UNIVERSAL	VATICANO	WHAT IS GOD'S WILL?	DAILY MASS	
7:00 PM	SUNDAY MASS	THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, (Encore)						
7:30PM		THE HOLY ROSARY		POPE'S AUDIENCE	THE HOLY ROSARY			
8:00 PM		DIOCESAN DATEBOOK						
8:00 PM	(8:20) LITANY OF SACRED HEART	THE JOURNEY HOME (Live)	CTV SPECIAL PRESENTATION	EWTN LIVE	THE WORLD OVER (Live)	SPECIALS	EWTN CINEMA	
8:30 PM	CATHOLICS COME HOME							
9:00 PM	LIFE ON THE ROCK	EWTN NIGHTLY NEWS (Encore)		EWTN NIGHTLY NEWS (Encore)				
9:30 PM	HOLY ROSARY W MOTHER ANGELICA	WEEKLY NOVENA TO ST. ANN	THE CHOICES WE FACE	FOCUS	LIVE WITH PASSION	SALT AND LIGHT TV SISTERHOOD	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY	
10:00PM	EWTN SPECIALS	THE WORLD OVER LIVE (ENCORE)	SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION (ENCORE)	FR. SPITZER'S UNIVERSE	PRO-LIFE WEEKLY	LIFE ON THE ROCK		
10:30 PM					DEFENDING LIFE	ICONS SPOTLIGHT		
11:00PM	CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS	BATTLE READY	CROSS TRAINING	CROSSING THE GOAL	LONG RIDE HOME	REAL LIFE CATHOLIC	WEB OF FAITH 2.0	
11:30PM	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN	WOMEN OF GRACE					PARABLE	

Knights of Columbus present Diocese with “Our Lady Help of Persecuted Christians”



Members of the Knights of Columbus present Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, right, with a portrait of “Our Lady Help of Persecuted Christians” at the closing Mass of the Solemn Novena in honor of Saint Ann in West Scranton on July 26, 2020. The Knights of Columbus have played a pivotal role in supporting Christians in the Middle East, where they have committed more than \$20 million since 2014 to provide food, shelter and clothing to people in Iraq and Syria.

Senior students from Scranton Diocese graduate from Marian Catholic High School

TAMAQUA — Numerous Catholic secondary school students who reside in the lower Luzerne County region in the Diocese of Scranton, where they are members of Diocesan parishes, attend Marian Catholic High School in Tamaqua, Schuylkill County, in the Diocese of Allentown.

The Scranton Diocese wishes to congratulate the 21 graduates of the Marian Catholic Class of 2020 who are parishioners at Catholic churches in the Greater Hazleton area.

The graduates, listed according to their home parishes, are as follows:

Saint John Bosco Parish, Conyngham — Christian DeAngelo, Michael Fuccile,

Annika Hahn and Christopher Latoff.

Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish, Hazleton — Julia Kreisl and April Tate.

Most Precious Blood Parish, Hazleton — Thomas Betterly, Jonathan Bonomo, Alexander Kubishin, Carolyn Mehallo, Jacob Mussoline and Auxillian Stroia.

Queen of Heaven Parish, Hazleton — Alison Anilosky and Anthony Pizzali.

Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton — Mackayla Aucker.

Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton — Nevin Baskin.

Good Shepherd Parish, Drums — Rachel Csella, Samantha Eroh, Maria Pastorella, Victoria Pekala and Emily Shaud.

Hanover parish plans Potato Pancake Fest

Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, 420 Main Road, Buttonwood section of Hanover Township, will sponsor a Potato Pancake Fest during the weekend of Sept. 19 & 20.

Potato pancakes will be sold on Saturday, Sept. 19, from 1 to 7 p.m., and Sunday, Sept. 20, from

noon to 6 p.m., in the parish hall. The sale is take-out only.

Cost for the potato pancakes is \$10 for eight pancakes (minimum order). There is a limit of 40 pancakes per order.

The event will conclude with a raffle drawing on Sunday at 6 p.m.

Religious education award recipients announced

The Religious Education Awards celebrate the dynamic mission of gifted Catechists, Parish Catechetical Leaders, and Directors of Religious Education/Faith Formation. Each of these individuals demonstrate the importance of passing on the faith and their example inspires us into mission!

There is such a great need for these generous men and women who devote themselves to handing on the truths of the Gospel. We wish to congratulate and thank the following Religious Education Award recipients listed by parish:

**Ascension Parish,
Forest City**
Jill Bailer
Kimberly Pleska

Saint Barbara Parish, Exeter
Denise Adams
Joyce DeAngelo
Christina Kratz
Lori Kratz

**Saint Joseph the Worker,
Williamsport**
Jim Foran

**Our Lady of the Eucharist,
Pittston**
Erin Bufogle

Saint John Bosco, Conyngham
Dorothy "DeDe" Maylath

**Saint Luke Parish,
Jersey Shore**
Denise Folmar

**Our Lady of the Snows,
Clarks Summit**
William Blaum
Anne Brokus
Donna Coleman
Abigail Fenton
Tara James
Christine Klimas
Jennifer Kwiakowski
Sarah Mitchell
Lisa Moher
Holly Regan
Marianne Rooney
Rhonda Schiavone
Marie Allison
Thomas Specht
Lori Hendrickson
Andrea Rogers
Mary Carroll Donahue
Margaret LaCoe
Marie Sarafinko

**Saint John Vianney,
Scott Township**
Ray Totten

**Saint Boniface/Saint Lawrence,
Williamsport/S. Williamsport**
Gregory Deck
Jennifer Dincher
Sharon Faust
Raymond Fischer, Jr.
Dianne Fisher
Heather Kriner
Tina Pulver
Karen Rider

**Saint Maria Goretti Parish,
Lafin**
Christine Abbey
Michele Christ
Sandy Fumanti
Katharine Getz
John Gibbons
Christine Kane
Emily Kane
Michelle Pinto
Theresa Snyder
Marian Verdine

**Saint Ignatius Loyola,
Kingston**
Danielle Ambrose
Daniel Berry
Elaine M. Blessing
Nicolette DeMarco-Burton
Melinda Ann Heffron
Julianna Scappaticci
Mary Sims
Shelby Smith
Thomas Tomsak

**Saint Patrick Parish,
Scranton**
Erin Kologe
Erica Krysko
Mary Ellen Richards

**Our Lady Queen of Peace,
Brodheadsville**
Paul Carpenito
Mary Demeo
Kimberly Kimmick
Clement Maisano
Karen Newton
Cathy Rizzo
Terry Talbott

**Saint John the Baptist,
Larksville**
Jill Antall
Michelle Bedosky
Jennifer Borino
Jim Borino
Marty Gabel
Mary Gabel
Debra Kester
Jessica Lee
Mary Ellen Novick
Tom Shrawder
Lucy Stinger
Charity Udzella
Karen Washicosky

**Saint Therese Parish,
Shavertown**
Anthony & Catherine Bruno
John & Anne Butler
David & Cathy Chesnalavage
Dorothy Hansen
Diane Molitoris
Douglas & Maria Ratchford
Faythe Roberts
Mary Dougherty
Wayne Williams

**Queen of the Apostles Parish,
Avoca**
Deborah Yuschovitz

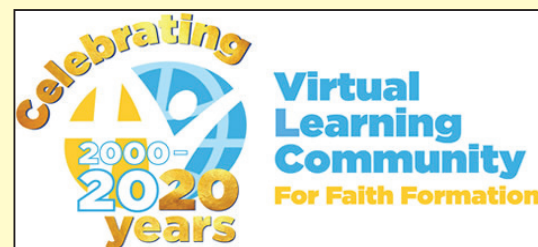
**Saint Thomas More,
Lake Ariel**
Michelle Farrell
Doris V. Kesse
Mary Krisovitch
Michelle Mattern
Marie McDonnell
Michele Palladino

**Saint Ann Basilica Parish,
Scranton**
Christine Fisne
Sara Hallock
Lorine Lemoncelli
Peter Lemoncelli
Kim Matthews
Jennifer Nied
Tina Profka
Kathleen Radkiewicz
Mary Ann Schmitt
Julianne Zaleski

**Saint John the Evangelist,
Pittston**
Erin Bufogle
Linda Dessoye
Judy LaPorte Durling
Mary Giardina
Kathleen Ostrowski
Ann Yench

**Saint Vincent de Paul Parish,
Milford**
Cristina Galeano
Nora Goetz
Anna Masker

*The names of all winners are also
listed on the Diocese of Scranton
website: dioceseofscranton.org*



Beginning this summer, the Diocese of Scranton is pleased to offer a new opportunity for Hispanic Leaders to continue their formation for parish ministry. The Diocese of Scranton has received a grant which we are applying to scholarship participation in the VLCFF (Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation) Certificate programs through University of Dayton.

There are two tracks of VLCFF Certificate courses available, which Hispanic Leaders can choose from:

- Certificacion en Catequesis
- Certificacion en Fundamentos para el Liderazgo en el Ministerio

More information about each certificate track can be found on the Diocese of Scranton's website or by emailing Kitty Scanlan, Coordinator for Ministry Formation, at Kitty-Scanlan@dioceseofscranton.org.

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Lebanese demand reform, Cabinet resigns after Beirut explosions

AMMAN, Jordan (CNS) — Viewing the burned wasteland of the Beirut port, one's eye catches a grey concrete slab in the foreground. It bears this stark message scribbled by the Lebanese in black ink: "My Government Did This."

On Aug. 10, Lebanon's Cabinet resigned over the Aug. 4 blasts at the Beirut port, the health minister said, a decision that was made under pressure as several ministers quit or expressed their intention to step down.

But observers believe that the changes many Lebanese demand to reform their political system could require a new electoral law, changes to the constitution and dismantling the sectarian-based system that has ruled Lebanon for decades.

After the explosions, grief-stricken and furious Lebanese took to the streets, battling rubber bullets and tear gas to demand their government's dismissal over inaction and incompetence. The explosions killed at least 160 people and injured 6,000. A security official was killed as protesters stormed various government ministries.

"They've taken our money. They've taken our pride. We've had enough and we're not going anywhere," said one demonstrator, named Aline. Protesters want aid to rebuild the country only to reach the people, without government cronyism.



A woman prays during Mass at a church in Beirut Aug. 9, 2020. The church was damaged five days earlier in explosions in Beirut's port area. (CNS photo/Hannah McKay, Reuters)

Vast areas of the capital have been destroyed, leaving 300,000 people homeless, including 80,000 children, according to UNICEF. It's estimated that \$15 billion will be needed in the short term to fix damages and aid the homeless in a city now in tatters and turmoil.

Other Lebanese formed armies of volunteers, sweeping up shards of glass from destroyed buildings. They also rescued the belongings of families whose homes are no longer safe to live in, delivered first aid and food as well as prayed for consolation with those traumatized by tremendous loss.

In his Aug. 9 sermon, Lebanon's powerful Catholic cleric, Cardinal Bechara Rai, Maronite patriarch, lent his voice to the popular rising tide against political leaders, many of whom were warlords from Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war. He called for the Cabinet to resign, saying it cannot "change the way it governs" the country, once known as the "Switzerland of the Middle East," now ravaged by corruption, financial mismanagement, soaring poverty and hyperinflation.

"The resignation of an MP or a minister is not enough ... the whole government should resign as it is unable to help the country recover," Cardinal Rai said, pointing out that the angry demonstrations exhibited "the impatience of those who are oppressed."

He also called for an international investigation into the deadly blast and expressed his "deep condolences to the families of the Lebanese martyrs and hope for a speedy recovery for the wounded," according to his

remarks reported by Lebanon's National News Agency.

French President Emmanuel Macron has led the charge mobilizing international assistance, first bringing planes carrying equipment, rescue workers and investigators Aug. 6, then hosting an international donors meeting that raised \$297 million, of which the U.S. pledged \$15 million, to aid the disaster recovery.

Neighboring Jordan sent medical workers to set up field hospitals around the blast site as Lebanon's health care system was already heaving under the pressure of COVID-19 patients and tending some of the injured. King Abdullah II has sent rescue teams, medical aid and food, joining dozens of other countries providing assistance. He also offered Jordan as a "logistics hub to facilitate international and regional humanitarian assistance to Lebanon," since its main port is now destroyed.

Pope Francis donated 250,000 euro (\$295,000) as initial aid to assist the church in Lebanon's difficulty and suffering.

He made an emotional appeal during his Aug. 9 Angelus to the "bishops, priests and religious of Lebanon to be close to the people and to live a style of life marked by evangelical poverty, without luxury, because your people are suffering, suffering a lot."

Acknowledging the fragility of coexistence in the multi-sectarian nation at this time, Pope Francis said he is nonetheless praying "that, with God's help, and everyone's genuine participation, [Lebanon] may be reborn free and strong."

International Catholic aid agencies also began helping and collecting money.

The 18 or more distinct religious groups is "something very rich for us," commented Karim Makdisi, who teaches at the American University of Beirut about Lebanon's historic model of coexistence.

"The diversity is a huge plus for us. It something that we need to rebuild as fundamentally part of Lebanon as we move forward," Makdisi said, commenting on the need to overhaul Lebanon's political system.

Pope Francis to begin new series on social doctrine

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and social and environmental crises worldwide, Pope Francis announced he would begin a new series of general audience talks aimed at helping build “the future that we need.”

“In the next few weeks, I invite you to tackle together the pressing questions that the pandemic has brought to the fore, social ills above all. And we will do it in the light of the Gospel, of the theological virtues and of the principles of the Church’s social doctrine,” he said Aug. 5 during his weekly general audience.

“We will explore together how our Catholic social tradition can help the human family heal this world that suffers from serious illnesses,” the pope said.

By keeping their focus on Christ, Christians can find strength and healing in the Gospel and the virtues of faith, hope and charity, he said.

Attacks on statues seen as ‘signs of society in need of healing’

A wave of recent attacks on Catholic statues around the country and fires at two churches prompted the chairmen of two U.S. bishops’ committees to decry “the destruction of these holy symbols of selfless love and devotion.”

“Whether those who committed these acts were troubled individuals crying out for help or agents of hate seeking to intimidate, the attacks are signs of a society in need of healing,” said Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami and Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City in a joint statement late July 22.

Among incidents the two prelates pointed out were the beheading of a statue of Christ at a Catholic church in the Miami Archdiocese, the defacing of a statue of Mary outside a Catholic school in the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. They also highlighted two church fires, one that severely damaged the interior of a church in the Diocese of Orlando, Florida, and one that gutted a 230-year-old mission church in the Los Angeles Archdiocese.

“Our nation finds itself in an extraordinary hour of cultural conflict,” Archbishops Wenski and Coakley said. “The path forward must be through the compassion and understanding practiced and taught by Jesus and his holy Mother.”

Pope appoints Greensburg, Pa., bishop to head Cleveland Diocese

Pope Francis has named Bishop Edward C. Malesic of Greensburg, Pennsylvania, to head the Diocese of Cleveland.

Bishop Malesic, 59, has been Greensburg’s bishop since 2015. He will be the 12th bishop of Cleveland and succeeds Archbishop Nelson J. Perez, who was named by the pope to be Philadelphia’s archbishop Jan. 23.

Bishop Malesic will be installed Sept. 14 at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Cleveland.

“I send heartfelt congratulations to Bishop Malesic on his appointment by Pope Francis as Bishop of Cleveland,” Bishop Joseph C. Bambera said. “While serving alongside him here in Pennsylvania for the last five years, I have come to know Bishop Malesic as a man of deep faith, hope and love. During his time in the Diocese of Greensburg he has truly embodied the meaning of being a servant leader.”

Pope names six women to previously all-male Council for Economy

Renewing the membership of the Vatican Council for the Economy, Pope Francis named six women to the previously all-male board that oversees the financial operations of all Vatican offices and entities.

Statutes for the council, approved by the pope in 2015, say the body will have 15 members: eight cardinals or bishops and seven laypeople, each serving a five-year term.

The original seven lay members were all men with experience in business, finance or government. The six women the pope named to replace them Aug. 6 have a similarly high profile and background.

Pope invites faithful to pray for nuclear weapons-free world

For peace to flourish, weapons of war must be set aside, especially nuclear weapons that can obliterate entire cities and countries, Pope Francis said on the 75th anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima.

“May the prophetic voices” of the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki “continue to serve as a warning to us and for coming generations,” he said in a written message sent Aug. 6 to Hidehiko Yuzaki, governor of the Hiroshima

prefecture, who led a peace memorial ceremony.

Recalling “the tragic atomic bombardments” of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and his visit there in 2019, which stirred within him “deep emotion and gratitude,” Pope Francis told visitors in St. Peter’s Square, “I renew the invitation to pray and the commitment to a world completely free of nuclear weapons.”

In 1945, during World War II, the United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima Aug. 6 and on Nagasaki Aug. 9 in an effort to get Japan to surrender. The cities were decimated and, by year’s end, at least 200,000 people had died from the blasts or the aftereffects.

Reiterating what he said in Hiroshima in 2019, Pope Francis wrote that the use of atomic energy for war and the possession of nuclear weapons are both “immoral.”

The pope’s message and others were published on the Hiroshima For Global Peace website: hiroshimaforpeace.com.

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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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Philly archdiocese approves over \$50 million for survivors

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia has paid out or approved over \$50 million so far to 222 clergy sex abuse survivors, according to a new report from the Independent Reconciliation and Reparations Program.

IRRP was launched in November 2018 as a means of providing settlements to claimants

alleging abuse by archdiocesan clergy.

The program's administrators, acting independently of the archdiocese, assess claims and offer compensation with no monetary cap, either individually or in total. Claims are considered regardless of how long ago the events in question occurred, or

whether the statute of limitations had expired.

The archdiocese has pledged to pay all awards as indicated by the plan and agreed to by the survivors.

Attorneys Kenneth Feinberg and Camille Biros, the IRRP's administrators, expect to conclude the process in about six months, at when a final report will be issued.

Marian Devotion Rosary Prayer Services Listed

Marian Devotion Ministries has been established in the Diocese of Scranton, dedicated to promoting prayerful devotion to Jesus and Mary through recitation of the Rosary.

Prayer rallies and Rosary Evenings will be hosted throughout the Diocese and include the Rosary with chanted scriptural mysteries, Fatima prayer and hymns.

The schedule of upcoming Marian Devotion events is as follows:

Thursday, August 13, at 6 p.m. — Our Lady of the Abingtons Church outdoor grotto, Dalton.

Saturday, August 15, Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, at 5 p.m. — Saint Mary of Mount Carmel Church outdoor Fatima shrine, Dunmore (rain date:

Saturday, August 22).

Monday, August 17, at 6 p.m. — Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, Highway 315, Laflin (Pittston). This regularly scheduled devotion on the third Monday of the month includes the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

For more information, contact Ernie Pappa at (570) 241-8171 or email: singtomary@aol.com.

Bernardine Sister Anna Suszek, Nanticoke Native, Dies

READING — Bernardine Franciscan Sister Anna Suszek died July 21 at Saint Joseph Villa in Reading, where she had been residing since 2012. She was 95 and in her 76th year of religious life.

Born Hedwig Suszek in Nanticoke, daughter of the late William Anna Salinska Suszek, Sister Anna entered the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters Third Order Regular of Saint Francis on Aug. 11, 1944. She earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Villanova University and master's degree in reading clinician from Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, Wis.

During her religious life, Sister Anna served in Catholic education as a teacher and principal; a superior in her congregation;

pastoral coordinator and in various parish ministries.

In the Diocese of Scranton, she ministered at Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dickson City; Sacred Heart, Dupont; Saints Peter & Paul, West Scranton; and

Saint Mary's, Plymouth.

A private Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated July 24 in Saint Joseph Villa Chapel, followed by interment in the Bernardine Sisters Cemetery at Mount Alvernia.

Prayer Requests for Priests

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

August 13, Father James Paisley; August 14, Father Francis Pauselli; August 15, Holy Cross Father Stephen Pepper; August 16, Father Jaime Perez Restrepo; August 17, Father Carmen Perry; August 18, Jesuit Father Thomas Pesci; August 19, Father Thomas Petro; August 20, Father William Petruska; August 21, Father Michael Piccola; August 22, Father William Pickard; August 23, Jesuit Father Scott Pilarz; August 24, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Jackson Pinhero; August 25, Father Joseph Pisaneschi; August 26, Father John Polednak, V.E.; August 27, Father Richard Polmouter; August 28, Father John Poplawski; August 29, Monsignor Patrick Pratico; August 30, Monsignor Joseph Quinn; August 31, Father Michael Quinnan; September 1, Pope Francis; September 2, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI; September 3, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; September 4, Father Cyril Rable; September 5, Father Michael Rafferty; September 6, Father Philip Rayappan; September 7, Jesuit Father James Redington; September 8, Father Gregory Reichlen; September 9, Father August Ricciardi; September 10, Father Frederick Riegler; September 11, Father Alex Roche; September 12, Jesuit Father Patrick Rogers; September 13, Monsignor Walter Rossi; September 14, Monsignor Dale Rupert; September 15, Passionist Father Paul Ruttle; September 16, Holy Cross Father John Ryan; September 17, Father Christopher Sahd; September 18, Father Thomas Sarnecki; September 19, Father Arbogaste Satoun; September 20, Holy Cross Father Eric Schimmel; September 21, Father Kenneth Seegar.

Oblate Fathers to host Labor Day weekend celebration honoring Saint Joseph the Worker

PITTSTON — The Chapel of Saint Joseph, located within the Oblates of Saint Joseph Religious Residence, Route 315, Laffin, will be the setting for the annual Labor Day Triduum and Mass honoring Saint Joseph the Worker.

Begun in 1983, this annual event invokes the patronage and intercession of Saint Joseph in conjunction with the national Labor Day holiday.

In light of the current health and financial crisis, there is a



great need to invoke the Patron Saint of Workers and Guardian of the Holy Family for all the unemployed, underemployed and those struggling to provide for themselves and their families.

A three-day spiritual preparation will lead up to Labor Day, with Masses celebrated every evening, Friday thru Sunday, September 4-6, at 7 p.m. Preacher for this year's triduum will be Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul A. McDonnell, the newly appointed

rector of the OSJ religious community and director of the chapel.

Confessions will be heard in a designated area before the Eucharistic liturgies.

A special Mass will be celebrated on Labor Day morning, September 7, at 11 a.m.

Presiding as principal celebrant will be Saint Joseph Oblate Father Joseph Sibilano, founder of this annual Labor Day spiritual event. Local Oblate clergy will serve as concelebrants.

Diocesan health/safety regulations and guidelines due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including social distancing and mask requirements, will be followed for all the services.

For more information, contact the main office at (570) 654-7542.

Fatima Grotto Group to host Marian events in Wilkes-Barre

WILKES-BARRE — The Our Lady of Fatima Grotto Association in North Wilkes-Barre announces it will host two upcoming events honoring the Blessed Mother at the North Street Grotto grounds.

On Sunday, Aug. 16, at 6:45 p.m., a crowning ceremony at

the Our Lady of Fatima statue will take place, followed by recitation of the 15-decade Rosary. Association Secretary Michele Kollar will crown the Blessed Mother's image.

In honor of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary next month,

the Fatima Grotto will host a celebration on Sunday, Sept. 6, at 6:30 p.m. The event will include Marian hymns, the 15-decade Rosary and the serving of birthday cake.

All are welcome. Facial masks are required.

IHM Sisters announce series of virtual prayer evenings

SCRANTON — The Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters announce their annual "Evenings of Prayer with the Sisters of IHM" will resume on Wednesday, Sept. 9, and continue monthly through May 2021.

The upcoming series of prayer devotions will celebrate the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Congregation of Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

in 1845, with each month's service based on a specific theme reflecting IHM history and spirituality.

Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the Evenings of Prayer will be offered on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. through Zoom videoconferencing. Participants may access the devotions at: <http://www.sistersofihm.org/eveningsofprayer>.

The theme for the Sept. 9 Evening of Prayer is "The Sisters on whose shoulders we stand."

For more information, contact the IHM Sisters' community in Scranton at (570) 346-5404 or communications@sistersofihm.org.

Remembrance Day for Abortion Victims Slated September 12

The Diocese of Scranton will participate in the eighth annual National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children on Saturday, Sept. 12, when pro-life Americans will honor the memory of the nearly 60 million unborn victims of abortion since its legalization in 1973.

Diocesan observances on Sept. 12 will include a Memorial Service for Victims of Abortion to be held at 11 a.m. at Mount Olivet Cemetery, 612 Mount Olivet Road, Carverton.

The pro-life gathering will take place at Mount Olivet's Wyoming Valley Knights of Columbus "Tomb for the Unborn," located at the top of the hill on the cemetery grounds.

During the memorial observance, the Rosary will be recited in remembrance of all aborted babies. All faithful are welcome to attend.

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 **September 4** 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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