

The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

WWW.DIOCESEOFSCRANTON.ORG

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2020

Experts: Voter behavior wasn't different in the 2020 election

WASHINGTON (CNS) – If there is anything different about the 2020 presidential election, don't chalk it up to fickle voters.

"The big thing about this election is it happened during a pandemic," said John K. White, a politics professor at The Catholic University of America, Washington.

That, White said, and "the highest (turnout) since 1900," with estimates ranging from 66.4% to 72.1% of registered voters casting ballots, with a pandemic-related all-time high in the number and percentage of ballots tendered away from polling places, with voters using the mail or drop boxes instead of risking long lines at election precincts.

"I don't see unusual behavior in terms of what was on their minds" when voters made their choices, White told Catholic News Service in a Nov. 11 phone interview. "You had the economy, the coronavirus, you had race relations. That's certainly what shows up in the polling." But the coronavirus bettered the economy as a top issue by 10 percentage points among those

surveyed, according to White.

"The election was a referendum on (President Donald) Trump," he said. "That's very typical when you have an incumbent seeking reelection. It was never, as Trump tried to make it, a choice – 'you may not like me, but Biden is unacceptable' – that was a very hard thing to do with (President-elect) Joe Biden."

White added, "I had thought from the beginning that Joe Biden was the only Democrat that could beat Donald Trump."

On Nov. 7, the media declared Biden the winner of the presidential election, but the Trump campaign has filed lawsuits in several states challenging vote counts.

In elections, a voter's age and sense of duty were once thought of as the best predictors of who would vote, said Jon Krosnick, a professor in three departments – political science, psychology and communications – at Stanford University.

That notion has since been discarded. "It's now a function, partly, of the candidates who are running," Krosnick said. "Ninety percent of the Republicans are going to vote



A woman votes during the presidential election Nov. 3, 2020, amid the coronavirus pandemic. (CNS photo/Nick Oxford, Reuters)

for the Republican, and 90% of the Democrats are going to vote for the Democrat, but 50% of the electorate is independent."

Voters are now seen as making their choices over a series of factors that resemble "soup that ingredients have been thrown in," Krosnick said.

First comes a set of criteria on "the health of the nation: how well we are doing economically, how well we're doing in terms of our safety and security, presidential approval—how do I feel about his performance

in a particular domain. There are also factors involved in perceptions of the personalities of the candidates," Krosnick told CNS.

Then, there are four attributes considered by the electorate: competence, integrity or honesty, compassion and, finally, strength of leadership. "As a general rule, voters prefer candidates" with these attributes, he said.

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Compensation Program provides assistance to survivors of abuse

SCRANTON – The Diocese of Scranton released its report regarding the Independent Survivors Compensation Program on October 29, 2020.

The independently-run Program provided more than \$24 million to 213 survivors of abuse committed by Diocese of Scranton priests, members of religious communities and lay employees. The Diocese created the Program in January 2019 to publicly recognize the harm caused to survivors of abuse and demonstrate the Church's commitment to those survivors.

The full report is available on the Diocese of Scranton website and the ISCP website.

"While no amount of money can take away a survivor's pain and suffering, my hope has always been that it will aid in their healing and recovery," Bishop Joseph C. Bambera said. "No child should ever face

abuse. For those who have endured pain, I once again say, I am sorry. As bishop of the Diocese of Scranton, I take my obligation to support survivors of abuse very seriously."

The Independent Survivors Compensation Program was purely voluntary and open to individuals who had submitted a complaint of sexual abuse to the Diocese before the program was first announced as well as individuals who had not previously submitted a complaint.

All new complaints of abuse received through the Program must also have been reported to the appropriate District Attorney's Office.

Kenneth Feinberg and Camille Biros, two nationally recognized claims administration experts, designed and administered the Program.

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Diocese of Scranton adds eight names to list of credibly accused individuals

SCRANTON – The Diocese of Scranton announces that eight additional names have been added to its list of individuals who have been credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera has consistently asserted that the abuse of minors cannot be tolerated. In maintaining his and the Diocese of Scranton's commitment to protect children and young people, the Bishop stated that it is his hope that the publication of these additional names will be a step forward in the healing process for survivors.

In August 2018, the Diocese published on its website a list of all clergy, staff and volunteers who had been credibly accused of child sexual abuse. Since that time, eleven additional names were added to the list in January 2019 and two more names were added in October 2019. The most recent additions to the list involve allegations of

abuse submitted to the Independent Survivors Compensation Program (ISCP).

The Diocese assesses the credibility of allegations of abuse utilizing a process that includes, as appropriate, assessments by outside counsel and investigation by a former FBI agent. In addition, the Diocesan Review Board, an independent, consultative body comprised of members of the laity, a religious sister and one priest, performs a case-by-case review. The Diocese also takes into account the determination by the Administrators of the ISCP, for allegations that were submitted in that program. All allegations are submitted to the appropriate District Attorney's Office. Allegations that are corroborated by secular legal proceedings, canon law proceedings, admission by the accused, and/or other information or evidence are deemed credible.

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The Catholic Light

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OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE
DIOCESE OF SCRANTON



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Catholic community of the Diocese of Scranton, are called through Baptism to imitate the servant leadership of Jesus Christ. In union with Our Holy Father, the Pope, we proclaim the Gospel faithfully, celebrate the sacraments joyfully, and boldly promote life, justice and peace in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.

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Bishop Bambera to ordain eight Permanent Deacons

SCRANTON — Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will preside as ordaining prelate and principal celebrant on Saturday, Nov. 28, for the ordination of eight men to the Permanent Diaconate for service as permanent deacons in the Diocese of Scranton.

The newly ordained deacons will join the ranks of clergy who minister to the faithful in parishes and other settings throughout the Diocese.

During the Mass of Ordination, scheduled for 10:00 a.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Bishop Bambera will ordain the following men to serve permanently in the Order of Deacon: Eugene N. Blockus, Joseph J. Chmiola, John C. Jorda, Peter J. Lemoncelli, Joseph R. Marcellus, Gerard P. Pernot, Angel Luis Rivera and Joseph Sudano.

These men will complete a five-year formation program and become members of the threefold ordained ministry that consists of bishops, priests and deacons.

The deacon's service has three aspects: word, worship and charity. He can perform certain ministerial functions such as administering baptism; serving as the deacon at the Mass, including proclaiming the Gospel, preaching the homily and distributing Holy Communion; bringing viaticum to the sick; presiding at wake services, funeral liturgies and burial rites and with permission by the pastor, may celebrate the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Deacons also minister to the needs of families, single parents, students, the aged and infirmed, the imprisoned and those who suffer from poverty or addictions.

Due to COVID-19, attendance at the Mass will be limited and by invitation-only. CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will broadcast the Mass live.

The following are brief biographies of the permanent deacon-candidates for ordination:

Eugene N. Blockus

Eugene N. Blockus, 63, lives in Hunlock Creek, where he is a member of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish. He is married to his wife, Patricia, for 31 years and has two stepsons.

Following graduation in 1975 from John S. Fine High School, Nanticoke, the deacon-candidate pursued certification as an emergency medical technician (EMT) and paramedic at Luzerne County Community College (LCCC) and became a nationally registered EMT-paramedic in 1990.

In 1998, he received his associate's degree in applied science from LCCC and was licensed as a registered nurse.

Blockus earned his pre-hospital registered nurse certification in 2005, having served as an ALS responder for Mercy Health Partners, and EMT-paramedic at Bloomsburg Hospital and Wilkes-Barre Mercy Hospital, where he also served and a PCU/ER registered nurse.

During 2009-2012, the future deacon was a registered nurse for Geisinger Health System in Wilkes-Barre/Danville, and served as an emergency room nurse at Lehigh Valley Hospital, Hazleton, for five years prior to his retirement from the nursing field in 2017.

Joseph J. Chmiola

Air Force veteran Joseph J. Chmiola, 59, is a parishioner at Saint Jude Parish in Mountain Top, where he resides with his wife of 18 years, Cecelia.

The 1979 graduate of Meyers High School, Wilkes-Barre, earned his bachelor's



Eugene N. Blockus



Joseph J. Chmiola



John C. Jorda



Peter J. Lemoncelli



Joseph R. Marcellus



Gerard P. Pernot



Angel Luis Rivera



Joseph Sudano

degree in history in 1983 from Wilkes University, followed by his teacher's certification in 1986. He received his master's degree in secondary education/history from Wilkes in 1995 and an administrative certificate in education from Temple University in Philadelphia in 1998.

Chmiola retired after serving for 30 years on the faculty at Crestwood High School, Mountain Top, as a social studies teacher.

John C. Jorda

A resident of Dallas, where he is a member of Gate of Heaven Parish and Our Lady of Victory Parish, Harveys Lake, John C. Jorda, 59, is the father of two sons.

He graduated from Bishop O'Reilly High School in Kingston in 1979, after which he received his municipal police officer training certification from the Pennsylvania State Police in 1989.

The deacon-candidate retired in July 2011 as captain of detectives for the Municipality of Kingston Police Department. He would later serve as operations manager in the Safety & Security Department at Misericordia University, Dallas, retiring in August.

Peter J. Lemoncelli

Peter J. Lemoncelli, 66, is a parishioner at the Basilica of Saint Ann in West Scranton and resides in Hughestown with his wife, Lorine. The couple has been married for 33 years and are the parents of two children.

After graduating from Lakeland High School in Jermyn in 1972, Lemoncelli earned an associate's degree in business from Penn State University. He received his bachelor's degree from The University of Scranton, where he was awarded his M.B.A. degree in 1978.

The future deacon is retired from the United States Postal Service following a 36-year career in the statistical programs division.

Joseph R. Marcellus

Deacon-candidate Joseph R. Marcellus, 60, and his wife of 12 years, Terri, reside in the community of Lake Ariel, where they belong to the Parish of Saint Thomas More.

A 1978 graduate of Wilson High School in Easton, Marcellus earned his bachelor's degree in architecture from Syracuse University in 1986.

He currently serves in a principal position

with BDA Architects, an architectural/interior design firm in Clarks Summit.

Gerard P. Pernot

Gerard P. Pernot, 58, and his wife, Patricia, have been married for 31 years and have three children. They are residents of Duryea and members of Nativity of Our Lord Parish in the borough.

The deacon-candidate is a 1979 graduate of Pittston Area High School and received his associate's degree in banking from Luzerne County Community College in 1984.

He later earned a bachelor's in business administration and economics from Wilkes University in 1988 and a master's in business administration, with a concentration in finance, from The University of Scranton in 1992.

Pernot is currently a relationship manager for retirement plan clients with CUNA Mutual Group.

Angel Luis Rivera

Future deacon and East Stroudsburg resident Angel Luis Rivera, 56, and his wife, Lizbeth, have three children and are parishioners at Saint Luke Parish in Stroudsburg.

He is a 1982 graduate of Luis Muñoz Rivera High School in Salinas, Puerto Rico.

Currently employed by Notre Dame High School in East Stroudsburg, Rivera received his bachelor's degree in Spanish from the College of Mount Saint Vincent, Riverdale, N.Y., in 2002. He also earned a graduate degree in religious education and Latino studies from Fordham University in New York.

Joseph Sudano

Joseph Sudano, 50, of Milford, is a member of Saint Nicholas Parish in Wilkes-Barre, where he currently serves as full-time Director of Faith Formation. He is married to his wife, Barbara, for 27 years and they are the parents of three children.

Sudano graduated from New York City's Archbishop Molloy High School in 1988 and received his undergraduate degree in liberal arts & sciences from City University of New York in 1992.

The deacon-candidate previously held a sales management position with Canon USA and was also campus minister at East Stroudsburg University.

Compensation Program helps abuse victims by acknowledging and validating pain

Continued from Page 1

The administrators retained complete and sole discretion over eligibility and compensation offers to eligible survivors. The Diocese of Scranton could not reject any of the administrators' final determinations regarding eligibility and/or compensation.

"We were pleased to provide a non-adversarial forum for the victims without regard to the statute of limitations," Biros said. "Though no amount of money could provide closure to these victims, we believe our Program was a small step in helping victims by acknowledging, validating and resolving their claims through our Program."

The Program has also been monitored by an Independent Oversight Committee comprised of Robert Gillespie, Jr., former Luzerne County District Attorney; Ralph H. Meyer, President and Chief Executive Officer Emeritus with Guthrie Healthcare System; and Robin Engels, MA, MSW, LCSW, a licensed clinical social worker.

All claimants who accepted awards have been paid in full. By choosing to accept the offered compensation, the individual waives any future legal claim against the Diocese of Scranton related to their sexual abuse claims.

The Independent Survivors Compensation Program has been primarily funded by the sale proceeds of the Diocese of Scranton's three long-term care facilities in 2019 and the subsequent transfer of assets held by these three facilities. In addition, some funding was provided by the Diocese of Scranton insurers and contributions from other religious orders.

The Diocese did not use any funds that had been given by the faithful to support parishes, schools, the Diocesan Annual Appeal, Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton or any donor-restricted contributions.

"As the body of Christ, the Church is called to be an instrument of healing. It is called to stand with those who are hurting and oppressed. We will continue to do that with compassion in the weeks, months and years ahead,"

Bishop Bambera added. "I ask for your continued prayers for all those who have suffered abuse."

The Diocese of Scranton maintains a zero tolerance policy for clergy, lay employees and volunteers who engage in misconduct with minors and takes immediate action when an accusation is made.

The Diocese offers counseling, spiritual guidance and pastoral care for anyone impacted by clergy abuse in the Diocese of Scranton.

Any individual who has been sexually abused by a priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese is urged to report abuse directly to law enforcement. If you have suffered abuse by clergy or anyone working on behalf of the Diocese, you are also encouraged to contact Victim Assistance Coordinator, Mary Beth Pacuska, at (570) 862-7551.

The full report on the Independent Survivors Compensation Program is printed on pages 4 and 5 of this edition of *The Catholic Light* and are also available on the Diocese of Scranton website.

Eight additional names added to Diocese's credibly accused list

Continued from Page 1

These names have been added to the list of credibly accused individuals:

DIOCESAN CLERGY

*Byrne, Edmund F.
Conboy, Joseph T.
Corcoran, Francis P.
Ferrett, Walter L.
Kelly, Joseph P.
McGroarty, Hugh Harold*

MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Reiner, Julius (C.P.)

LAITY

Major, Mark

All but one of the Diocesan Clergy listed above are deceased. The sole living credibly accused clergy, Monsignor Joseph P. Kelly, entered into retirement prior to the conclusion of the Independent Survivors Compensation Program.

After notification of multiple allegations received through the ISCP, the Diocese of Scranton enacted the *Essential Norms* of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and placed Monsignor Kelly on administrative leave, prohibiting his ability to publicly celebrate the sacraments or present himself as a priest.

The Diocese of Scranton urges any individual who has been sexually abused by a priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese to report abuse directly to law enforcement. If you are aware of additional allegations of wrongdoing or any information that should be included on this list, please contact our Victim Assistance Coordinator Mary Beth Pacuska at (570) 862-7551. If you have suffered abuse by clergy or anyone working on behalf of the diocese, you are encouraged to contact Mary Beth Pacuska.

Monsignor Kelly issues statement in response to credibly accused listing

In response to being named on the Diocese of Scranton's Credibly Accused Individuals List, Monsignor Joseph P. Kelly released the following statement, which is printed in its entirety:

"Bishop Bambera has decided that I have been 'credibly accused' of the sexual abuse of minors, and has removed me from ministry.

It is true that some priests of the Diocese did abuse minors, which is both a sin and a crime. I am not one of them.

I deny the allegations that I abused anyone, and I especially deny that I abused any of the children under my care while I was Director of St. Michael's School for Boys.

I have spent much of my ministry involved with children. I worked at Boys Town. I helped found and worked at Project Hope. I was Director of Camp St. Andrew. I taught in Catholic Schools for 25 years. The only claims against me come from former, court-assigned boys who were committed to St. Michael's in the mid 70's.

The Bishop's decision to name me as 'credibly accused' is based on a seriously flawed process that is an open invitation for fraud. Once the Diocese established and announced that it created a 'Survivors Fund,' former St. Michael's boys made claims of having been abused while

there. These claims were referred to a Diocesan-created Independent Survivor Compensation Program for review and decision. I was not given the opportunity to defend myself, and no adequate investigation of these claims was made.

My accusers, who claim that I abused them 45 years ago, have criminal records ranging from murder to robbery to assault to drug offenses. These claims arise as part of a prison industry, where claims against Diocese nationwide have arisen. One former St. Michael's boy was charged in Federal Court in Oregon for having asserted fraudulent claims against 5 separate Diocese.

None of the claimants against me came forward until the Survivor's Fund was created and announced.

I say to my family, my friends, my former co-workers, my former parishioners that these claims are not true. I have spent the last 54 years as a priest who believes in and practiced respect for the dignity and safety of all I came in contact with, especially those under my supervision.

I put my record before the people of the Diocese, and ask that you not accept the label 'credibly accused' that has been applied to me, but that you do accept my denial that these claims are false and fraudulent."

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 Respetto de Reportar el Abuso Sexual de Un Menor de Edad

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

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

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

Por eso, información respecto a una alegación del asunto sexual de un menor de edad, debe ser reportada a la Coordinadora Diocesana de Asistencia para Las Víctimas, Mary Beth Pacuska, a (570) 862-7551.



REPORT ON THE INDEPENDENT SURVIVORS COMPENSATION PROGRAM IN THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

INTRODUCTION

On January 22, 2019, the Diocese of Scranton launched its Independent Survivors Compensation Program (ISCP) to promote healing and recovery for survivors of clergy sexual abuse. The Program was purely voluntary and open to individuals who had submitted a complaint of sexual abuse to the diocese before the Program was first announced as well as individuals who had not previously submitted a complaint.

Survivors of abuse committed by Diocese of Scranton priests, members of religious communities and by lay employees of the diocese were able to submit claims. The Program confronted a dark and difficult chapter in the history of the Church. The diocese created the ISCP in order to publicly recognize the harm caused to survivors of abuse, demonstrate the Church’s commitment to those survivors and hopefully to provide validation and a measure of healing.

HOW DID THE ISCP WORK?

The ISCP has been completely independent from the Diocese of Scranton. Kenneth Feinberg and Camille Biros, two nationally recognized claims administration experts, administered the ISCP. Their prior experience involved handling the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund, BP Deepwater Horizon Disaster Victim Compensation Fund and similar compensation Programs for numerous other Catholic dioceses.

In addition, the Program has been monitored by an Independent Oversight Committee comprised of Robert Gillespie, Jr., former Luzerne County District Attorney; Ralph H. Meyer, President and Chief Executive Officer Emeritus with Guthrie Healthcare System; and Robin Engels, MA, MSW, LCSW, a licensed clinical social worker.

The Program administrators retained complete and sole discretion over eligibility and compensation offers to eligible survivors who participated in the Program. The Diocese of Scranton could not reject any of the administrators’ final determinations regarding eligibility and/or compensation.

Serving as independent administrators, Mr. Feinberg and Ms. Biros worked with individuals who had previously submitted a complaint of sexual abuse to the diocese. These individuals were invited by letter to participate in the Program.

Individuals who had not previously filed a complaint with the diocese could register to participate in the Program through a website that was established. New complaints of abuse received through the Program must also have been reported to the appropriate District Attorney’s Office.

Individuals were invited to provide any documentation and corroborating information to substantiate the claim. This information aided administrators in making fair and accurate determinations. Claims were handled in the order in which they were received and administrators used information submitted to process and pay claims. One of the most important aspects of the Program was its confidentiality.

RESULTS OF THE ISCP

Total claims submitted:	295
Claims determined ineligible:	46
Total eligible claims:	249
Offers that remain outstanding:	25
Rejected offers:	11
Total claims paid:	213
Total paid to claimants:	\$24,460,000

The Administrators have processed all claims and have sent determination letters to the claimants. More than 85% of claimants accepted their offers and less than 5% rejected their offers. Under 10% of the claims remain outstanding. The diocese anticipates that these outstanding claims will be resolved in the near future.

Before accepting compensation through the ISCP, all individuals were required to consult with an attorney for the purpose of reviewing documents and understanding agreement language. If the claimant did not have an attorney, the administrators provided an independent attorney for consultation free of charge. By choosing to accept the offered compensation, the individual waives any future legal claim against the Diocese of Scranton related to their sexual abuse claims.

HOW WAS THE ISCP FUNDED?

The Program was primarily funded by the sale proceeds of the Diocese of Scranton’s three long-term care facilities in 2019, which was planned long before the ISCP was created. The Diocese received approximately \$26 million from the sale of the properties and subsequent transfer of assets held by these three facilities. In addition, some funding for the Program was provided by Diocese of Scranton insurers and contributions from other religious orders.

The diocese did not use any funds that had been given by the faithful to support parishes, schools, the Diocesan Annual Appeal, Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton or any donor-restricted contributions.

The Diocese of Scranton maintains a zero tolerance policy for clergy, lay employees and volunteers who engage in misconduct with minors and takes immediate action when an accusation is made. Any allegation of abuse is reported immediately to law enforcement and any substantiated allegation against a member of the clergy results in immediate and permanent removal from ministry.

The Diocese of Scranton formally established a “Policy Concerning Clerics Accused of Sexual Abuse of Minors” in March 1993. When the bishops of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted a comprehensive plan on this issue in 2002, the Diocese refined and expanded its procedures. After prayerful reflection, extensive research and study, and purposeful review by several external and internal entities, including the Diocesan Review Board, the most recent policy, the Diocese of Scranton Policy for Response to Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors, took effect in 2015. A copy of the policy is provided to all members of the clergy and seminarians. The policy is made available to all diocesan employees and members of the general public on the diocesan website.

The Diocese of Scranton continues to address this serious issue with vigilance and fidelity so that its policies, procedures and practices achieve genuine transparency and true accountability. The Diocese’s Safe Environment Program has a multi-faceted approach, including:

- Background Checks – Ensuring a thorough background screening is completed for all clergy, paid employees and volunteers that have direct contact and routine interaction with children.
- Adult and Youth Training – Providing training, prevention and educational programs in recognizing and reporting any suspicions or knowledge of child abuse to appropriate civil and Church authorities. As of October 2020, more than 31,340 individuals have completed VIRTUS training since 2003.
- Code of Pastoral Conduct – A document holding all clergy, employees and volunteers accountable to a Christ-centered, pastoral code of conduct.
- Office of Victim Assistance – The role of the Victim Assistance Coordinator is to facilitate the immediate pastoral care of persons that claim to have been sexually abused by a cleric when they were minors. The Victim Assistance Coordinator provides support and services, including arranging for counseling or spiritual direction and referrals to support groups.
- Diocesan Review Board – An independent, consultative body comprised of members of the laity, a religious sister and one priest, which performs a case-by-case review of allegations of sexual abuse of a minor, reviews diocesan policies for responding to the accusation of sexual abuse of a minor by Church personnel and advises the bishop in his determination of suitability for ministry of the accused.

The Diocese has passed independent audits of its child protection procedures every year since the policy was adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002. The audit evaluates each diocese’s efforts to ensure the protection of children.

CONCLUSION

The Independent Survivors Compensation Program fulfills two promises made by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera. First, to promote the healing and recovery of survivors. Second, to directly confront a scandal that robbed many of the most vulnerable of their innocence and peace. While nothing can take away their pain, several survivors have commented that their participation in the Program has provided a measure of solace and an opportunity to move forward. Many survivors have also expressed an appreciation for the privacy that the Program provided.

The Diocese of Scranton continues to urge any individual who has been sexually abused by a priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese to report abuse directly to law enforcement or the Diocese’s Victim Assistance Coordinator.

While the Program has concluded, the Diocese’s outreach to survivors of clergy sexual abuse continues. The Diocese of Scranton is committed to learning from the mistakes of the past and moving forward with renewed resolve to protect all children from abuse.

“It is essential that we, as a Church, be able to acknowledge and condemn, with sorrow and shame, the atrocities perpetrated by consecrated persons, clerics, and all those entrusted with the mission of watching over and caring for those most vulnerable.”

- Pope Francis

BUILDING ON OUR COMMITMENT TO ACCOUNTABILITY

“Be diligent in these matters, be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to everyone.” (1 Tim 4:15)

Charter & Essential Norms
 June 2002, Revised 2005, 2011, 2018

Motu Proprio
 Vos Estis Lux Mundi
 May 2019

Implementation Directives
 June 2019

- Zero Tolerance
- Victim Outreach
- Required Reporting to Public Authorities
- Lay Review Boards
- Victim Assistance Coordinators
- Safe Environment Training
- Background Checks
- No Confidentiality Agreements Unless Requested by Survivor
- Ongoing Formation for Clergy

- Reporting Systems
- Timely Investigations
- Survivor Support
- Whistleblower Protection
- Conflict of Interest Ban
- Lay Involvement
- Compliance with Civil Law
- Grounded in the Law and Life of the Local Church

- Outlines Use of Lay Experts to Investigate and Publicize Allegations
- National 3rd Party Reporting
- Strengthens Conflict of Interest Ban
- Pastoral Care for Those Harmed
- Affirms Duties of Metropolitan

Protocol
 June 2019

Episcopal Commitments
 June 2019

Vademecum
 Treating Cases of Sexual Abuse of Minors
 July 2020

- Guidance on Bishops Who Were Removed or Who Resigned for Reasons Related to Sexual Abuse or Abuse of Power
- Guidance on Participation of Such Bishops Removed or Resigned in USCCB Meetings

- Bishops Included in Codes of Conduct that Must Include Prohibitions Against Sexual Misconduct and Harassment
- Bishops Renew Pledge to Be Subject to the Charter
- Commitment to Ongoing Formation for Bishops
- Commitment to Include Expertise of Lay Professionals

- Affirms the Rights of Victims
- Underscores Ways to Report Clerical Sexual Abuse
- Reinforces Bishops’ Obligations to Preserve Evidence
- Emphasizes Cooperation with Civil Authorities
- Clarifies Obligations of Silence
- Ensures Consistency in the Investigation of Allegations
- Describes the Church’s Penal Process

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McCarrick report documents repeated lack of serious investigation

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Although dogged for years by rumors of sexual impropriety, Theodore E. McCarrick was able to rise up the Catholic hierarchical structure based on personal contacts, protestations of his innocence and a lack of church officials reporting and investigating accusations, according to the Vatican report on the matter.

In choosing then-Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of Newark in 2000 to be archbishop of Washington and later a cardinal, St. John Paul II likely overlooked rumors and allegations about McCarrick’s sexual misconduct because of a long relationship with him, McCarrick’s own strong denial and the pope’s experience with communist authorities in Poland making accusations to discredit the church, the report said.

But, in fact, rumors of McCarrick’s conduct, especially knowledge that he had young adult men and seminarians sleep in the same bed with him when he was bishop of Metuchen, New Jersey, led the Vatican to decide it would be “imprudent” to promote him when looking for candidates to become archbishop of Chicago in 1997, New York in 1999-2000 and, initially, of Washington in July 2000, the report said.

The text of the report makes clear that because the allegations involved behavior with adult men, not minors, both diocesan and Vatican officials did not consider McCarrick’s actions abusive, made excuses for McCarrick based on his lack of real family ties and were overwhelmingly concerned with the church’s reputation, not the health or safety of his alleged victims.

The “Report on the Holy See’s Institutional Knowledge and Decision-Making Related to Former Cardinal Theodore Edgar McCarrick” was released Nov. 10; it included an introduction describing the two-year investigation that led to the report’s compilation and gave an “executive summary” of its findings.

In June 2018, the Vatican suspended McCarrick from ministry after an investigation by the Archdiocese of New York found credible a charge that he sexually abused a teenager. McCarrick resigned from the College of Cardinals in July, and in February 2019, after a canonical process found McCarrick guilty of “solicitation in the sacrament of confession and sins against the Sixth Commandment with

minors and with adults, with the aggravating factor of the abuse of power,” Pope Francis dismissed him from the priesthood.

In August 2018, Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, former nuncio to the United States, called on Pope Francis to resign after claiming that he had informed Pope Francis of McCarrick’s abuse in 2013 and that top Vatican officials knew of McCarrick’s abusive behavior for years.

That claim led Pope Francis to initiate an investigation into how McCarrick was able to continue to rise through church ranks despite the repeated rumors, anonymous letters, allegations and even settlements with alleged victims.

The report summary said, “No records support Vigano’s account” of his meeting with Pope Francis “and evidence as to what he said is sharply disputed.”

Until the allegations about child sexual abuse were made to the Archdiocese of New York in 2017, “Francis had heard only that there had been allegations and rumors related to immoral conduct with adults occurring prior to McCarrick’s appointment to Washington,” it said.

“Believing that the allegations had already been reviewed and rejected by Pope John Paul II, and well aware that McCarrick was active during the papacy of Benedict XVI, Pope Francis did not see the need to alter the approach that had been adopted in prior years,” the summary said.

While acknowledging efforts made by Archbishop Vigano to bring rumors about McCarrick to the attention of his superiors while Pope Benedict was still in office, the report also claimed the former nuncio was instructed to investigate an allegation in 2012 and failed to do so.

The introduction to the report said it is based on documents found at the Vatican and the apostolic nunciature in the United States as well as interviews – “ranging in length from one to 30 hours” – with more than 90 witnesses in the United States, Italy and elsewhere. They included survivors, Pope Francis, retired Pope Benedict XVI, cardinals, bishops, former seminarians and a mother who was shocked by McCarrick’s behavior with her sons.

In a statement issued with the report, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, said the contributions of survivors were

“fundamental.” The introduction of the report cautions survivors of abuse that certain sections “could prove traumatizing.”

He also said that over the course of the two years it took to complete the investigation and compile the report, “we have taken significant steps forward to ensure greater attention to the protection of minors and more effective interventions to avoid” repeating errors of the past.

Among those steps, he highlighted *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* (“You are the Light of the World”), Pope Francis’ 2019 document on promoting bishops’ accountability and setting out procedures for handling accusations of abuse against bishops.

The report said St. John Paul’s decisions to name McCarrick bishop of Metuchen in 1981 and archbishop of Newark in 1986 were based on “his background, skills and achievements. During the appointment process, McCarrick was widely lauded as a pastoral, intelligent and zealous bishop.”

It also said that, at the time, “no credible information emerged suggesting that he had engaged in any misconduct.”

But in October 1999 Cardinal John J. O’Connor of New York wrote to Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, then nuncio in the United States, summarizing allegations about McCarrick, then-archbishop of Newark. The letter was given to St. John Paul, who asked Archbishop Montalvo to investigate.

The nuncio did so by writing to four New Jersey bishops: Bishops James T. McHugh of Camden, 1989-1998; Vincent D. Breen of Metuchen, 1997-2000; Edward T. Hughes of Metuchen, 1987-1997; and John M. Smith of Trenton, 1997-2010.

“What is now known, through investigation undertaken for preparation of the report, is that three of the four American bishops provided inaccurate and incomplete information to the Holy See regarding McCarrick’s sexual conduct with young adults,” the summary said.

In response to Cardinal O’Connor’s accusations, the report said, McCarrick wrote to now-Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, St. John Paul’s secretary, claiming: “In the 70 years of my life, I have never had sexual relations with any person, male or female, young or old, cleric or lay, nor have I ever abused another person or treated them with disrespect.”



Then-Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick of Washington faces the press in the shadow of St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican April 24, 2002. (CNS photo/Paolo Cocco, Reuters)

“McCarrick’s denial was believed,” the report said, adding that because of “the limited nature of the Holy See’s own prior investigation, the Holy See had never received a complaint directly from a victim, whether adult or minor, about McCarrick’s conduct.”

“Though there is no direct evidence,” the report added, “it appears likely from the information obtained that John Paul II’s past experience in Poland regarding the use of spurious allegations against bishops to degrade the standing of the church played a role in his willingness to believe McCarrick’s denials.”

In addition, McCarrick had a relationship with the Polish pope going back to his days as the cardinal of Krakow. The summary said, “McCarrick’s direct relationship with John Paul II also likely had an impact on the pope’s decision-making.”

St. John Paul II “personally made the decision” to name him archbishop of Washington and a cardinal, it said.

The report also concluded that now-retired Pope Benedict XVI did not initiate a formal canonical process against McCarrick or even impose sanctions on him because “there were no credible allegations of child abuse; McCarrick swore on his ‘oath as a bishop’ that the allegations were false; the allegations of misconduct with adults related to events in the 1980s; and there was no indication of any recent misconduct.”

However, after initially asking McCarrick to stay on in Washington for two years past his 75th birthday in 2005, the report said, new details related to a priest’s allegations about McCarrick’s sexual misconduct emerged and Pope Benedict asked him to step down in 2006.

Statement of Bishop Joseph C. Bambera on the report of former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick

“The long-awaited report from the Holy See is an important document that brings greater transparency and accountability to the decision-making process regarding Theodore McCarrick. I am grateful to Pope Francis for following through on his commitment to make public this two-year investigation, despite its difficult content. I believe it is critical that we have an honest accounting of what transpired.

This report is yet another reminder of the sin of sexual abuse within the Church. The release of this voluminous report has rightly sparked a wide range of emotions, ranging from shock to anger to frustration. Even one case of sexual abuse is one too many. No matter one’s rank, privilege or prestige, nothing gives them the right to abuse their power.

This report will no doubt be upsetting to those who have suffered sexual abuse, as well as their loved ones and friends, given the failures and missed opportunities that are outlined. I believe this report highlights and emphasizes the need for all of us to take seriously any rumor of abuse or improper behavior.

I remain committed to supporting all survivors of sexual abuse. I hope all people of good will join me in praying for healing and reconciliation within the Church. If you are a survivor of sexual abuse in the Diocese of Scranton I encourage you to immediately contact law enforcement. Survivors are also encouraged to reach out to the Diocese’s Victim Assistance Coordinator.”

Pope not changing church teaching on gay unions, Secretariat of State says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – The Vatican Secretariat of State has sent an explanatory note to nuncios around the world insisting that when Pope Francis spoke about civil unions, he was not changing or challenging “the doctrine of the church, which he has reaffirmed numerous times over the years.”

The note, which was not signed, explained that the pope’s remarks about gay people in the recent film, “Francesco,” come from his responses to two separate questions in a 2019 interview for Mexico’s *Televisa* network.

The pope’s comments were “edited and published as a single answer without the necessary contextualization,” the note said.

As Catholic News Service reported Oct. 26, when Pope Francis said gay people have a right to be in a family and that gay couples needed some form of civil law to protect their rights, he was not advocating any form of “marriage” or marriage rights for gay couples.

Yet, in his documentary “Francesco,” director Evgeny Afineevsky presented the statements as if Pope Francis had been talking about the right of gay couples to form a family, including with children.

Afineevsky, who a Vatican official said

was never granted an on-camera interview with the pope, pulled the quotes about families and the quote about civil unions from the interview by Valentina Alazraki, correspondent for *Televisa*, CNS had reported.

The clips used in Afineevsky’s film put together quotes from three separate moments of the *Televisa* interview, so the pope appears to say: “They are children of God and have a right to a family. Nobody should be thrown out or be made miserable over it. What we have to create is a civil union law. That way they are legally covered.”

The note from the Secretariat of State also noted that Pope Francis repeatedly has insisted that gay unions cannot be equated to marriage, pointing to a 2014 interview with the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*.

In the interview six years ago, Pope Francis was asked about moves across Europe to legalize gay marriage or adopt civil union laws.

“Marriage is between a man and a woman,” he said. “Secular states want to validate civil unions to regulate different situations of cohabitation, driven by the need to regulate economic aspects between



Pope Francis speaks with Valentina Alazraki of the Mexican television station *Televisa* during an interview that aired in May 2019. The Vatican Secretariat of State has sent a note to nuncios around the world explaining the pope’s comments about civil unions in the documentary “Francesco” by Evgeny Afineevsky. (CNS screenshot/Noticieros Televisa via YouTube)

people, such as ensuring health care. These are cohabitation pacts of various kinds, of which I could not list the different forms.”

“It is necessary to see the different cases and evaluate them in their variety,” he said, implying that some forms of civil unions would be acceptable.

From the unedited interview with

Televisa, the pope’s remarks to *Corriere della Sera* and similar distinctions he has made on other occasions, the Secretariat of State’s note said, “It is clear that Pope Francis was referring to particular state regulations, certainly not the doctrine of the church, which he has reaffirmed numerous times over the years.”

Transcript shows pope’s distinction between gay marriage, civil unions

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – When Pope Francis said gay people have a right to be in a family and that gay couples needed some form of civil law to protect their rights, he was not saying that gay couples should have a right to adopt children.

In his documentary “Francesco,” director Evgeny Afineevsky presented the statements as if Pope Francis had said them one right after the other; the director used the quotes immediately following a story about a gay couple with children.

Released Oct. 21, the film gave some people the erroneous impression that Pope Francis approved civil union laws that would equate gay couples to married couples. Pope Francis consistently has said that gay people deserve love, respect and the protection of the law; however, he has insisted marriage can be only between a man and a woman.

Afineevsky, who a Vatican official said was never granted an on-camera interview with the pope, pulled the quotes about families and the quote about civil unions from a 2019 interview by Valentina Alazraki, correspondent for the Mexican television station *Televisa*.

When the Vatican, which filmed the interview, gave *Televisa* the footage, the quotation about civil unions had been cut.

Catholic News Service obtained the complete transcript of the uncut interview, including the comment about civil unions.

The pope, speaking in Spanish, referred to “una ley de convivencia civil,” literally a “law of civil cohabitation,” but commonly called a civil union.

The clips used in Afineevsky’s film put together quotes from three separate moments of the *Televisa* interview, so the pope appears to say: “They are children of God and have a right to a family. Nobody should be thrown out or be made miserable over it. What we have to create is a civil union law. That way they are legally covered.”

At one point in the interview – in the piece aired on *Televisa* and included in transcript the Vatican originally put online – Alazraki and the pope spoke about the “journey” of discernment and conversion he called for in his exhortation on the family, *Amoris Laetitia*, and about the habit of referring to certain people as being in “irregular” situations.

“If we were convinced that they are children of God, things would change quite a bit,” the pope says.

Then he brings up his response in August 2018 to a journalist who had asked what he would say to a father whose son or daughter tells him he or she is gay.

On the plane returning from Ireland, he had responded: “I would tell him first of all to pray. Pray. Don’t condemn, (but) dialogue, understand, make room for his son or daughter.”



Evgeny Afineevsky, director of the documentary “Francesco,” poses for a photo during an interview with Reuters in Rome Oct. 14, 2020. The Vatican Secretariat of State has sent a note to nuncios around the world explaining the pope’s comments about civil unions in the documentary by Afineevsky. (CNS photo/Guglielmo Mangiapane, Reuters)

The parent should respond, “You are my son; you are my daughter, just as you are. I am your father or your mother, let’s talk about this,” he had said. “And if you, as a father or mother, can’t deal with this on your own, ask for help, but always in dialogue, always in dialogue. Because that son and daughter has a right to family, and their family is this family, just as it is. Do not throw them out of the family.”

In the interview with Alazraki, Pope Francis paraphrased his earlier responses, saying, “Homosexual persons have a right to

be in the family and the parents have a right to recognize this son as homosexual, this daughter as homosexual. Nobody should be thrown out or be made miserable over it.”

The pope explained to Alazraki how upset he was that a newspaper, reporting on his comments on the flight from Ireland, ran a headline saying that the pope said homosexuals should see a psychiatrist when he clearly meant that if parents see their son or daughter struggling with their sexuality, professional help might be a good idea.

“And I repeated it: ‘They are children of God and have a right to a family,’ and so on,” he told Alazraki.

The interview went on with a discussion about the media taking words out of context, and then Alazraki told the pope that people say he was a doctrinal conservative when he was in Argentina.

“I am a conservative,” he responded.

Alazraki pointed out that as archbishop of Buenos Aires, he opposed gay marriage.

“I’ve always defended doctrine. And it is curious about the law on homosexual marriage – it is a contradiction to speak of homosexual marriage. But what we have to create is a civil union law, that way they are legally covered. I defended that,” he said, referring to his efforts to support an alternative to legalizing gay marriage that would still protect the rights of gay couples when it came to matters like inheritance, health care decisions and visitation when one is ill.

In Thanksgiving message, Bishop Bambera stresses COVID-19 vigilance

Leading up to the celebration of Thanksgiving on Nov. 26, 2020, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera released a video message to the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton.

The message includes the following: “The month of November is a time of Thanksgiving. It is a time for gratitude and expressing our blessings.

This month especially, we remind ourselves of the bounty of God’s goodness and give Him thanks for the gifts that we receive each day. When we focus on God with grateful hearts, we become more aware of those around us and our need for each other.

This year during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have all faced separation and isolation in some way or another over the last eight months. With the number of cases continuing to rise, this Thanksgiving may look very different from those we have come to expect and love.

You may not be gathering in large groups. You may be staying home to protect your family members. While things may be different – I still encourage you to pray.

Prayer sustains us. Through prayer and the Sacraments – God feeds us and sustains us.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, I want to thank all of you in our parishes, including our priests, deacons and parish life coordinators who continue to work so hard to create safe places to worship.

I also urge everyone to remain vigilant about this virus. Now is not the time to let our guard down. We must continue to wear face masks and remain socially distant, especially while in our parishes and wash our hands as much as possible.

It is also critical for anyone who may feel sick, whether it’s a cold or potentially something more, to stay home and participate in Mass online or on television.

Please know that I am praying for you and your families at this time. I wish you a very happy and blessed Thanksgiving.”



Cathedral of Saint Peter announces schedule for Advent and Christmas

The Cathedral of Saint Peter announces its schedule for public services for the joyous celebration of Advent and Christmas.

On each Sunday in Advent, beginning Sunday, Nov. 29, the Cathedral will host Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with Evening Prayer and Benediction beginning at 6:15 p.m.

Each service will be livestreamed to the Cathedral and Diocese of Scranton social media platforms. The services will then air on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton immediately following the rebroadcast of the 6:00 p.m. Mass.

The Cathedral will host several Pontifical Masses for the celebration of Christmas with the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

The Cathedral will require reservations for all Christmas Masses. Reservations will open on Monday, Dec. 7, at 9:00 a.m. Reservations can be made by calling the Parish Office or online at the website www.stpeterscathedral.org/christmas.

The Mass schedule includes a 4:00 p.m. Pontifical Vigil Mass of Christmas with Bishop Bambera and a 9:00 p.m. Vigil Mass of Christmas Eve.

A Pontifical Midnight Mass of Christmas, celebrated by Bishop Bambera, will take place on Friday, Dec. 25, 2020. Additional Masses of Christmas Day will

be held at 6:30 a.m., 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

The Cathedral will also offer numerous opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation leading up to Christmas. Reservations are not required for confessions. The dates and times are listed in the graphic below.



BISHOP BAMBERA’S SCHEDULE

- November 22** - Feast of Christ the King Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 10:00 a.m.
- November 28** - Permanent Diaconate Ordination
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 10:00 a.m.
- November 29** - Mass for 10th Anniversary of Nativity of Our Lord Parish
Duryea, 11:00 a.m.
- December 1** - Priests Day of Recollection
2:00 p.m.
- December 6** - Mass at Saint Gabriel’s Retreat Center
Clarks Summit, 10:00 a.m.
- December 8** - Mass for Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 6:30 a.m.
- December 12** - Mass for Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
Saint John Neumann Parish, Scranton, 11:00 a.m.
- December 12** - Mass for Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
Saint Nicholas Church, Wilkes-Barre, 6:00 p.m.
- December 23** - Advent Mass for Chancery Staff
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.
- December 24** - Christmas Eve Vigil Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 4:00 p.m.
- December 25** - Midnight Mass
Cathedral of Sainter Peter, Scranton, Midnight

The Cathedral provides the perfect setting for the most joyous time of the year. Readings from Scripture, favorite seasonal hymns, and instrumental music all herald the birth of Jesus.

A reservation is required to attend any Mass of Christmas. Reservations will open on Monday, December 7 at 9 a.m.

MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve | Thursday, December 24

4:00 p.m. Pontifical Vigil Mass of Christmas Celebrated by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera	9:00 p.m. Vigil Mass of Christmas Eve
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Christmas Day | Friday, December 25

Midnight Pontifical Midnight Mass of Christmas Celebrated by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera	6:30 a.m., 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 12:15 p.m. Mass of Christmas Day
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CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Saturday, December 19 | 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. | Tuesday, December 22 | 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, December 23 | 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. | Thursday, December 24 | 8:00 a.m. to Noon

USCCB president to bishops: Take Gospel to troubled people during pandemic

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Admitting that people’s faith in God “has been shaken” by the pandemic and related economic turmoil, Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez called on his fellow bishops to take the news of the Resurrection and the triumph of life over death directly to people to help them navigate the crises.

“At the heart of their fears are fundamental questions about divine providence and the goodness of God,” said Archbishop Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said Nov. 16 during an online address on the first day of bishops’ annual fall general assembly.

“This is far more than a public health emergency,” he said. “Everywhere we see spreading the fear of illness and death.”

The assembly was taking place entirely online for the first time because of the pandemic. Archbishop Gomez’s address was prerecorded. The archbishop said the pandemic illustrates that the core message of the Gospel – Christ’s love for every person, the power of the cross and the promise of the



Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the USCCB, speaks Nov. 16 during the bishops’ virtual fall meeting. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

resurrection – “is fading from our neighbors’ hearts.”

During the virtual fall assembly, bishops also discussed the Vatican report on Theodore McCarrick, the ongoing pandemic and the church’s response to racism.

The bishops also looked at the pandemic in light of their four-year strategic plan, adopted one year ago, and not scheduled to go into effect until January 2021. The plan is being modified to accommodate the pandemic and associated consequences.

Young adults being honored with Bishop’s Youth Awards

A total of 684 young adults from across the Diocese of Scranton are being honored this fall for their commitment to their faith and service to their parishes and schools.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Bishop’s Youth Awards are not being handed out in large regional Masses. Instead, the nominees are being recognized in their individual parishes and schools. The Bishop’s Youth Awards Masses began on Nov. 8 and are expected to continue through the rest of the month.

The awards recognize eighth grade and 12th grade students who have shown exceptional service and leadership skills.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera taped a video message to all of the students receiving the awards, thanking them for their commitment to service.

“I want to remind you that holiness is

often found in the little things – not just the big things. More than you might realize, you are already making a difference in your parish and school communities,” the bishop said. “Whether you are serving at your parish Mass as a lector, altar server or cantor; taking part in youth ministry or religious education programs; being an example of faith to your peers, or helping with vacation bible schools – you are thinking of others more than yourselves.”

Bishop Bambera encouraged all students to continue sharing their

gifts and talents wherever they may be.

“We are so proud of all of you for everything that you do and all that you are,” the bishop said in his message to honorees. “We need you now more than ever to be living saints, doing things both big and small for your community and our diocese.”

“We need you now more than ever to be living saints”

-Bishop Bambera

2020 Election results in highest turnout percentage since 1900

Continued from Page 1

“Another set of characteristics that play in the choice are the emotions that the candidates provoke in the voters,” Krosnick added. If the candidate comes off as proud and optimistic, voters are more likely to vote for that person, he said. If the candidate comes off as angry, the voter is less likely to choose that person, he added.

“I believe a small number of swing voters behaved differently in that they had given Donald Trump a chance and were not happy with him. But I don’t think the majority of voters – I would say 85%-90% of voters – voted as they had in the last election,” said Fathali Moghaddam, a Georgetown University professor and director of its interdisciplinary program in cognitive science.

That number does not change much every four years, Moghaddam said, and has grown into the norm over time because of the polarized nature of our politics,” a concept he calls “mutual radicalization.”

“The center is hollowed out. Unfortunately, this means that dialogue and constructive communication becomes more difficult. Because of mutual radicalization, when groups are pushing one another to become more and more extreme, anybody who dares to take a middle ground is shot at from both extremes,” he said.

Trump drew higher percentages of Hispanic and Black men than analysts had predicted.

Asked whether that meant the GOP is becoming a “men’s party” and the Democrats a “women’s party,” Moghaddam replied, “I’m not sure it’s going to translate into support for the Republican party as a whole. I think it is specific to the image prepared by Donald Trump – his image of anti-feminism, and his image of appealing to traditional gender roles, the idea that men and women have their traditional gender roles and it’s best for them to stay in those positions.”

In the 2020 election, noted Catholic University’s White, “there are a whole host of life issues. Abortion is certainly one, and an important one. But so is immigration. So is climate. So is the way we treat one another. And you just saw this very active dialogue. Those on one extreme said, ‘You can’t be Catholic and vote for Biden.’”

Biden supports legal abortion. As a Catholic, he says he is personally opposed to abortion but cannot impose his view on the electorate.

“On the other side, (the U.S. bishops’ quadrennial document) ‘Faithful Citizenship’ means informed consciences,” White said. “I think that dialogue is going to continue. I think it reflects what’s going on in Rome with PF (Pope Francis).”

The dialogue was interesting to witness, “and I don’t think it goes away with the election. I think it may continue,” he added. “I see the USCCB (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops)

issued a rather gracious statement noting and congratulating Biden on his win, noting that they had disagreements with him, but noting there were things they very much agree with him on, like immigration and separation of children (from their parents).”

“Being a Catholic is who he is, and it’s

so tied up in his story of tragedy and loss,” White said of Biden. “There’s nothing fake about that. It’s very much part of his cultural identity,” he said, and is what helped Biden prevail not only in the Electoral College and the popular vote, but among Catholic voters as well.

Pro-lifers fear ‘hard-core, pro-abortion forces’ in Biden administration

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (CNS) – If President Donald Trump’s legal efforts to challenge his 2020 reelection results prove unsuccessful and Joe Biden becomes the 46th president of the United States, pro-life advocates are finding no silver linings.

“Biden will be directed by hard-core, pro-abortion forces,” said Mark Harrington, executive director of the Ohio-based Created Equal, a nonsectarian pro-life organization.

Harrington said he anticipates that under Biden and his vice president, Kamala Harris, the Department of Justice would screen all pending state legislation to make sure it conforms to Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court’s landmark 1973 decision legalizing abortion on demand nationwide.

The Biden team also has vowed to repeal the long-standing Hyde Amendment, which outlaws federal tax dollars from directly funding abortion except in cases of rape, incest or when the life of the woman would be endangered, he said.

They also “are going to attempt to codify Roe into federal statute in the event that Roe is overturned,” Harrington said.

Pope Francis calls Biden to congratulate him on election

WILMINGTON, Del. (CNS) – Pope Francis called President-elect Joe Biden early Nov. 12 to congratulate him on winning the U.S. presidential election.

“The president-elect thanked His Holiness for extending blessings and congratulations and noted his appreciation for His Holiness’s leadership in promoting peace, reconciliation and the common bonds of humanity around the world,” said a readout on the call released by Biden’s transition team in Wlmington.

Biden, it said, “expressed his desire to work together on the basis of a shared belief in the dignity and equality of all humankind on issues such as caring for the marginalized and the poor, addressing the crisis of climate change, and welcoming and integrating immigrants and refugees into our communities.”

Despite pandemic, Leave a Mark Mass still connects young adults

SCRANTON – Having celebrated their second wedding anniversary just days earlier, Chris and Veronica Morrison of Dunmore found themselves at the Cathedral of Saint Peter on Nov. 1, 2020.

The young couple felt called to participate in the Diocese of Scranton’s annual Leave a Mark Mass because it presented an opportunity to strengthen their commitment to one another, in addition to being around other young adults

“After you get out of college, it’s really hard for younger people to get involved, to make friends and feel a part of the Church community,” Veronica, 26, said.

“I’m all for community, getting connected, getting young people connected,” Chris, 27, added. “It’s really great that they can have something like this and that people show up.”

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, attendees had to pre-register to attend the Mass in person. Attendance was limited to comply with social distancing

regulations but the Mass was broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television and livestreamed on Diocesan social media platforms.

“For me it’s definitely something important to make connections and keep my faith alive and keep it going,” Veronica explained.

This year marked the fifth anniversary for the Leave a Mark Mass. The idea for the Mass came after Pope Francis spoke to pilgrims at World Youth Day in Poland in 2016. The Holy Father said, “It is very sad to pass through life without leaving a mark.”

Bridget Barnic, 24, of Moosic helped launch the Leave a Mark Mass five years ago while a student at Marywood University.

“I’ve found being with other peers my age very encouraging. It

makes me want to share my faith more,” she said.

As a parishioner of Divine Mercy Parish in Scranton, Barnic believes the Leave a Mark Mass is important for young adults in the diocese.

“I feel that there is strength in numbers and when you’re surrounded by faithful people,

it’s easier to go out in the world and not be afraid to speak your faith,” she added.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera served as principal celebrant for the Mass, which was held on the Solemnity of All Saints. Reverend Jonathan Kuhar, Assistant Pastor, Saint John Neumann Parish, Scranton, served as homilist.

“Your task right now is to welcome others into the kingdom of God and do so by carrying the



Rev. Jonathan Kuhar delivers the homily during the Leave a Mark Mass on Nov. 1, 2020.



Young adults participate in the fifth annual Leave a Mark Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter. (Photos/Mike Melisky)

kingdom of God wherever you go, by living your lives as God’s holy people, by living your lives as saints,” Rev. Kuhar said during his homily.

Rev. Kuhar also encouraged the young adults to ask a simple question every day: ‘What does God want from me?’

“If you ask this question honestly and faithfully, God will answer your simple prayer,” he said.

Reverend Alex Roche,

Diocesan Vocations Director, welcomed the participants at the start of Mass.

“This (Mass) is always a great opportunity for us to come together as a young Church, to listen to God’s call in our life, to discern what it is we’re supposed to do, how we’re supposed to discern our vocation and of course today to pray for the intercession of all of the saints that go before us,” Rev. Roche said.

Cross blessing concludes Phase I of parish renovation project

HAZLETON – A journey that began with the planning process more than three years ago came to a completion this month high atop scaffolding more than nine stories in the air.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera joined members of Annunciation Parish on Nov. 3, 2020, to bless the Cross on top of Saint Gabriel Church. The prayerful moment marked the end of the first phase of a major renovation project at the Luzerne County church.

“This Cross is here because of so many people who helped make it be here through their gifts, through their generosity, through their efforts, for close to the century that this church has been here,” Bishop Bambera said.

The bishop, along with Rev. Mariusz Beczek, O.S.J., pastor, Annunciation Parish, parishioners and representatives of companies involved in the renovation work climbed scaffolding steps, battling windy conditions as well, to reach the limestone Cross.

“That Cross tells the story of so many lives that have been a part of this community, this neighborhood and this city, that

have turned to God in times of struggle, in times of suffering and pain and war and upheaval and in moments of joy, just to celebrate their belief that it’s the Cross that carries us all through,” Bishop Bambera added.

In late April, contractors began the six month project to address urgent needs on the front part of the church. The main goals were to address a leaking roof and water that was infiltrating the walls of the building.

“This is really about preserving this beautiful church so that we can continue to provide services to God’s people for many, many years to come,” Rev. Mariusz Beczek said.

Tom Kennedy, one of the chairmen of the Capital Campaign Committee that helped raise roughly \$1 million for the project, says the work was badly needed.

“My wife is an organist. When she would be playing the organ, it would be raining inside. The water was just coming in and there was no way to keep it out,” Kennedy explained.

Saint Gabriel Church was built in 1927. Kennedy says



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera blesses the limestone Cross at the top of Saint Gabriel Church in Hazleton on Nov. 3, 2020. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

working to restore this important house of worship has been deeply personal.

“Our family was a member of the church since the 1920s, starting with my grandfather. I was baptized here, went to school at Saint Gabriel’s, we were married here, our kids were baptized here, and we buried our parents here. Saint Gabriel’s is a very important part of our lives,” Kennedy said.

The renovation project was only slightly delayed because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Companies involved in the renovation work say they were blessed with good weather. They were happy to finish the project before the start of winter.

“Between some extensive deteriorated joints up top at the bell tower specifically and many joints washed out that were in need of replacement, there was a lot of water getting into the building. There was a lot of water infiltration,” Dawn Van Fossen, project manager with Mark J. Sobeck Roof Consulting, Inc., said.

With the first phase of the renovation project now complete, Kennedy says over the next five to ten years, parishioners plan to embark on additional renovation phases to prevent any additional damage from taking place. Those efforts will be concentrated on the other sides of the building.

Seeing the scaffolding up outside the church has brought new life to this faith-filled community.

“I think it brought some enthusiasm and vitality,” Rev. Beczek said. “We are not giving up on this church and as a community we came together to preserve this beautiful site.”

“When we look at this church which has always just dominated the skyline of the city of Hazleton, it’s such a joy and a consolation to know that it will continue to do that because of the efforts of so many people who are committed, not just to the brick and mortar, but to everything that means as a people of faith,” Bishop Bambera said.

More information on ways to contribute to the Capital Campaign can be found at www.restorehishouse.com.

Parishes plan to celebrate Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe



I am very moved," he remarked.

Father Ruth added that the feast day celebration will be complete with Mariachi accompaniment for the procession with the Marian image of Guadalupe, which will be presented by a young parishioner portraying Juan Diego. Fiesta with a light dinner will follow the Mass, with social distancing and masks required.

Leydi Rodriguez of Scranton, a member of Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary, said, "We know that Mary, as the Mother of Jesus and also our Mother, is a great intercessor. It is an honor to call her 'Mother.'"

Fellow parishioner Danielle Muñoz Heras of Carbondale concurred.

"Our Lady of Guadalupe came to Mexico where there had been worship of pagan gods," she remarked. "You can see in her miraculous image the darkened moon at her feet and the rays of the sun and stars around her mantle. This clearly said to the people that she was from the One True God. She helps us, as well, to believe in Jesus and to abandon false gods in our own lives."

Through the intercession of "Virgen de Guadalupe," plans for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe next month are proceeding with the hopes of providing as much celebration as possible amid a global pandemic and a world of social unrest.

Particularly in the areas of large Latino populations in the Diocese of Scranton, the annual observance commemorates the appearance of the Virgin Mary to a Mexican Indian peasant — now venerated as Saint Juan Diego — in December 1531 in Tepeyac, near present-day Mexico City.

The Blessed Mother's appearance is believed to have resulted in millions of conversions to Catholicism, and her message of hope continues to inspire those of Hispanic descent, especially natives of Mexico.

In 1946, Pope Pius XII declared Our Lady of Guadalupe as Patroness of the Americas.

The Our Lady of Guadalupe



feast on Dec. 12 will culminate a host of celebrations being planned throughout the Diocese, especially in those parishes made up of significant Hispanic/Latino communities.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will celebrate the feast day Mass on Saturday, Dec. 12, at 11 a.m. at Saint John Neumann Parish at Nativity of Our Lord Church, 633 Orchard St., in South Scranton.

According to Father Jonathan Kuhar, who is serving as assistant pastor at Saint John Neumann following his ordination in June, traditional plans that normally mark the celebration have been scaled back due to safety concerns.

"Although it is unfortunate we are unable to have so many traditional aspects of our celebration," Father Kuhar said, "the silver lining for us must be that more of our attention will be directed toward the Mass, which will be celebrated in Spanish. We hope all people will discover the beauty of the Spanish language and find value in celebrating this special feast day."

To maintain proper social distancing, reservations are required to attend the Mass — the first 150 reserving a place will be seated in the upper church of the Nativity worship site; the following 140 will view the livestream video of the feast day liturgy. The Mass will also be livestream on their Facebook page.

Registration may be found on the parish website at www.stjnparrish.org or on Facebook @stjnparrish.

Later in the day on Dec. 12,

Bishop Bambera will preside at the Eucharistic liturgy for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at 6 p.m. at Saint Nicholas Parish in Wilkes-Barre. The Mass will be livestream on Facebook and YouTube.

With social distancing guidelines in effect, seating is limited and reservations are required to attend. Registration can be made by visiting the parish website: www.stnicholasrc.com.

For the past ten years, Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg has received the "Virgen de Guadalupe Torch," a burning symbol marking the annual Marian feast and originating from the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

As it passes through the United States, accompanied by images of Our Lady and Saint Juan Diego, Saint Matthew's has been the only church in Pennsylvania which actively participates along the torch's celebratory route.

A Mass heralding the Guadalupe Torch's arrival will be hosted at Saint Matthew Church on Tuesday, Dec. 1, at 7 p.m.

On Friday, Dec. 11, the Vigil liturgy for Our Lady of Guadalupe will be celebrated at 6:30 p.m., followed by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Rosary recitation, and a teaching. The Virgin of Guadalupe will be venerated in music with "Serenata" (serenade) and "Mañanitas" — traditional singing to honor a loved one — at 8:30 p.m.

Saint Matthew's will host the Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Saturday, Dec. 12, at 1 p.m.

Holy Annunciation Parish

in Hazleton will host their traditional Novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe, leading up to the feast, from Dec. 3-11. The Novena is customarily hosted each evening at nine different homes during the devotion; however, the tradition has been suspended this year due to the pandemic.

On Saturday, Dec. 12, Annunciation Parish will host Very Rev. Matthew Spencer, OSJ, provincial superior of the Oblates of Saint Joseph in America, who will preside at the Feast Mass at 7 p.m. The celebration will be highlighted by Mariachi singers.

Father John Ruth, pastor of Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary Parish in Jermyn, will be principal celebrant for the Spanish Mass commemorating the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Saturday, Dec. 12, at 6 p.m. in Sacred Heart of Mary Church, 624 Madison Ave. Father Ruth will also preach the homily in Spanish.

"I love the Hispanic culture, traditions and language, praying and reading each day in Spanish," the pastor said, noting he has enjoyed a sizable following of Latino faithful since actively serving in Hispanic ministry during his Scranton assignments at Saint John Neumann and Saint Patrick parishes.

Father Ruth further shared that a parish pilgrimage to Lady of Guadalupe Basilica in Mexico a few years ago returned with replicas of the miraculous image that now adorn Nativity Church (in Scranton) and the parish church in Jermyn.

"Every time I look at Mary's image (as Our Lady of Guadalupe),

Lake Ariel parishioner seeks to restore devotion to traveling Pilgrim Virgin Statue

If Mike Tuman of Lake Ariel has anything to do with it, the time-honored tradition of homes hosting the venerable Pilgrim Virgin Statue for private devotion throughout the Diocese of Scranton will once again reign.

Currently the "custodian" of the well-traveled Marian icon, Tuman is in possession of the statue, which *Catholic Light* readers will recall, from years gone by, traversed the Diocese as devotees displayed the "Virgin of

Fatima" for a week at a time.

It is Tuman's sincere hope that the statue honoring the Blessed Mother as Our Lady of Fatima and dating back nearly 70 years will once again be venerated in individual homes as it did in its heyday.

According to Tuman, who personally hosted the Pilgrim Virgin on several occasions, the three-foot statue has been "out of circulation" for the past four to five years and is accompanied by seven



third-class saintly relics.

"There is an hour's worth of prayers associated with the devotion" during the statue's visitation, he said, "but it is entirely up to the individual how they want to venerate the Blessed Virgin Mary."

Tuman also emphasized that there are no fees or monetary donations required of those who host the Marian object of devotion, which is embedded with a small tree fragment from

the 1917 Fatima apparition site in Portugal.

"(The statue) has been a part of the Diocese of Scranton for several decades and was always promoted by the *Catholic Light*," he noted. "It is an excellent way for the laity to increase devotion to the Virgin Mary."

Anyone interested in hosting the Pilgrim Virgin Statue or seeking more information, may contact Mike Tuman at (570) 698-1488.

Diocesan Annual Appeal helps parish food pantries meet critical need

BLOOMING GROVE TOWNSHIP – During the COVID-19 pandemic, food pantries operated by parishes across the Diocese of Scranton have continued to respond to an increasing need.

The Blooming Grove Food Pantry in Pike County, operated by Saint John Neumann Parish, is one of the many facilities meeting the needs of its community.

“This is one of the few places that will make sure that you have toilet paper and paper towels and things that are really necessary,” recipient Adista Wightman said.

Wightman, who lives near the parish in the Hemlock Farms development, says the food she receives has helped immensely during the coronavirus.

“The one gentleman that volunteers here also makes sure I get a packet of kitty food so it means the world to me,” Wightman added.

Peggy Shekailo, Blooming Grove Food Pantry Director, says the parish has helped an average of 60-70 families each month during the coronavirus pandemic. Prior to



Peggy Shekailo, Blooming Grove Food Pantry Director, left, helps to sort meat that will be distributed to families in need. Funding for the meat is provided to the parish through a social justice grant provided by the Diocesan Annual Appeal. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

the pandemic, the number was roughly 48 families.

In order to keep volunteers and recipients safe, the food pantry transitioned to a drive-thru operation for several months.

“My biggest concern is children and seniors. I try to make sure I have food for them,” Shekailo said.

A social justice grant provided by the

Diocesan Annual Appeal helps the parish purchase meat to distribute to recipients. Reverend Ed Casey, pastor of Saint John Neumann Parish, is very thankful that the Annual Appeal helps recipients get a good protein along with canned goods and non-perishable items.

“The Annual Appeal has helped us greatly with keeping the food pantry open,”

he explained.

The Blooming Grove Food Pantry has been at Saint John Neumann Parish since the early 2000s. Shekailo has spent the last decade personally making sure its operation has been successful.

“I was there when I was a kid, there was no food on the table at my house. My family was one of those that was extremely poor and I ate at different people’s houses or the diner would fix something and give it to my dad. That is how I ate so to do this for me makes me feel unbelievably good. I enjoy it,” she explained.

The Blooming Grove Food Pantry is open to anyone in the community. Recipients do not need to belong to the parish to receive assistance.

“There aren’t that many services in Pike County. I know that from my days as a social worker with Catholic Social Services and this really fills a need,” Father Casey said.

Donations to the 2020 Diocesan Annual Appeal are currently being accepted. To make a gift, visit AnnualAppeal.org.

Appeal regional chairs named for Lackawanna and Wyoming counties

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera has invited Chris DiMattio and Ann Celli DiMattio, Moscow, and Father Patrick Albert, pastor, Saint Mary of the Lake Parish, Lake Winola, and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Tunkhannock, to serve as Appeal regional lay and clergy chairs for Lackawanna and Wyoming counties.

Father Albert grew up in the neighborhood of Nativity Parish, Scranton, now Saint John Neumann. He previously served as pastor of Ascension Parish, Forest City, where he oversaw the renovation of a church building that represented several parishes coming together in the region.

“I’ve come to appreciate there is tremendous need among the poor and the elderly. I see the outpouring of people seeking assistance every single day in our community,” Father Albert said. “We have to be up to the challenge.”

Appeal social justice grants help Father Albert’s parishes serve the needy through the Lower Wyoming County Food Pantry and Seven Loaves which provides hot meals five days a week at no cost.

“I remind my parishioners there are a wide variety of services covered by the Appeal. Many people served are unbeknown to us. You see it through all aspects of the Appeal. Looking closely it becomes more personal...Wow, this is the core of our Diocese. This is what we do as followers of Christ,” he explained.

The DiMattios are members of Saint

Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow, and parents of sons, Louis and Robert. Chris is a senior financial advisor at Merrill Lynch Wealth Management. A registered dietitian, Ann is presently a full-time mom. Both are daily communicants.

The couple was married at the Cathedral of Saint Peter by the late Most Rev. Robert C. Morlino, later Bishop of Madison, Wisconsin. In his memory, the DiMattios made a gift to the Cathedral of Saint Peter Restoration

Project for one of the Cathedral’s external dome crosses in the Diocese Bishop Morlino loved.

“Our brightest experiences in life have come by participating at faith events,” Chris said.

“Whether during

a Holy Hour at Saint Catherine’s Adoration Chapel or praying the Novena at Saint Ann’s Basilica, we are extremely grateful for the blessings God has bestowed on us.”

“When complications arose days after the birth of our first son, Louis, panic wasn’t an option. We knew he was in God’s care and mercy,” Ann added.

The couple recognize the obligation of Catholics to provide financial help to individuals who suffer from poverty and hardships. “We understand that it may be uncomfortable talking about financial giving especially in these times,” Chris said regarding the Appeal. “But the spiritual services we took for granted by so loving priests now deceased or retired are very present in our lives today. They deserve our support.”



Ann & Chris DiMattio



Rev. Patrick Albert



Linda & Joseph McDonald



Rev. Carmen Perry

Bishop Bambera names lay and clergy chairs on behalf of Monroe county

Serving the 2020 Diocesan Annual Appeal as Regional lay and clergy chairs on behalf of Monroe County are Linda Fangio McDonald and Attorney Joseph McDonald, Jr., Stroudsburg, and Father Carmen Perry, pastor of The Church of Saint Luke, Stroudsburg.

“For me, all aspects of the Appeal are important because there is need in each area,” Father Perry said. “As I reflect on the final judgment standing before Christ, I will render an account of how I gave of myself for the good of others. I can’t afford to ignore the cry of the poor who need to be fed and clothed, or the need to help educate the young,

or show gratitude by caring for the retired priests who spent their lives in service to others, and have been a wonderful example to me.

“Jesus commands us to give to those who ask, and not turn our backs on our own,” the pastor continued. “May God bless us in our giving.”

Father Perry has served The Church of Saint Luke as assistant pastor for 21 years and pastor for the past five.

Raised in Scranton as a member of Saint Lucy’s Church, he graduated from Saint Frances X. Cabrini School.

The McDonalds are active members of Our Lady Queen of Peace, Brodheadsville. Joe

is a lector, and former Eucharistic minister and CCD instructor. Linda is member of the Finance and Pastoral Councils. Both are marriage Pre-Cana ministers.

Joe is sole attorney in his general civil law practice. Linda, a former information technology and financial manager, is a part-time financial coach and instructor for Northampton Community College.

The McDonald family includes daughter, Alysea; her husband, Pary and their baby, Lina; son, Patrick, and daughter, Megan.

Joe grew up in Carbondale and graduated from Saint Rose Elementary and High schools. Linda was raised in Dunmore.

Both credit their parents, Alice and the late Victor Fangio, and Joe and Margaret McDonald, for inspiring their faith and empathy for others.

“The Annual Appeal funds several ministries with an economy of scale beyond the reach of most individual parishes,” Joe said.

“Appeal contributions can help relieve moments of stress in the lives of our brothers and sisters throughout the Diocese,” Linda added. “We must go beyond ourselves, our family, our parish and community to serve God, to help others in need and to keep our Christian Faith strong and inclusive.”

END OF AN ERA

Saint Gabriel's Monastery to close next month

SOUTH ABINGTON TOWNSHIP – Northeastern Pennsylvania will soon be losing one of its oldest religious communities. Saint Gabriel's Monastery will close on Dec. 31, 2020, ending of a 94-year presence by the Passionist Nuns in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The Passionist Nuns Community established its Scranton-area community in 1926 and then moved to Clarks Summit in 1970. Thirty-three nuns have been a part of the community since 1926, but the numbers have dwindled over the past decade due to an aging community and a lack of new vocations.

The Community produced altar-bread for parishes across the United States and offered retreats to groups and individuals and was also a welcome haven for community faith groups.

The closing of Saint Gabriel's Monastery will affect the local community as it is one of the last remaining retreat centers in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Since 1970, Saint Gabriel's has welcomed thousands of retreatants from across the United States, providing a safe and spiritual haven for those in search of peace and strengthening of their faith.

Sister Teresita Kho has been part of the Passionist Community at Saint Gabriel's for the past 26 years. She, along with Sister Olive Ann Schneider, are the two remaining nuns at the monastery. She believes that Saint Gabriel's will be missed and has received communications to support her belief.

"I have received a lot of letters, emails and phone calls from people who are devastated by the closing of our facility," Sister Teresita said. "People knew that they could come here to pray without judgment. We have accepted people who have been hurting and those who were looking for God. It is my hope that the right people will continue the ministry in the same way."

Sister Teresita said that there are some special bonds that she will miss.

"Every corner of this monastery has contributed to my personal growth. The nuns we have lost and the experiences we have had were a great impact on my life. The people of the monastery and those who I have met in the Scranton Diocese have meant a lot to me. I am hoping that wherever God is taking me, I can use the experiences I have had here

to continue to grow in my faith and as a person," she added.

Carol Burti has been a part of Saint Gabriel's for nearly 45 years. Her involvement started as a volunteer with music ministry, providing music for weekend retreatants and various community retreat weekends. Even though the community was contemplative, Burti's involvement with Saint Gabriel's was providing care to the ailing nuns in need of hospice services.

Her involvement also opened the door for college interns to help with providing care to the sisters in need. Through this interaction, a local butterfly memorial service was held each year for friends of the community that have died. She feels that the closing of the monastery will greatly affect the local community and that the memorial service could continue.

"This was truly a place where people could come together to feel safe and rest awhile. The closing will create more isolation for people who look for areas to interact with others that they may not have opportunity to otherwise," Burti explained.

Charlie Augustine of Clarks Summit has been providing maintenance services to Saint Gabriel's for 15 years. He feels



Sister Teresita Kho, left, and Sister Olive Ann Schneider are currently the two remaining nuns at Saint Gabriel's Monastery.

that the monastery will be missed.

"People depend on this place to go to Mass and practice their faith," Augustine said. "It is a shame and will be missed. I will miss the current friendships that I made here, especially with the nuns who are still living and with those who are deceased. It was wonderful."

The closing Mass will be held

on Sunday, December 6, 2020, with the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., Bishop of Scranton, presiding.

Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, the monastery will be unable to open the ceremony to the public.

Anyone who wishes to express their sentiments can contact the monastery at (570) 586-2791.

Prayer Requests for Priests

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

November 19, Monsignor Thomas Banick; November 20, Father David Bechtel; November 21, Father Richard Beck; November 22, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Mariusz Beczek; November 23, Jesuit Father John Begley; November 24, Monsignor John Bendik; November 25, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Samuel Bentivegna; November 26, Monsignor John Bergamo; November 27, Father Eric Bergman; November 28, Father Jacek Bialkowski; November 29, Monsignor David Bohr; November 30, Passionist Father Vincent Boney; December 1, Pope Francis; December 2, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI; December 3, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; December 4, Father John Boyle; December 5, Father Michael Bryant; December 6, Passionist Father Richard Burke; December 7, Jesuit Father Timothy Cadigan; December 8, Father William Campbell; December 9, Father David Cappelloni; December 10, Father Thomas Cappelloni; December 11, Passionist Father Robert Carbonneau; December 12, Father Sean Carpenter; December 13, Father Eugene Carr; December 14, Father Edward Casey; December 15, Father John Chmil; December 16, Father Richard Cirba; December 17, Father Brian J.T. Clarke; December 18, Father Brian J.W. Clarke; December 19, Father Charles Connor; December 20, Father William Corcoran; December 21, Father David Cramer; December 22, Father Charles Cummings; December 23, Father Wilfredo Cusicanqui.



Established in 1926, Saint Gabriel Monastery, located on Griffin Pond Road near Clarks Summit, is slated to close on Dec. 31, 2020. (Photo/Carl Porter)

Celebrating 175 Years of IHM

Joyful, Loving Service

On November 10, 2020, Giovana Fuentes Bendivez, a native of Arequipa, Peru, professed her first vows with the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was 175 years to the day that Theresa Maxis and Reverend Louis Florent Gillet founded the IHM Sisters. Following Mass that day, Father Gillet blessed three sisters for service. The sisters moved into a simple log cabin in Monroe, Michigan, and began their consecrated life together. They were on fire with the love of God and ready

to serve. Their mission prospered and their life style of prayer, community and service attracted other young women.

However, foundations are never without struggle. Mother Theresa Maxis was the daughter of a Haitian refugee who was also a single mother. Though a woman of color, Theresa passed for white but she encountered many obstacles including racism, and oppression by the Church she loved. When in 1858 the community received a request from Bishop John Neumann to open a mission among the poor in St. Joseph, Susquehanna County, PA, Theresa jumped at the opportunity. Thus began the story of the Scranton IHM Congregation.

Even before the Diocese of Scranton was formed, eager young women joined the IHM community. Our early sisters were farsighted women who defied odds and took risks, believing that the Providence of God would sustain them. It did. The Sisters organized and staffed schools in the newly established Diocese of Scranton. They often taught all day and then taught exhausted young breaker boys from the mines at night.

The vows of an IHM sister commit her to a rule of life which says; "Relying on God's Providence, we serve God's

people in a variety of ministries, living and working lovingly among all persons." The expansion of IHM ministries beyond education came early in the Scranton foundation.

The plight of unwed mothers and abandoned children led the sisters, at the initial request of Bishop O'Hara, to assume the operations of St. Joseph's Foundling Home in 1888 and its adjoining Maternity Hospital in 1900. Aggravated by World War I, and the Spanish flu pandemic, the needs became so severe that in 1913, a well-run but massively overcrowded facility cared for 336 women, infants and children. Today a multifaceted provider, known as Saint Joseph's Center, serves individuals with intellectual disability or developmental delay, pregnant women without resources, couples hoping to adopt, children needing residential care, and Trinity Day Care for medically fragile children.

Studying the documents of Vatican II and examining the signs of the times, we grew in awareness of global realities. In 1968, at the request of Pope Paul VI, our first IHM sisters were missioned to Peru. Our worldview changed with this outreach. A number of Peruvian women have joined our community as a result



Sister Giovana Fuentes Bendivez, third from the left, professes her vows as an IHM Sister, on Nov. 10, 2020, the 175th anniversary of the founding of the IHM Congregation.



Foundational to their lives, IHM Sisters meet daily for shared prayer and contemplation.



The four IHM Sisters pictured here were the first IHM missionaries to Peru in 1965.



Sister Mary Persico, second from left, 12th president of Marywood University, meets with students to address diversity concerns and developing intercultural awareness.

of those missionary efforts including our newly professed Sister Giovana.

Steeping ourselves in prayer and contemplation, we began to search for new ways to live our vowed life in a world hungering for justice and meaning. Our gifts of experience, education, leadership, and collaboration, and our growing awareness of systemic evils led to a whole new examination of conscience about our use of personal and communal gifts.

In 1971, in the midst of this soul searching, the IHM Motherhouse burned to the ground on a frigid February night, rendering homeless more than 120 of our sisters and seriously injuring eight young

sisters. The loss of our motherhouse and the sudden displacement of so many sisters put us in solidarity with the suffering of others.

During this period of upheaval, we faced new challenges as fewer new members joined our community. Those who did choose this way of life were mature, highly educated, experienced professionals seeking to embrace consecrated life and the support of a prayerful community.

As we moved closer to the pain of our neighbors, new ministries continued to emerge. Friends of the Poor founded by Sister Adrian Barrett and incorporated in 2001, collaborated to ease the burden

of the poor and enhance their quality of life.

It remains a vital, IHM social ministry. During this COVID-19 pandemic year, Friends of the Poor continues to

provide food for more than 1,000 households at each distribution.

The Nativity Miguel School of Scranton co-sponsored by our IHM community reaches out to bright, low-income students whose family hardships interfere with their academic achievement. Free tuition, innovative education, an extended day, as well as artistic, athletic and cultural exposure promote advancement in learning, self-confidence, social skills and leadership.

Founded in 1999, our partnership in ASEC, the African Sisters Education Collaborative, sponsors academic and leadership training among women religious in ten African countries. As they say at ASEC, "If you give a sister the tools to succeed, she's going to change the world." Indeed, these sisters are changing the face of Africa.

Trusting in Divine Providence, determined sisters overcame many challenges to found a college for the daughters of working class families. When Marywood opened in 1915, it was the first college for women in Northeastern Pennsylvania and the first



Sister Adrian Barrett founded Friends of the Poor in 1984. Today, Friends of the Poor continues her legacy as it brings together in friendship those who have the desire to give with those in need of assistance.

Catholic college for women in the state. Today, Marywood leads in every way. It educates across generations, welcoming to its campus, a day care, middle school, university, IHM Friends of the Poor, ASEC, and Marywood Heights, a university-based retirement community. Marywood's multiple populations enhance the life experiences of students, and promote thriving relationships.

Adjacent to the university sits our IHM Center, home to our chapel, administrative center, and residence for senior sisters. Across the drive stands Our Lady of Peace Residence, a model health care facility dedicated to the care of our aging and medically fragile IHM sisters.

As we, IHM Sisters celebrate our 175 years of consecrated life, we rejoice in our relationship with the people of the Scranton Diocese. Together may our lives continue to proclaim the Good News of God's universal love for all.

To learn more about the life and mission of the Sisters of IHM, visit www.sistersofihm.org



Since 1845, the Sisters of IHM have been advocates for social justice and the needs of the poor.



The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe: November 22, 2020



FIRST READING

EZ 34:11-12, 15-17

Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will look after and tend my sheep. As a shepherd tends his flock when he finds himself among his scattered sheep, so will I tend my sheep. I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered when it was cloudy and dark. I myself will pasture my sheep; I myself will give them rest, says the Lord GOD. The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy, shepherding them rightly. As for you, my sheep, says the Lord GOD, I will judge between one sheep and another, between rams and goats.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

PS 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6

Response: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

SECOND READING

1 COR 15:20-26, 28

Brothers and sisters: Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through man, the resurrection of the dead came also through man.

For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has destroyed every sovereignty and every authority and power.

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. When everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.

GOSPEL READING

MT 25:31-46

Jesus said to his disciples: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.'

Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?'

And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.'

Then they will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?'

He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.'

And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."



First Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2020



FIRST READING

IS 63:16B-17, 19B; 64:2-7

You, LORD, are our father, our redeemer you are named forever. Why do you let us wander, O LORD, from your ways, and harden our hearts so that we fear you not? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your heritage. Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, with the mountains quaking before you, while you wrought awesome deeds we could not hope for, such as they had not heard of from of old.

No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God but you doing such deeds for those who wait for him. Would that you might meet us doing right, that we were mindful of you in our ways!

Behold, you are angry, and we are sinful; all of us have become like unclean people, all our good deeds are like polluted rags; we have all withered like leaves, and our guilt carries us away like the wind. There is none who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to cling to you; for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us up to our guilt.

Yet, O LORD, you are our father; we are the clay and you the potter: we are all the work of your hands.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

PS 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19

Response: Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

SECOND READING

1 COR 1:3-9

Brothers and sisters: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always on your account for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, that in him you were enriched in every way, with all discourse and all knowledge, as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He will keep you firm to the end, irreproachable on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

GOSPEL READING

MK 13:33-37

Jesus said to his disciples: "Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his own work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch.

Watch, therefore; you do not know when the Lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning.

May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: "Watch!"



Second Sunday of Advent, December 6, 2020



FIRST READING

IS 40:1-5, 9-11

Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service is at an end, her guilt is expiated; indeed, she has received from the hand of the LORD double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: In the desert prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low; the rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

PS 85:9-10-11-12, 13-14

Response: Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day. The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard “delay,” but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar and the elements will be dissolved by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be found out.

Since everything is to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved in flames and the elements melted by fire. But according to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, since you await these things, be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace.



Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, December 8, 2020



FIRST READING

GN 3:9-15, 20

After the man, Adam, had eaten of the tree, the LORD God called to the man and asked him, “Where are you?” He answered, “I heard you in the garden; but I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself.”

Then he asked, “Who told you that you were naked? You have eaten, then, from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat!”

The man replied, “The woman whom you put here with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and so I ate it.”

The LORD God then asked the woman, “Why did you do such a thing?”

The woman answered, “The serpent tricked me into it, so I ate it.”

Then the LORD God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, you shall be banned from all the animals and from all the wild creatures; on your belly shall you crawl, and dirt shall you eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike at your head, while you strike at his heel.”

The man called his wife Eve, because she became the mother of all the living.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

PS 98:1, 2-3AB, 3CD-4

Response: Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous deeds.

SECOND READING

EPH 1:3-6, 11-12

Brothers and sisters: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who



Third Sunday of Advent, December 13, 2020



FIRST READING

IS 61:1-2A, 10-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God.

I rejoice heartily in the LORD, in my God is the joy of my soul; for he has clothed me with a robe of salvation and wrapped me in a mantle of justice, like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem, like a bride bedecked with her jewels. As the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth spring up, so will the Lord GOD make justice and praise spring up before all the nations.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

LK 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54

Response: My soul rejoices in my God.

SECOND READING

1 THES 5:16-24

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way.

A voice of one crying out in the desert:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.”

John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. People of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins. John was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He fed on locusts and wild honey.

And this is what he proclaimed: “One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

GOSPEL READING

LK 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary.

And coming to her, he said, “Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there will be no end.”

But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” And the angel said to her in reply, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.”

Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will also accomplish it.

GOSPEL READING

JN 1:6-8, 19-28

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, “Who are you?” He admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, “I am not the Christ.” So they asked him, “What are you then? Are you Elijah?” And he said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” He answered, “No.” So they said to him, “Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?”

He said: “I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, ‘make straight the way of the Lord,’” as Isaiah the prophet said.” Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.” This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Diocese of Scranton
CATHOLIC
 SCHOOL SYSTEM
 FAITH • ACADEMICS • SERVICE

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



Students at **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston** collected donations for the residents at the Veteran's Village in Edwardsville. Mr. Luke Balonis, veteran of the Vietnam conflict and Director of the Veteran's Village, accepted the donations from student Megan Albrecht and Christopher Dutko on behalf of a grateful GSA Guardian Nation.



Alex Lockcuff, a senior at **Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School in Williamsport**, works on a STREAM project - creating a boat that will hold weight.



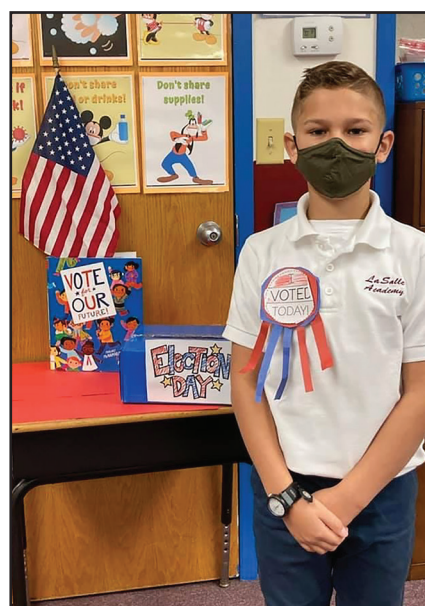
Aaron Traeger, and his first grade classmates at **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** recently learned about the importance of voting. Students created books and held a class mock election in which they voted for their favorite color: red or blue.



Guilianna Zenga, a fifth grade student at **Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport**, poses with the prize she won during Red Ribbon Week.



A **Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg** student uses her white board to practice her printing and art skills.



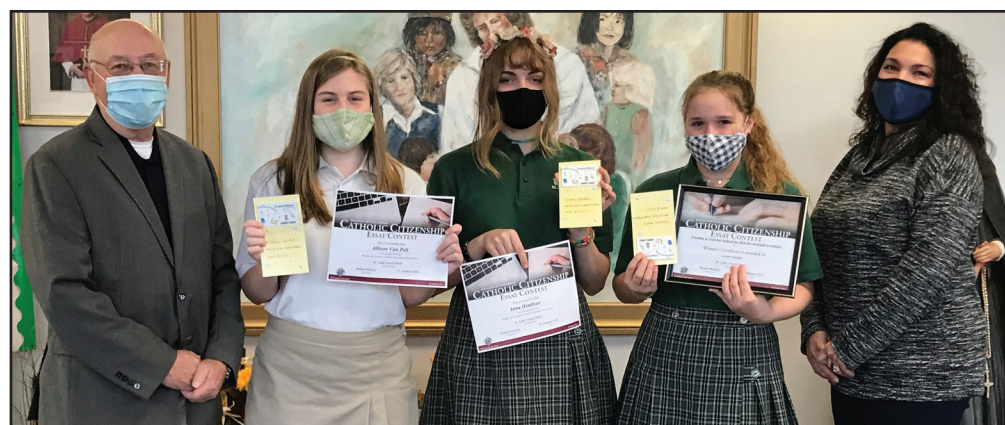
Students at **La Salle Academy in Jessup** learned about the voting process as Americans celebrated Election Day.



Caelyn Oxley, an eighth grade student at **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton**, has been elected Student Council President for the 2020-21 school year.



Laura James and Rachel Krechel, seniors at **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg**, start their day by raising the American flag in front of the school.



Students from **Saint Jude School in Mountain Top** participated in the Knights of Columbus Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest which promotes connecting youth to their communities. Pictured are Grand Knight Bob Murphy, winners Allison Van Pelt (third grade), Anna Ostaltsov (second grade), Lauren Hayden (first grade), and school writing teacher Mrs. Carlee Strish.



The second grade class at **Holy Family Academy in Hazleton** is working on shadows. They go out in the morning to trace each other's shadow and then return in the afternoon to see how they have changed.



Students at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green** take advantage of the beautiful November weather and go outside for some classes.



PK3 and PK4 students jump for joy in the leaves on a warm November day at **Saint Agnes School in Towanda**.



In this season of giving, students and staff at **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore** collect non-perishable food items for Friends of the Poor.



Ms. Breenan's eighth grade Science class at **All Saints Academy in Scranton** make use of the unseasonable November weather to perform some experiments in the school parking lot.




PK3 students use their rocking chairs to socially distance during their iPad lesson at **Epiphany School in Sayre**.



Some seniors from **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** show their ROYAL pride after recently being presented with their National Honor Society stoles.

Julia Mazur, a Diocesan Virtual Academy student and senior at **Holy Cross High School in Dunmore**, shares her first AP 3D Design piece for class discussion from home via Google Meet. Julia created an original dress design using sewing and weaving techniques and described her process with the class.



Registration underway for Christmas Gifts for Kids Program

Through generous donations from our community, parishes, schools and in conjunction with the United States Marine Corps Reserve ‘Toys for Tots’ program, the annual Catholic Social Services Christmas Gifts for Kids program helps provide toys to children in need within the communities of northeastern Pennsylvania.

Registration for this program is required. Due to COVID-19, there are significant changes to the registration and distribution process this year. The registration process for families in Lackawana County is included below. This information can also be found on the Diocese of Scranton’s website.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR KIDS REGISTRATION

SPONSORED BY:



Catholic Social Services
OF THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON



Friends
OF THE
poor

DATES: MONDAY, NOV. 16TH - FRIDAY, NOV. 20TH

HOW: ONLINE VIA GOOGLE FORMS
(<https://forms.gle/HHDWT2QJXUBG72GM6>)

NOTE: PARENTS MUST UPLOAD PROOF OF ADDRESS, AS WELL AS AN INSURANCE CARD, REPORT CARD, BIRTH CERTIFICATE, OR SOME PROOF OF ID FOR EACH CHILD.

THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO A COMPUTER OR SMART PHONE SHOULD CALL MARY HOEHING AT 570-207-2283 EXT. 2110 FOR ASSISTANCE.





“CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR KIDS”
Catholic Social Services of Carbondale

Christmas Toy Registration **BY PHONE!!**
(570) 282-0460


Dates: Monday, November 30th - Friday, December 4th

Time: 9a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and 1p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Location: Catholic Social Services, 34 River Street, Carbondale

Families residing South of Jessup should contact
CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF SCRANTON
504 Penn Ave. (570) 207-2283

Photo ID / verification of income for everyone in household / social security card, birth certificate, or insurance card for children / proof of address with a recent date.



CTV: CATHOLIC TELEVISION

Diocese of Scranton, 400 Wyoming Ave., Scranton, PA 18503 (570) 207-2219

Class A, LPTV Broadcast Station: W07BV-CA, Channel 7, Wilkes-Barre/Pittston;
Adams Cable Service, Carbondale: channel 16 • Comcast Cable TV, Scranton/Dunmore/Dallas: channel 12
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

NOVEMBER SCHEDULE

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
12:00 AM	DAILY MASS	SUNDAY MASS (Encore)	DAILY MASS (Encore)				
1:00 AM	FR SPITZER'S UNIVERSE	(1:10AM) LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART	THE JOURNEY HOME (Encore)	MOTHER ANGELICA LIVE CLASSICS	EWTN LIVE (Encore)	THE WORLD OVER (Encore)	SAINTS VS SCOUNDRELS
1:30 AM		EWTN GALLERY					GK CHESTERTON
2:00 AM	ICONS SPOTLIGHT		EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Encore)				
2:30 AM	GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR A HAPPY LIFE		EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY
3:00 AM		EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	SPECIALS	REAL LIFE CATHOLIC	LIFE ON THE ROCK	BATTLE READY	FINDING GOD IN ALL THINGS
3:30AM	EWTN GALLERY	DEFENDING LIFE		PAPAL AUDIENCE	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY CALL-IN	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOG	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY
4:00 AM		REFURBISHING THE SOUL	SWEAR TO GOD		BOB AND PENNY LORD	WEB OF FAITH 2.0	SAVORING OUR FAITH
4:30 AM	EWTN LIVE (Encore)	(4:35)SUNDAY BEST WITH FR GROESCHEL	COMMUNITY TREANSFORMED	(4:40)ANGELUS FROM NAZARETH	FORGOTTEN HERITAGE	LIFE IS WORTH LIVING	MATTHEWS TESTIMONY TO JESUS
5:00 AM	EXTRAORDINARY FAITH	EWTN BOOKMARK	THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL	SUFFERING AND WHAT TO DO WITH IT	EWTN SPECIALS	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY	CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS
5:30 AM	FUNDAMENTALS OF CATHOLICISM	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN	APOSTOLATE FOR FAMILY CONSECRATION	GENESIS TO JESUS			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	MATTHEWS TESTIMONY TO JESUS	SAINTS VS SCOUNDRELS	THE CHOICES WE FACE	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE
7:00 AM	THE CHAPLET OF ST. MICHAEL					STATIONS OF THE CROSS	CHAPLET OF ST. MICHAEL
7:30 AM		HOLY LAND ROSARY					
7:50 AM	THE ROSARY FROM LOURDES	LITANY OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	LITANY OF THE HOLY NAME	LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH	LITANY OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD	LITANY OF SACRED HEART	THE HOLY ROSARY
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)	MY TIME WITH JESUS
10:00 AM	SUNDAY MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL	RELIGIOUS CATALOG					HERMIE AND FRIENDS
10:30 AM		SALT AND LIGHT TV	MOTHER ANGELICA LIVE	LIVE WITH PASSION	CATHOLIC CLASSICS WITH MOTHER ANGELICA	FOCUS	WE ARE CATHOLIC
11:00 AM	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY	OFOD OR SPECIALS		ST ANN'S WEEKLY NOVENA		CHOICES WE FACE	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY
11:30 AM	VATICANO	SPEAKING OF SAINTS	ST PIO	ST JOSEMARIA ESCRIVA AND OPUS DEI	EUCCHARISTIC JOURNEY	JP II: THE MAN THE POPE THE MESSAGE	BOB & PENNY LORD PRESENT
12:00 PM	SUNDAY MASS (Encore)	THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, LIVE AT 12:10 p.m. "DIOCESAN DATEBOOK" airs before and after Mass.					EWTN DAILY MASS (Encore)
12:30PM							
1:00 PM	(1:10PM) LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART	WOMEN OF GRACE					EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE
1:30 PM		AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	PRO LIFE WEEKLY	AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	OFOD	WOMEN OF GRACE HOUR LONG	EWTN BOOKMARK
2:00 PM	IN CONCERT						
2:30 PM		CALLED TO COMMUNION	SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION	FR. SPITZER'S UNIVERSE	THE JOURNEY HOME	STATIONS OF CROSS	EWTN ON LOCATION
3:00 PM	THE CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY IN SONG						
3:20 PM	LIVE ADORATION FROM EWTN CHAPEL						
3:30 PM	THE ROSARY FROM LOURDES	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	THE FRIAR	CAT CHAT	MASTERPIECE DONUT SHOP	MY CATHOLIC FAMILY	THE ROAMIN' CATHOLIC	
5:00 PM	THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL	EWTN BOOKMARK	THE CHOICES WE FACE	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	BOB & PENNY LORD PRESENT	GENESIS TO JESUS	BECOMING CATHOLIC
5:30 PM	SUNDAY PASSIONIST MASS	SPECIALS					SWEAR TO GOD
6:00 PM	SUNDAY MASS FROM ST PETERS CATHEDRAL	EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Live)					THE JOURNEY HOME
6:30 PM		CATHOLICS COME HOME	REAL LIFE CATHOLICS	CHURCH UNIVERSAL	VATICANO	WHAT IS GOD'S WILL?	
7:00 PM							
7:30PM	SUNDAY MASS	THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, (Encore)					DAILY MASS
		THE HOLY ROSARY		POPE'S AUDIENCE		THE HOLY ROSARY	
		DIOCESAN DATEBOOK					
8:00 PM	(8:20) LITANY OF SACRED HEART	THE JOURNEY HOME (Live)	OFOD OR SPECIALS (CAN BE 90 MINUTES)	EWTN LIVE	THE WORLD OVER (Live)	SPECIALS	
8:30 PM	CATHOLICS COME HOME		MUSIC AND SPOKEN WORD				
9:00 PM	LIFE ON THE ROCK	EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Encore)					EWTN CINEMA
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	
10:00PM							
10:30 PM	EWTN SPECIALS	THE WORLD OVER LIVE (ENCORE)	SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION (ENCORE)	FR. SPITZER'S UNIVERSE	PRO-LIFE WEEKLY	LIFE ON THE ROCK	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY
					DEFENDING LIFE	ICONS SPOTLIGHT	
11:00PM	CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS	BATTLE READY	LONG RIDE HOME	CROSSING THE GOAL	REAL LIFE CATHOLIC		WEB OF FAITH 2.0
11:30PM	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN	WOMEN OF GRACE					GENESIS TO JESUS

Catholic Youth Center meeting critical need during pandemic

WILKES-BARRE – Best known for offering recreational and child care opportunities to kids in the Wyoming Valley for decades, the Catholic Youth Center has taken on another critical mission in 2020.

Due to COVID-19, the CYC is now making sure at least 115 students get an education through its cyber-school program.

"I can't help but feel immense gratitude for my school-aged staff that have really transformed their duties," Francesco Pesce, CYC Cyber School Specialist, said. "Prior to being counselors for the cyber program, they were school aged counselors who would facilitate activities for the children but now they too have a role in making sure the children are attending their classes."

At the start of the school year, only 35 students were enrolled in the program but as various school districts began offering online-only classes, many parents needing to work went in search of a safe place for their children to stay during the day.

"Our number one priority is the safety and welfare of any child here and also our staff. Luckily, we haven't had any (COVID-19) cases to date," Ryan Smith, CYC Program Executive, said.

Guinivere, a fifth grade student, spends weekdays at the CYC attending classes on her Chromebook. While missing her traditional school environment, the 10 year old enjoys having the ability to spend time with her



Aubriann, left, a third grade student at Dodson Elementary School in Wilkes-Barre, receives help briefly during a virtual class session at the Wyoming Valley Catholic Youth Center. The nine year old is one of 115 students who currently take part in virtual school lessons at the CYC. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

friends at the CYC.

"When we get in, we get our temperatures taken and then we go to the other gym and then we have tables with our name tags on them. We sit and I usually talk with my friends before I have school and then I go in my classes," she said.

McKenzie, another fifth grader learning five days a week at the CYC, likes having the opportunity to play games in between her online classes.

"You get to play with your friends and I'd rather come here instead of staying home," she said.

With students ranging from kindergarten to sixth grade enrolled in the cyber-school program, CYC employees have had to overcome challenges for each age group based on their abilities. Some of the challenges involve making sure students stay engaged, complete

their assignments and do not interrupt other children because of varying schedules.

Pesce says helping kindergarten students has been particularly difficult because most are only five years old.

"They've never been in school before. This is their first time in 'school,' in the CYC, in our library downstairs," he explained.

In addition to the cyber-school program, the CYC continues to offer its Respite and Youth Drop-In Center Programs. The Respite Program allows parents and grandparents of children in the mental health system, ages 5-13, supervised recreational and socialization opportunities while their caregivers are able to receive a short break. The Youth Drop-In Center Program offers a safe place for young adults ages 14 and over.

Help the CYC on #GivingTuesday!

You can help the mission of the CYC on Giving Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2020. The CYC is one of several organizations taking part in AllOne Charities Giving Tuesday event. AllOne Charities will match the first \$1,000 raised for the CYC and is offering other matching-gift challenges to organizations that raise the most money and have the most donors.

The money raised on Giving Tuesday will support the CYC's effort to purchase desperately needed replacement vans used to pick-up and drop-off children at the Wilkes-Barre facility. For many families in the Wilkes-Barre area, transportation is an issue.

"We don't only serve the Wilkes-Barre Area School District, we have children here from Hanover Township, Wyoming Valley West,

Pittston Area, Nanticoke and some of the parochial schools," Ryan Smith, CYC Program Executive, said.

The vans mean many students, like Miguel, a seventh grader, can participate in CYC programs.

"When I come in, a lot of people say hi, some people ask me if I want to play games or basketball," the 12 year old said. "When I come here, I feel very welcome."

To make a donation for Giving Tuesday, visit <https://allonefoundations.org/all-one-give-day/>

Gifts in support of the CYC's campaign can also be mailed to 300 Wyoming Avenue, c/o Development Office. Checks should be made out to AllOne Charities with CYC Giving Tuesday in the memo line.

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Arby's restaurant locations in the Wilkes-Barre Scranton Co-Op proudly provided Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen in Scranton with an \$18,800 grant from the Arby's Foundation. The grant will be used to continue the mission of Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen by providing a free, hot, nutritious meal every day of the year. Guests are served with a spirit of compassion, respect and dignity.

Shown at the grant presentation are, from left: Ashley LS Bhasin, Director of Marketing, D.B. Concepts; Rob Williams, Executive Director, Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen and Food and Clothing Pantry; Mary Theresa Malandro, Diocesan Secretary for Catholic Human Services; Randy Palko, President, Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen Advisory Board.

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Collection for Religious Retirement Fund December 12-13

SCRANTON — The Diocese of Scranton will hold the Retirement Fund for Religious collection during all weekend Masses Dec. 12-13. The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) coordinates this annual appeal and distributes the proceeds to assist eligible U.S. religious communities with their retirement needs. Nearly 30,000 senior sisters, brothers and religious order priests benefit.

Last year, the Diocese of Scranton donated \$74,491.78 to the collection.

"The generosity of U.S. Catholics enables us to continue our ministry for aging women and men religious," said Presentation Sister Stephanie Still, the NRRO's executive director.

In 1988, Catholic bishops of the United States initiated the Retirement Fund for Religious collection to help address the deficit in retirement funding among U.S. religious congregations.

IHM Sisters virtual evening of prayer Dec. 9

SCRANTON — The Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters will continue their monthly "Evenings of Prayer with the Sisters of IHM" on Wednesday, Dec. 9.

The ongoing series of prayer devotions celebrates 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 focusing on a specific theme relating to IHM history and the religious community's charism.

Due to the current coronavirus pandemic, the



Each congregation is responsible for the care and support of its members. Financial distributions from the collection are sent to a congregation's central house and may be applied toward immediate expenses — such as medications or nursing care — or invested for future eldercare needs.

Historically, Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests served for little to no pay. Today, many religious communities lack sufficient retirement savings. Of 531 communities providing data to the NRRO, only 29 are adequately funded for retirement. Rising health care costs and a growing

number of senior members compound the challenge to meet retirement expenses.

The 2019 collection raised \$26.2 million, and in June, the NRRO disbursed \$25 million in financial assistance to 341 religious communities. Throughout the year, additional funding is allocated for resources and services that help communities improve eldercare delivery and plan for long-term retirement needs. A new online webinar offers professional guidance on adapting care protocols to address issues arising from the coronavirus pandemic.

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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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Mission Message

Go Forth

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



This past Friday, the Church celebrated the Memorial of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, a 19th-century missionary and foundress of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Affectionately known as Mother Cabrini, this modern-day saint lays before us much to consider as we travel our own path to sanctity. And in this month of the saints, I hope each of you appreciates that you are indeed called to be a saint. If your desire is to be in heaven after you die, then your desire is to be a saint. It is the lives of saints like Mother Cabrini that give us the roadmap that leads to a holy life.

Providentially, the responsorial psalm for Mass that accompanied Mother Cabrini's Memorial truly speaks to her mission and to ours as well. As an aside, it may be helpful to note that the readings for Mass do not typically follow the prescribed readings of the saint herself. For example, Mother Cabrini's Memorial is November 13, which fell this year on Friday of the Thirty-Second Week in Ordinary Time (it's a mouthful, I know). Unless our

parish or our religious community boasts Mother Cabrini as a particular patron, we read the readings from the day, not from the proper of saints. The reason I'm getting into this hullabaloo is that we reflected on readings that were not provided for Mother's Memorial and that's why I say it's beautifully providential.

The responsorial psalm of the day came from Psalm 119 with the prayerful repetition of the response: Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord. Following the law and seeking the wisdom and direction of God was central to Mother's personal prayer life and the mission of her congregation. Mother demonstrated this in varied ways, but particularly when she was asked to lead a mission to the United States, something that she was not initially inclined to do.

From the very early years of her childhood, Mother's devoutly religious parents would lead their 13 children (Mother was lucky 13) in daily prayers which included, of all things, readings from the annals from the Propagation of the Faith. Some of Mother's earliest memories were of feeling a call to be a missionary in the East, much like that of her hero, the Jesuit, Saint Francis Xavier. After a few failed attempts to enter religious communities at a very young age, Mother's local bishop permitted her to gather a group of like-minded women to serve the needs of the Church. Eventually she would be asked to come to the United States — not to China as she desired — and

Mother appealed to Pope Leo XIII who appealed back to her "not to the East, but to the West."

Seeing the hand of God in this change of itinerary, Mother went West and established roots in New York and would found schools, religious communities, orphanages, and hospitals (including in the beloved parish of Saint Lucy, Scranton, which she visited in 1899). Mother could have insisted and perhaps prevailed upon those who were encouraging her to adjust her plans to go East, but she followed the Lord as the Psalm says: "blessed are they whose way is blameless" (Ps. 119:1). With her docile spirit, her formidable character, and her complete trust in God she founded over 70 agencies and communities, many of which still exist today.

So what's the point for you and me? Well, so often we make plans, we are eager to execute them, we *know* what we want and how we want it to happen. These are all good things. But whose path are we following, whose plans are we executing? Ours or God's? The key to living out the Mission of the Church in our lives — collectively and individually — is to listen to God and trust that His purpose and plan for us is always better; in fact, it's perfect. Mother listened to God and to His voice speaking through others and realigned the path that she had planned. Mother once said, "I will go anywhere and do anything in order to communicate the love of Jesus." May we do likewise and go where *He* needs us to go.

Apostleship of Prayer

Papal Intention for December 2020

For a Life of Prayer —

We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

Enthronement Mass slated for Christ the King Feast

PITTSTON — The Diocesan Enthronement Guild of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary will host a special Mass of Enthronement to celebrate the Solemnity of Christ the King on Sunday, Nov. 22.

The Mass commemorating the annual feast day that marks the end of the Church’s liturgical year will be celebrated at 3 p.m. in the chapel of the Oblates of Saint Joseph Seminary, Route 315 in Laflin.

Father Dan Toomey, spiritual moderator of the Enthronement Guild, will serve as principal celebrant for the liturgy. Saint Joseph Oblate Father Joseph Sibilano, who resides at the



Father Dan Toomey

seminary, will concelebrate. Music ministry for the liturgical celebration will be provided by Ernie Pappa.

Recitation of the Rosary will be offered prior to the Mass, beginning at 2:30 p.m.

The Enthronement of the Sacred Heart apostolate enables families and individuals to consecrate their homes to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the

Immaculate Heart of Mary. Homes that have been enthroned become an extension of the liturgy, whereby faithful can follow up their Eucharistic devotion in church with prayerful devotion in their own private settings.

Anyone interested in enthroning their home and family to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary may register to receive an Enthronement packet by contacting Maria Pappa, coordinator of the Enthronement Guild, at (570) 587-0805. Enthronement renewals are also available.

All are welcome to attend the Christ the King celebration.

Marian Ministries lists upcoming devotional services

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

Prayer rallies and Rosary Evenings are hosted throughout the Diocese and include the Rosary with chanted scriptural mysteries, Fatima prayers and hymns.

Upcoming Marian Devotion events are scheduled as follows:

Sunday, November 29, at 2 p.m. — Rosary Rally for America hosted at Saint Joseph Church,

Saint Thomas More Parish, North Main Ave. & Theodore St., North Scranton. Rosary and Chaplet prayers offered to the Blessed Mother for the special intention of healing around the country.

Friday, December 4, at 6:30 p.m. — First Friday Rosary & Mass hosted at Saint Lucy Church, 949 Scranton St., West Scranton.

Monday, December 21, at 6 p.m. — Christmas Rosary Evening with Carols hosted at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, 1880 Highway 315, Laflin (Pittston).

This event is being offered as the regularly scheduled devotion on the third Monday of the month.

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



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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Weekly Novena to Saint Anthony of Padua — NOV. 24-DEC. 15, hosted by Our Lady of Hope Parish, 40 Park Ave., Wilkes-Barre; nine-week Saint Anthony Novena devotion held on consecutive Tuesday evenings, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the parish church. Novena theme: "Saint Joseph: Guardian of the Redeemer." Includes blessing with the Saint Anthony relic. All faithful are welcome; social distancing and facial coverings required. For more information, call (570) 824-7832.

Take-Out "Breakfast with Santa" — NOV. 29, presented by the Knights of Columbus, Saint Ann Basilica Council 12572, Scranton; drive-thru/walk-in breakfast held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the dining room of Saint Ann's Shrine in West Scranton. Menu includes pancakes, sausage links and hash brown patty. Event features visit by Santa & Mrs. Claus and Christmas raffle; social distancing & mask rules apply. Breakfast cost in

advance/at door: adults, \$5/\$6; children, \$4/\$5 (under age two, no charge). Tickets available online at: ScrantonKnights.com; at Saint Ann Basilica Rectory & Gift Shop; and after all weekend Masses until Nov. 28.

Parish Christmas Raffle — DEC. 6, drawing for holiday raffle fundraiser sponsored by Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Lake Silkworth (Hunlock Creek); featuring two top prizes of \$10,000 and \$5,000. Raffle tickets cost \$100 each; sale limited to 300 tickets. For more information and to purchase tickets, contact Diane at (570) 477-2996, or the parish office at (570) 477-5040.

Homemade Christmas Cookie Sale — DEC. 19,

sponsored by St. Nicholas of Myra Byzantine Catholic Church, 320 Vine St., Old Forge; held from 10 a.m. to noon. Featuring a variety of homemade holiday cookies and fruitcakes. Cost: \$9 per pound. Advance orders only; must be received by Dec. 7. To place pre-orders, call Betty (570) 457-9292, or Maria (570) 457-8275.

Christmas Drive-Thru Cookie Walk — DEC. 19, from 9 a.m. to noon at Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, 420 Main Road, Hanover Twp. Drive-thru pickup of advance orders only; order deadline is Dec. 1. Cost: \$10, pre-assorted container; \$40, cookie platter. To place orders, call (570) 814-6444 or visit: exhc.org.

Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation

Due to increased participation in faith enrichment, the VLCFF at University of Dayton is offering an additional learning cycle (Cycle 8). Cycle 8 offers a selection of topics for study during the Advent Season, both in English and Spanish.

Course dates are from November 29 to December 19. Visit the VLCFF webpage for more information and to register: <https://vlfcc.udayton.edu/calendar/>

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The recent spate of unseasonably warm weather allowed Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish in Nanticoke to celebrate its second "Drive-in Mass" at the parish grove to accommodate larger participation while following Diocesan and CDC guidelines during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The drive-up congregation remained in their cars for the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy, with the audio portion of the Mass broadcast live over their radios. All in attendance were pleasantly surprised by the blaring of car horns during the traditional "Sign of Peace." Shown celebrating the outdoor Mass in the grove's pavilion are, from left: Deacon Florian Gyza; Father James Nash, host pastor; Father Shawn Simchok, newly ordained priest of the Diocese serving as assistant pastor at the parish; and Deacon Herb Cruikshank. Earlier in the season, more than 60 faithful were spiritually and musically nourished at an outdoor "Christian Rock Mass" offered by the Saint Faustina Mini/Youth Ministry at the parish grove.

In June 2017, Saint Benedict Parish, Wilkes-Barre, was linked to Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Plains, with the Reverend John C. Lambert serving as Pastor of both parishes.

The buildings of Saint Benedict Parish in Wilkes-Barre consist of Saint Dominick's Church and Rectory. Following extensive consultation among its members and in consideration of its desire to maintain its primary mission of service, a request has been made of the Bishop of Scranton to close Saint Benedict Parish.

The parishioners previously belonging to Saint Benedict Parish will now belong to Saints Peter and Paul Parish, and the new territorial boundaries of Saints Peter and Paul Parish will take in the previous territorial boundaries of Saint Benedict Parish.

The Church of Saint Dominic will remain open as a secondary worship site of Saints Peter and Paul Parish.

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2020

Diocese of Scranton

BOUND TOGETHER IN

HOPE

2020

DIOCESAN

ANNUAL APPEAL

THIS IS

APPEAL ONLINE COMMITMENT WEEKEND

Ends Sunday, November 22, 11:59 p.m.

Support Our Diocesan Ministries and Help Your Parish Reach its Annual Appeal Goal

Go to

AnnualAppeal.org/donate-now/

or

Scan the QR Code at Right with your Smartphone Camera



Special Features

☐ Donors will be listed on your parish "Donor Wall" unless they wish to be anonymous

☐ Memorial or Honorary Donations welcome

☐ Thermometers will show progress to goal in real time

Thank you for your kind generosity!

The Catholic Light

MAILING LABEL - Please be sure to enclose this label with any address changes and mail to The Catholic Light, 300 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503

When You Give to the Diocesan Annual Appeal...



You're giving food to needy families, aiding Parish Social Justice Ministries, helping retired priests who served us so generously...and so much more. Please consider making a gift today.



Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have; God is pleased by sacrifices of that kind.

Hebrews 13:16



Gifts of Any Amount Are Appreciated

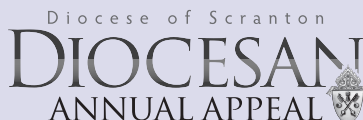


Giving to the 2020 Diocesan Annual Appeal is easy!

Return this form to:

Diocesan Annual Appeal, 300 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503

Your Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____ Cell _____
Email _____



Please credit my gift to (Parish Name & City) _____

Total amount pledged \$ _____

Enclosed amount \$ _____

Balance to be paid \$ _____

☐ I would like to pledge a gift now.

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ Other \$ _____

Check One: ☐ Single Payment in Full ☐ Monthly Payments _____ # of Payments

You may pay using your credit card by carefully completing the following:

Name on credit card (please print) _____

Check One ☐  ☐  Card # _____ CVV _____ Exp. Date _____

One-time Payment

Monthly Payments

Amount \$ _____ or Amount to be deducted each month \$ _____

For _____ months, Starting in _____
(Number of months) (month)

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for considering a gift to the Diocese.

Please make checks payable to: Diocese of Scranton

Appeal Online Commitment Weekend November 21 & 22

Parishioners Invited to Make a Gift Online This Weekend

Parishioners from across the Diocese are invited to make a gift to the 2020 Diocesan Annual Appeal: *Bound Together in Hope* during Online Commitment Weekend, November 21 and 22. The Appeal Commitment Weekend online giving page can be found at <https://annualappeal.org>.

This two-day online event was developed to provide a safe opportunity to make an Appeal pledge since many parishes will not be conducting the traditional In-Pew Commitment Weekend collection at Mass this Fall due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"We are deeply grateful to the more than 10,000 parishioners who have generously made a gift commitment to this year's Appeal and we expect that many more will join us with a gift this weekend," Jim Bebla, Diocesan Secretary of Development, said. "Donations to the Appeal make a tremendous difference in the lives of those we serve and beautifully demonstrate that we are all 'bound together in hope' by virtue of our Catholic faith."

During Appeal Online Commitment Weekend, parishioners can make a gift on

their parish team page that will be credited immediately to their parish's Annual Appeal goal. The goal for the online giving weekend is \$450,000, which is 10% of the overall Appeal goal of \$4.5 million. Each parish's goal for this two-day event is 10% of their parish Annual Appeal goal.

Some of the features on the Appeal Online Commitment giving page are:

- Parishioners who donate online will be listed on each parish's "Donor Wall." Donors have the option to be listed as anonymous.
- Donations may be made in honor or in memory of a family or friend.
- Prayer intentions may be submitted online and will be remembered at a Mass celebrated by Bishop Joseph Bambera on Sunday, Jan. 10, at the Cathedral of St. Peter.

For more information on the Diocesan ministries supported by gifts to the Annual Appeal, to view one of the regional Annual Appeal videos or to make a donation online, visit AnnualAppeal.org. Gifts may also be made by calling the Diocesan Development Office at (570) 207-2250 or by sending a donation to: Diocesan Annual Appeal, 300 Wyoming Ave., Scranton, PA, 18503.