



GoodNewsNotes

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON
OFFICE FOR PARISH LIFE

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World Day of the Sick
Tuesday, February 10
at 12:10PM
Cathedral of St. Peter

Mass for Developmental & Intellectual Disabilities Awareness
Sunday, February 14
at 10:00AM
Cathedral of St. Peter

Ash Wednesday
February 17

Will You Give Your Marriage the Gift of Two Hours This Valentine's Day?



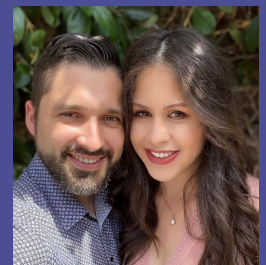
We invite you to join us for the finale of National Marriage Week on **Sunday, February 14, 2021 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.** as we gift to you a live, virtual marriage enrichment event with **Chris and Linda Padgett (English) and Joel and Nora de Loera (Spanish)!**

Chris and Linda Padgett are popular speakers, teachers and authors who have traveled around the world for over two decades, giving presentations, lectures, parish missions, and retreats to all ages on many topics dealing with faith, marriage and family life. Converts to Catholicism, Chris taught at Franciscan University of Steubenville and currently teaches with Catholic Distance University. Linda has completed certification for Spiritual Direction and does this within the Diocese of Syracuse.



Chris and Linda Padgett

Joel and Nora de Loera have been joyfully married for 12 years and are blessed with six amazingly curious and extremely energetic children (so far). Joel has a Bachelor's Degree in Theological Studies and a Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology. He has traveled all over the nation and abroad sharing his powerful testimony of conversion and leading discipleship retreats. Nora is a stay-at-home wife and a full-time mother. She is also involved with "Amor y Café: Anecdotas de Una Familia Católica," an online marriage and family enrichment ministry they co-founded.



Joel and Nora de Loera

Visit www.dioceseofscranton.org/parish-life/community/marriage to register for this event.

For other resources related to National Marriage Week and World Marriage Day, please see page 4.



Self-Care Events

To better guard ourselves from the dangers of experiencing burnout within our ministry, the Office for Parish Life has organized two events to help Directors of Religious Ed and Youth Ministers to bring hope and balance back into your life. God expects us to be strong and have a strong support network that constantly provides the love and support needed to overcome the stressors associated with our ministry. Information for these events is listed below.

The Virtue of Hope Virtual Retreat

for Directors of Religious Ed and Youth Ministers

We all face difficult moments of darkness and anxiety when things can become difficult. Some may become disillusioned with life and lose hope. During these challenging times, hope can also be misunderstood. We may think that it is having a positive attitude or being optimistic. We may place our hope in things of this world, such as our work or charitable projects, thinking they will bring us happiness. Pope Francis reminds us that true hope is not built on human words or assurances, but on God's Word and His promise of salvation and eternal life. Join Erin O'Leary as she unpacks the truth about the Virtue of Hope.

Date: Friday, March 5, 2021

Time: 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Watch your email for information on how to sign up.

Ever Changing, Ever Growing Virtual Day of Reflection
for Directors of Religious Ed, Lay Ministry Formation Candidates and everyone involved in catechetical ministry or family faith formation

Are you seeking to grow in your relationship with God? Searching for more direction in a time of uncertainty? God is always speaking to us. But in today's hectic world, do we know how to listen? In *Listening for God in Everyday Life*, you will find engaging stories and thoughtful reflections about the many ways God speaks to us every day - in nature, relationships, silence, struggle, and more. Join Dr. Joseph White and Katy Maier from Our Sunday Visitor for reflection and practical ways for each of us to hear God's voice more clearly. God has a message for you - are you ready to listen?

- **"Listening for God in Everyday Life"—Dr. Joseph White**

God speaks to us in many ways – through Creation, through significant people and events, through our talents and interests, and more. This session will offer stories and reflections on the various ways God speaks to us and practical strategies for hearing and

responding to God's voice in our daily lives so we can gain a clearer sense of God's vision for ourselves and our ministry.

- **"Courage Within"—Katy Maier**

Katy will explore ways in which we can discover the courage within ourselves to live faithfully. In this ever-changing world we will discover the joy that comes through connecting to ourselves and to life with courage to meet the changes that life throws our way. Those of us engaged in ministry know the challenge of sustaining ourselves and our commitment to deeply held values and beliefs. The more passionate we are about our work, the more vital it is that we take time to renew our own spirituality, to reconnect who we are with what we do. And to find the courage to do so.

Date: Friday, March 26, 2021

Time: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Watch your email for information on how to sign up.

Remote Networking Meetings

Save the Dates-We are excited to continue our Remote Network Meetings for DREs and Youth Ministers. We would love to have every parish represented. We invite each of you to join us every other Wednesday at 11AM. Our upcoming meeting dates are February 10 & 24, and March 10 & 24. For more information on how to stay connected, please contact Jacki Douglas, Director of Word and Lifelong Faith Formation, Office for Parish Life. jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org (570)207-2213 x-1100

Faith Alive! Powered by Edmodo

The Office for Parish Life and the Directors of Religious Education have been busy discovering all the benefits available through Faith Alive! Powered by Edmodo. In a recent meeting with our account manager from Edmodo, he shared the chart below. We were so happy to see that so many are now engaged in parish life on Edmodo.

General Information

- 128 Admins (DREs)
- 304 Catechists
- 2,158 Students
- 1,407 Parents
- 368 Classes
- 19 Groups

Zoom integration continues to be an asset and is working well. Not only are the Directors of Religious Ed and catechists able to interact online with their families, they are also able to see each other face to face. This has been such a gift for all. To learn more, please contact Jacki Douglas at jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org

(570)207-2213 x-1100.

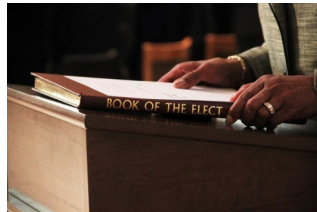
Confirmations with Bishop Bambera

As you know from previous messages, Bishop Bambera intends to celebrate Confirmations in the Spring as scheduled. Because of social distancing requirements, **the planned combined parish Confirmations will need to be adjusted**, with Bishop celebrating the sacrament with as many Confirmandi and guests as a given space will allow safely. Some parishes previously scheduled for these combined celebrations will now celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation with your Pastor. The dates already published are still reserved for these celebrations, with a few minor changes or additions for larger parishes needing more than one gathering. **EACH Pastor of the parishes listed for 2021 has been contacted regarding the Confirmation plans for your parish or parish grouping.**

All other parishes **who were not scheduled to have Confirmations with Bishop Bambera in 2021** will proceed, as planned, with celebrations of the Sacrament of Confirmation with your Pastor on the **Feast of Pentecost**.

Rite of Election

Because of the current pandemic, there will be three celebrations of the Rite of Election to safely accommodate all of catechumens and candidates.



The Rite of Election will be held on Saturday, February 20, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. and at 1:30 p.m., and on Sunday, February 21, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. at the Cathedral. For the sake of meeting safety protocols, the assignment of parishes to each celebration will be completed once we have your registrations.

Please [click here](#) for important information concerning changes to the Rite of Election. Please contact the Office of Parish Life as soon as possible if you have not registered your catechumens and/or candidates at 570-207-2213 or email oplgeneral@dioceseofscranton.org.

World Day of the Sick

A Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Bambera for the twenty-ninth World Day of the Sick on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 12:10PM at the Cathedral of Saint Peter. Parishes around the diocese are encouraged to offer a Mass for the Sick either on February 11 or another convenient day near it, but because of the current health crisis, the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is not to be offered communally. Resources for World Day of the Sick can be found on the [diocesan website](#) or on the [National Association of Catholic Chaplains website](#).

Change to Collect Prayers' Doxology

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has directed a change to the closing words of the Collect prayers at Mass. The prayers found in the *Roman Missal* currently conclude **"...in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever."** The change involves the **omission of the word "one"** so that the prayer will conclude **"...in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever."** This change to the concluding doxology of orations is **to be implemented on Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021.** For more information on this change, please [click here](#).

Lenten Guidelines during COVID

Guidelines for Liturgical Celebrations during the Season of Lent 2021 can be found on the [diocese website at this link](#). The guidelines for Lent include directives for the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday, the distribution of palm branches on Palm Sunday, the "Light Is On for You" initiative that offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Monday evenings in Lent, as well as directives for other potential parish gatherings. Directives for Holy Week 2021 are briefly mentioned, but more specific directives will be made available soon.

Instant Access to New Resources

For compassionate understanding and spiritual support through some of life's most difficult challenges, the Office for Parish Life is happy to announce that we have renewed the subscription with Paraclete Press for this year. These videos offer much-needed resources available instantly, online. They range from faith formation to biblical teachings to a full selection of grief and social issues from Paraclete Press. Parishes can benefit from Instant Access to the Complete Video Streaming Library — a collection of more than 50 full-length videos.

Each parish can share access with staff members, small group leaders, pastoral care coordinators, teachers, and church members who serve in a variety of ministries! Find immediate, trusted support on a wide range of topics including:

- Grief and Bereavement
- Social Issues
- Faith Formation for Adults
- Faith Formation for Children Paraclete's award-winning line of videos have earned praise from experts in these fields.

For more information, contact the Office for Parish Life at 570-207-2213 or email jhousel@dioceseofscranton.org or jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org

To access the Paraclete Video Streaming Library, visit paracletevideostreaming.com.



National Marriage Week USA
MARRIAGE IS WORTH IT! • EVERY FEB 7-14

National Marriage Week will be celebrated between **February 7 through February 14th, 2021**. This event is promoted through an international organization working to promote marriages and the many societal goods that flow from strong marriages. National Marriage Week is also supported by the USCCB.

Here are some ideas on how to observe National Marriage Week in your home:

WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN BE KIND AND LOVING TO YOUR SPOUSE

- Make a point to thank your spouse for something he or she did during the day (ex: 'thanks for unloading the dishwasher' or 'I appreciate you bringing in the mail')
- Offer your husband or wife simple displays of affection throughout the day – a hug, a kiss, a gentle touch on the back or shoulder
- Write a short love note for your spouse to find in his or her bag, or near his or her workspace in your home
- Make (or buy/bring home already prepared) one of your spouse's favorite foods or drinks
- Write a list of 5-10 appreciations for your spouse; let him/her know the ways in which he/she has added value to your life
- Do nice things for your spouse: make his or her morning coffee/tea, pick up his or her dry cleaning, wash his or her car (maybe even the interior and the exterior!)
- Give your spouse a compliment about his or her appearance or manner
- Apologize. Even if you're apologizing for something that happened long ago, if you feel you were wrong, ask for forgiveness.
- Make your spouse a playlist. You can include songs that have sentimental value to your relationship and/or songs that were popular when you started dating.

WAYS IN WHICH THE TWO OF YOU CAN SPEND SOME ENJOYABLE TIME TOGETHER

- For ideas on how to keep young children at home occupied, to allow you time together, please [click here](#).
- Download the [At-Home Marriage Retreat](#) for Couples
- Engage in a round (or two or a few) of a two-player video game, where you can play as a team together, or enjoy some friendly competition
- Look through your wedding album or watch your wedding video together
- Take a few minutes and slow dance together if a favorite song comes on your radio/Pandora/Spotify etc. OR purposefully play and dance to the song you chose for your first dance on your wedding day
- Each of you, gather some of your favorite couple photos

from your years together. Plan a time when you look at the photos together, and talk about why the pictures are meaningful and beloved.

- Put together a puzzle, perhaps choose to buy one together that symbolizes a life goal the two of you share (ex: a vacation to Hawaii, becoming more fit by hiking in the woods)
- Tell one another the story of how you met and fell in love, enjoy each spouse's unique perspective
- Cuddle up on the couch with some popcorn and watch a movie you've both been eager to see – or choose an old favorite (Make a date to do this once the kids have gone to bed if small ones are still at home.)
- Recall the friends and family members who were a part of your wedding day (With whom have you lost contact? Should you try connecting with them again? Who is in need of your prayers? Who has passed away? Pray together for their souls.)
- Bundle up and go outside together for a walk, a hike, or to build a snowman/have a friendly snowball fight
- Dream together. Look forward into the future, and talk about what your "couple goals" are for the next two, or five, or twenty years. If you enjoy music, make a playlist to match. If you find art or photos meaningful, create a vision board together. If writing is your thing, create a story of your future life. Commit to revisiting these dreams each year so that you can celebrate those you've achieved together, change those that are no longer meaningful, and add new dreams and goals to your list

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR ENRICHING AND SUPPORTING YOUR MARRIAGE

Websites

- <https://www.foryourmarriage.org/> : The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops sponsors this website, and it offers a wealth of marriage-related information.
- <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/> : This secular resource has been helpful to many couples for years. The 5 love languages is a simple system that guides couples in learning how to express love to one another in the ways that count the most to each individual spouse.
- Visit the [diocesan website](#) to access the full Diocesan web resources and links for National Marriage Week 2021.

Resources to observe National Marriage week, including a **flyer/bulletin insert**, an **at-home marriage retreat**, a **parish resource**, a **preaching resource**, a **prayer for married couples** and **intercessions** for the Universal Prayer can be found on the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's \(USCCB\) website](#). Married couples could also participate in an at-home marriage retreat, available both in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

To contact Jen Housel about ideas or with questions, call 570-207-2213 x 1104 or send her an email at jhousel@dioceseofscranton.org.

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

SERVICE

The Together Project: A Clickable Community



February 15 - March 8

Join High School Students from across the Diocese of Scranton for a virtual community building experience!

What Is It?!

- Connect one hour a week for four weeks in peer-facilitated virtual small groups
- Stay connected with your small group between video chats with GroupMe messages & optional open Zoom sessions

For more info, visit www.dioceseofscranton.org or email shannon-kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org



NFCYM 2021

The Diocese of Scranton is once again organizing a delegation for the National Catholic Youth Conference in November of 2021. While details are still being developed by the NFCYM, we will hold a VIRTUAL Diocesan Info Meeting on Monday, March 1st at 6:30pm. To register for the info meeting, please email Shannon at Shannon-Kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org.

VLFFF Cycle 2

Registration for the Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation is now open until February 17—course dates: February 21-March 27, 2021. Cycle 2 would provide members of our diocesan faithful a perfect opportunity for going deeper into their faith during Lent, with courses such as 'Catholic Beliefs,' 'Conscience,' 'La Alegría del Evangelio,' 'Misión: Un Mundo de Encuentros (OneWe)' and others, in both English and Spanish! See the website to view the full catalog, and to register: <https://vlcff.udayton.edu/calendar/>

World Youth Day

World Youth Day (WYD) is a world-wide encounter with the Pope celebrated every three years in a different country. World Youth Day is a unique way to deepen your faith and grow closer to Christ, through prayer and the sacraments, together with hundreds of thousands of other young people who share your interests and ambitions.

If you are interested in joining the Diocese of Scranton's Pilgrimage, contact Shannon Kowalski at Shannon-Kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org.

Youth/Young Adult Ministry Resources

If you are in need of resources for your youth or young adult ministry program,



check out the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry website's resources at nfcym.org/resources. There you can find free games, lessons, webinars, and more!

Diocese of Scranton Young Adult's

EVENING PRAYER AND SOCIAL

Join Other Young Adults Ages 18 -35 For Evening Prayer and Social Time. This Even is Free. But Registration is Required to Recieve the Meeting Link.

FEBRUARY 22
MARCH 15
APRIL 12

7:00pm via Zoom. Email Shannon at shannon-kowalski@dioceseofscranton.org to register

OPL Month At A Glance

February 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 DRE/YM Remote Networking Meeting 11AM	11 World Day of the Sick	12	13
N A T I O N A L M A R R I A G E W E E K						
14 Valentine's Day World Marriage Day Event 6:30-8:30PM MARRIAGE WEEK	15 Presidents' Day The Together Project Kickoff Meeting	16	17 Ash Wednesday VLCFF Cycle 2 Registration Closes	18	19	20 Rite of Election 10:00AM and 1:30PM
21 Rite of Election 2:30PM VLCFF Cycle 2 Courses Begin	22 The Light Is On for You	23	24 DRE/YM Remote Networking Meeting 11AM	25	26	27
28						

OPL TEAM MEMBERS

Diocesan Secretary for Parish Life: **Catherine Jantsch Butel**
 Director for WORD and Lifelong Faith Formation: **Jacki Douglas**
 Director for WORSHIP: **David Baloga**
 Director for SERVICE and Mission: **Shannon Kowalski**
 Coordinator for Pilgrimages: **Fr. Andrew Hvozdovic**
 Director for COMMUNITY and Family Development: **Jen Housel**
 Coordinator for Ecumenical/Interfaith Relations: **Msgr. Vincent Grimalia**
 Coordinator for Lay Ministry Formation: **Kitty Scanlan**
 Coordinator for Hispanic Ministry: **José Flores**
 Consultant for Pastoral Council Development: **Ann Marie Cawley**
 Events Coordinator, Diocesan Pastoral Center:
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