

The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2021

Easter Hope

Rite of Election brings dozens closer to full entry into Catholic Church

SCRANTON – Despite all of the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, this Lent is filled with hope and joy for Andrew Farr. After wanting to become Catholic for years, the Scranton man’s dream is about to become a reality.

“I’m incredibly excited to be welcomed into the Catholic Church. I didn’t grow up religious so this whole process has been eye-opening for me,” Farr said.

Farr is one of 85 people who made their final declaration of intent to join the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Scranton at the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, held on the first weekend of Lent, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter. Due to the pandemic, three different celebrations took place on Feb. 20 and Feb. 21 so people could maintain proper physical distancing.

The Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion is when candidates and catechumens participating in RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) publicly declare their intention to fully enter the church.

This year, the Diocese of Scranton has 30 catechumens, who will receive all the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist), and 55



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera delivers his homily at the first of three Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion celebrations that took place at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Feb. 20 and Feb. 21, 2021. This year, the Diocese of Scranton has 85 people who made their final declaration of intent to join the Catholic Church this Easter. (Photo/Mike Melisky)

candidates, who have been baptized but have not finished receiving the sacraments of initiation.

Farr, who is a catechumen, is sharing

this journey with his two children, Lilly and Cayden, who are both candidates. Farr says the experience of learning as a family has been a blessing.

“It allowed us to learn the faith together and to be able to have the conversations together,” Farr explained.

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Latest COVID-19 vaccine can be used in good conscience

SCRANTON – The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, says that the new Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine can be used by the faithful in good moral conscience.

On March 4, 2021, Bishop Bambera released a statement on the vaccine.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has caused tremendous grief and fear in our country and world over the last year, leaving more than 500,000 dead in the United States alone,” the bishop wrote.

“I want to be clear and concise in my pastoral guidance regarding COVID-19 vaccines. Given the grave danger this virus poses, it is morally acceptable to receive any of the current COVID-19 vaccines that have been determined to be clinically safe and effective. This position is supported by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

“People should not delay getting a vaccine. Receiving a vaccine not only protects an individual’s health but also serves the common good by protecting the

community – including the weak and vulnerable.

“While fully recognizing the complex moral and ethical issues involved in vaccine development, at this time, people are not being given a true choice of which vaccine they receive, and likely won’t be without a lengthy delay.

“Given that risk to public health, the faithful can in good conscience receive any of the current vaccines.”

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A health care worker administers COVID-19 vaccines at a mass vaccination site on Jan. 27, 2021. (CNS photo/Alisha Jucevic, Reuters)



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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Diocese of Scranton directives for Holy Week observances

SCRANTON – Parishes around the Diocese of Scranton are busy preparing for Holy Week Masses and services. The faithful are invited and encouraged to attend Holy Week and Easter Masses to experience the joy, hope and love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Despite the good news of effective vaccines for COVID-19, safety protocols will remain in place for the remainder of Lent, the Sacred Paschal Triduum and Easter Sunday. The faithful are reminded that the obligation to attend Sunday and Holy Day Masses remains suspended by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera until further notice.

For those attending Masses, parishioners will be required to wear properly-fitting face coverings, remain physically distant from other individuals and practice good hand hygiene. Parishioners who feel ill or suspect they (or another immediate family member) may be infected with the coronavirus are urged to stay home and participate in online/broadcast services to protect others.

The Diocese of Scranton has released a comprehensive set of liturgical directives for parishes. The protocols are all available on the Diocese of Scranton website.

Parishes have been encouraged to pay special attention to the length of Holy Week liturgies and take great care in developing plans to welcome the faithful on Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter Sunday. Some parishes have decided to take reservations while others plan to utilize overflow areas with livestream/broadcast capabilities.

PALM SUNDAY Sunday, March 28, 2021

The Diocese of Scranton will resume the practice of providing blessed palms to the faithful this year.

While parishes are responsible for developing a safe and effective method of distribution, the faithful are reminded of the importance of maintaining a proper six-foot physical distance while receiving palms.

The Diocese of Scranton has also directed that the Passion should be proclaimed in a format that does not require the use of missalettes by the assembly.

Individual pamphlets or bulletins that

include the readings may be distributed but must be taken by the faithful after Mass or discarded and not reused for another Mass.

CHRISM MASS Tuesday, March 30, 2021

Bishop Bambera is planning to celebrate the Chrism Mass on Tuesday, March 30, at 4:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

Due to seating limitations, the Mass will be open to invited guests only.

The faithful from across the 11-county Diocese are invited to participate in the Chrism Mass via a live broadcast on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton. The Chrism Mass will also be livestream to the Diocese of Scranton website with a link made available on all Diocesan social media platforms.

HOLY THURSDAY Thursday, April 1, 2021

This year, the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper will look different in the Diocese of Scranton but its significance will not change.

Due to health and safety concerns, the washing of the feet will not take place this year. Traditionally, the bishop/priest would wash the feet of twelve individuals.

At the end of the Mass, a simple transfer of the Eucharist may take place. The Diocese has directed that the transfer needs to remain indoors and not involve movement of the assembly. The transfer can, however, involve the priest and an adult attendant carrying incense.

Adoration by the faithful at the place of reposition may follow but parish leaders must ensure that all safety precautions, including physical distancing and mask wearing are followed.

GOOD FRIDAY Friday, April 2, 2021

Similar to Palm Sunday, the Passion should be proclaimed in a format that does not require the use of missalettes by the faithful. Pamphlets or bulletins that include

the readings may be distributed but should be taken home by the faithful or discarded.

On Good Friday, due to health and safety measures, the faithful are being asked not to approach the Cross for private adoration, such as kissing. After physically venerating the Cross himself, a priest is welcome to hold the Cross before the faithful and invite them to adore the Holy Cross in silence.

HOLY SATURDAY Saturday, April 3, 2021

The Blessing of the Fire and Preparation of the Paschal Candle may take place. Even though outside, only a small group such as the RCIA catechumens/candidates, along with the priest and an adult server/attendant may gather around the fire. Everyone participating must also be masked and remain physically distant from one another, especially when processing inside the church.

It is extremely important that parishes not use congregational tapers during the Easter Vigil because blowing them out would require everyone to lower their masks and exhale at the same time.

If catechumens and candidates are being fully initiated/received into the Church and confirmed at the Easter Vigil, care must be taken that the priest celebrates these rites safely, including using fresh water for each baptism and/or the use of a separate instrument to anoint an individual with Chrism.

EASTER SUNDAY Sunday, April 4, 2021

If it answers a pastoral need, parishes can add additional Masses on Easter Sunday.

Weather permitting, parishes may consider holding outdoor Masses on Easter Sunday if it has already been parish practice last fall.

Liturgical music should continue to be done simply, without large choirs, and the assembly is once again advised that singing is still not recommended at this point, even with a mask.

The faithful can be sprinkled with holy water following the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. Fresh water in a separate container should be used and blessed for this sprinkling.

Holy Week/Easter Services Schedule

CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton, will broadcast the following Holy Week and Easter services from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, celebrated by the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., Bishop of Scranton.

- ◆ Palm Sunday Mass of the Lord's Passion on March 28 at 12:15 p.m.
- ◆ Chrism Mass on March 30 at 4:00 p.m.
- ◆ Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, April 1, at 5:30 p.m.
- ◆ Good Friday Commemoration of the Lord's Passion, April 2, at 12:10 p.m.
- ◆ Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday, April 3, at 8:00 p.m.
- ◆ Easter Sunday Mass, April 4, at 10:00 a.m.



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“God is the true and lasting source of our life and well-being,” bishop says during Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion

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“Because we were all starting from the same spot and luckily we have my wife who has been through all of this so she has been a great resource in the process as well,” Farr continued. “It feels like we’re a lot closer now. We have these conversations about our faith and what it means to us. We never really got to have those conversations before.”

Gregory Gies of Saint Michael Parish in Canton also participated in the Call to Continuing Conversion.

“I’ve always had faith but I was never part of a religious community and I wanted to gain more of that and better myself for my family,” Gies said.

As a father of two young children who have been baptized Catholic, Gies says he is excited about fully joining the Church this Easter.

“Taking part in the Eucharist and Confirmation and becoming Catholic was my ultimate goal and it’s coming closer and closer,” Gies added.

Sisters Stephanie Sanchez, 18, and Destiny Sanchez, 19, from Saint Rita Parish in Gouldsboro will also be joining the Church at Easter.

“It has been a long process but it is all worth it,” Destiny said. “It was very special for us to do this together. I’ve been wanting to do this my whole life and I’m so glad I’m living it.”

Several years ago, Destiny Sanchez said she witnessed the baptism of a cousin and realized its significance. This year, as her sister joins her this Easter, it will be an equally important occasion.

“I learned so much,” Stephanie added about the process.

The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, was celebrant and homilist at each celebration. He officially accepted the catechumens, signing each parish’s Book of the Elect after being presented with it.

During his homily, the bishop reminded everyone that God calls each of us to be converted, to trust and discover that He is the true and lasting source of our life and well-being.

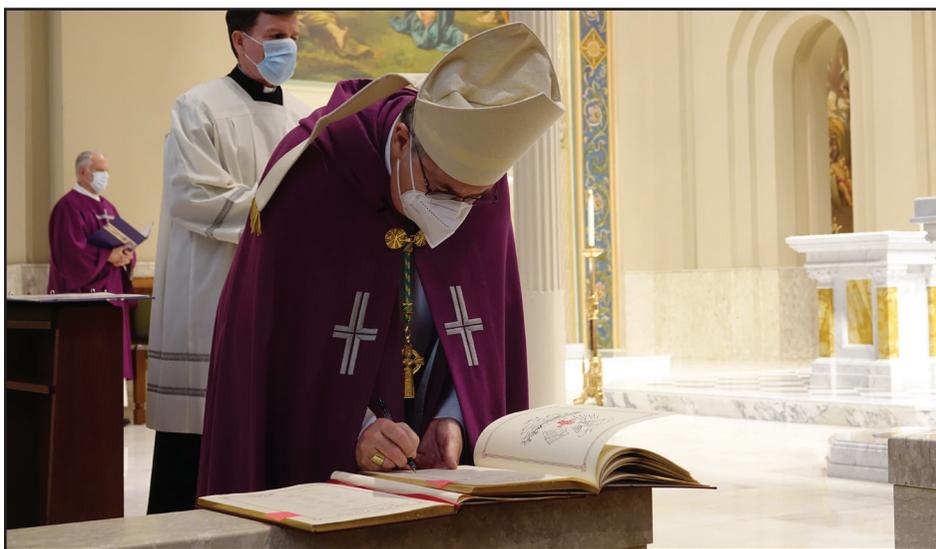
“He’s inviting you to walk a path with Him that ultimately will lead you to a life of meaning, purpose and peace. He is saying, through His invitation, that your life – with all of its struggles and joys, with all of its blessings and challenges – has a unique place and role to play within His plan,” Bishop Bambera said. “He’s sharing with you the same words that He shared with his disciples on the very night before He died, ‘It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain.’”

The bishop also told both the candidates and catechumens that they do not walk alone.

“Your presence here today, in the midst of so many challenges that have resulted from the (COVID-19) pandemic that has enveloped our lives, is a vital reminder to all of us of the power of faith and the reality of God working mightily even and especially in the midst of a most unlikely time in our history,” Bishop Bambera added.



Andrew Farr of Scranton, right, stands after his name is called during the Presentation of the Catechumens during the Rite of Election at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Feb. 20, 2021. (Photos/Mike Melisky)



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera signs each parish “Book of the Elect.” The name of each catechumen is inscribed in their parish “Book of the Elect.”



Gregory Gies of Saint Michael Parish in Canton, far right, participates in the Call to Continuing Conversion at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Feb. 20, 2021.



Sisters Stephanie Sanchez, left, and Destiny Sanchez, right, from Saint Rita Parish in Gouldsboro stand during the Celebration of Election on Feb. 20, 2021.

Catholics reminded Lent is a time of self-reflection, atonement and preparation

SCRANTON – Rich in symbolism, the distribution of ashes brought many faithful together at parishes across the Diocese of Scranton on Ash Wednesday.

“After dealing with this pandemic almost a year now, it’s frankly wonderful to see so many of you gathered here today,” the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, said during the 12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

With people wearing masks, sitting in alternating pews and spaced out to remain physically distant, the Cathedral reached its maximum capacity in accordance with established COVID-19 protocols.

“People have wondered, will people come back at the end of this pandemic? I think those people who have a depth of faith will not only come back but come back with a greater sense of resolve,” Bishop Bambera said to the media directly following Mass.

During his homily, the bishop preached on the words taken from the prophet Joel in the book of the Old Testament: “Even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God.”

“The message of Ash Wednesday calls us to change our lives...however, remember that Joel boldly challenges us to do so, not merely through gestures and religious practices – but by peering intensely into our hearts to ensure that our spirit – the core of our being – is honest and pure and open to the transforming power and presence of God,” Bishop Bambera said.



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera uses a cotton swab to place ashes on the forehead of a man during the 12:10 p.m. Mass on Ash Wednesday at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

The bishop emphasized the importance of the Lenten journey, which draws people to the very heart of what it means to be a Christian through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

“May we have the courage to confront the reality of our broken, struggling hearts and lives as we continue to face the pain and uncertainty born of the pandemic that has enveloped us. May we pray for the grace to turn away from all that distracts us from our resolve to authentically live our relationship with God. And may we selflessly serve the poor among us and so discover our merciful and loving God present in our lives,” the bishop added.

This year’s ash distribution was different because of the pandemic. Parishes

in the Diocese of Scranton were given two options: to either sprinkle ashes on the top of the recipient’s head or use a cotton swab to trace a cross on the recipient’s forehead. The Cathedral used the cotton swab option, ordering extra-long cotton swabs in order to protect both the ministers and the public.

Ashes are an important symbol to Catholics for several reasons. First, they represent a physical sign that we are sinners in need of forgiveness. Second, they remind the faithful that God created us from the earth and when we die, we will return to it.

Just like the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Saint Paul of the Cross Parish in Scranton also saw a large number of faithful attend its noon Mass on Ash Wednesday.

“Just being able to come here today



The imposition of ashes is a solemn ritual that signals the beginning of Lent.

in a safe environment, it meant a lot to us,” Joshua Walker, parishioner at Saint Paul of the Cross Parish, said.

Walker’s brother agreed.

“I think in times of anxiety, I think this is when we need God most for His strength and to allow everyone to feel a sense of comfort and unity,” Justin Walker added.

At Saint Paul of the Cross Parish, the pastor decided to sprinkle ashes on the top of each person’s head. The faithful say they are glad ashes were still available as they began the 40 days of Lent.

“We have to think of the season, think of what God went through and He is going to help us through this situation, like all of the other situations we have to deal with,” parishioner James Kryzanowski said.

‘Living Way of the Cross’ from Nanticoke parish to be broadcast on CTV: Catholic Television

NANTICOKE – For more than a decade, performing the ‘Living Way of the Cross’ to a room filled with family, friends and parishioners has been a Lenten tradition for young adults at Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish. After last year’s performance was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, organizers were determined to bring it back this year.

The ‘Living Way of the Cross’ is a prayerful journey through the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It features members of the parish youth ministry program and would traditionally take place on Palm Sunday at the Saint Faustina Parish Cultural Center.

Because large crowds are still being discouraged and physical distancing is still a necessity, the parish has spent considerable time over the last few weeks recording scenes with individual students. The program is currently being edited together and will be shown on social media as well as CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton.

“It is a gift, a real gift,” Father James Nash, pastor, Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish, said. “It is very, very meaningful. I know our people are looking forward to it.”

Because this year’s production will not be a live presentation and all of the actors



For several weeks, young adults from Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish in Nanticoke have been filming scenes for the ‘Living Way of the Cross’ which will be broadcast on CTV this year.



were filmed separately, except in a few places, that meant the entire script had to be entirely re-written.

“We had to change everything that we did so that everyone is safe,” Sandy Repak, Saint Faustina Kowalska Youth Ministry Director, said. “Our kids are amazing. They were very patient because it was one at a time.”

Deyonna Wood will be portraying Mary in this year’s production. While acknowledging that this year’s performance will be much different from past years, she is still excited to see how it all comes together.

“Everyone brings a different aspect of this play together. To see the different age

groups come together and put this on as we do, I think they get really excited,” Wood said.

Bill Borysewicz who has been instrumental in coordinating the production

and filming all of the scenes for the new version of the ‘Living Way of the Cross’ said he has been “proud beyond belief” at all of the young adults taking part.

“Nobody had scripts. I was feeding them what their lines are right there,” Borysewicz said. “I can’t express how proud I am.”

Father Nash says he always gets energized by the way young adults present the story of Jesus’ Passion, Death and Resurrection. He watched as nearly all of the actors filmed their individual roles.

“These young people are putting their heart and soul into it. They want to tell the story. They want the story to be appreciated and understood for what it is,” Father Nash explained. “It reminds us that the Word of God is the Living Word of God and it touches us in different ways.”

‘Living Way of the Cross’ broadcast times on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton

Tuesday, March 30 at 8:00 p.m.
Thursday, April 1 at 10:30 a.m.
Thursday, April 1 at 4:30 p.m.

SCRANTON — What is a parish to do when a global pandemic greatly upsets its long-standing fundraisers, especially those involving food?

Faithful members of parishes throughout the Diocese of Scranton have proven themselves quite innovative and resilient in the face of COVID-19, because after all, the sales must go on.

“When the pandemic hit, everyone’s first reaction was to survive,” Paulette Merchel, co-facilitator of the Women’s Guild at the culturally rich Parish of Saints Peter & Paul nestled in Scranton’s West Side, related. “That meant stocking food, securing masks, washing every vegetable purchased and washing hands incessantly.”

“We found a rhythm to our new lifestyle,” Merchel said of the intimate, close-knit parish rooted in Polish-Catholic traditions and one that, despite its lack of size, continues to be a dynamic beacon of faith and activity for the surrounding community.

Merchel recalled a meeting on July 8 that she and fellow Women’s Guild facilitator Paulette Burton organized to address the situation created by the coronavirus. “With

heavy hearts we crossed off all of the events that would not meet safety requirements.”

That meant the suspension of popular pierogi and hoagie sales and a basket raffle, which translated into the curtailment of parish fellowship that was historically enjoyed without much thought.

“After some prayer we had to accept two caveats,” Merchel said. “We’re not going to be able to raise a typical amount of money, but we will do our best and be grateful for the results, and we have to accept change and creatively redesign a calendar without some of the traditions and expectations.”

The determination and generosity of parishioners and friends have resulted in tremendous success for Saints Peter & Paul’s “pandemic activities,” according to Merchel.

Based on the model of minimal gathering, the parish doubled the output for its “Blessing Bag” project, providing sample-size self-care products for the homeless and an increased number of coats collected for those in need.

The Advent sales of pierogi and soup gave way to an authentic Christmas Cookie Sale, featuring

homemade baked goods carefully prepared in the personal kitchens of parishioners. A take-out meatless soup sale, offering clam chowder and one specialty soup following the weekend Masses during Lent, is currently replacing the traditional Lenten pierogi sales.

“Brian Rogers, our soup chef, manages it with a handful of helpers in the kitchen,” Merchel remarked.

She continued by referring to the Women’s Guild as the organizational engine that drives the many events indicative of the thriving soul of an aging parish.

“With the help of all parishioners, we handle the administrative facet of the parish’s activities,” emphasizing the ministerial pillars of community and service, she said. “We have a tremendous labor force, both men and women alike. I just serve as one of the organizers.”

At Saint Maria Goretti Parish in Laffin, the time-honored homemade pasta & sausage dinner has been coveted and enjoyed by parishioners and supporters for more than 40 years; however, it never experienced anything like it did in 2020.

Last year at this time, the March version of the popular Italian-style dinner, which the parish serves twice annually in the spring and fall, was all set for dine-in and take-out service. Then the coronavirus outbreak took hold.

Saint Maria Goretti had to adapt rapidly, shifting gears to provide a take-out-only option for a dinner fundraiser that traditionally sells 1,000 tickets.

Mary Ann Schmitt, who has served on the parish staff for the past 15 years recalled, “Our walk-in business was certainly hurt by it, but people were very understanding and the take-out dinner went very well.”

The parish, consequently, was much more prepared for the all-take-out dinner held again in the fall, which still resulted in more than 800 to-go meals being sold.

Schmitt credited a cooperative effort on everyone’s part to create a smooth transition from the well-known dine-in event.

“Our volunteers who have been putting the dinner on for



The soup’s on at Saints Peter & Paul Parish in West Scranton, where a meatless soup sale is being held following the parish’s weekend Masses during Lent.

years were wonderful,” she remarked. “They came up with their own system and answered the challenge.”

This year’s pasta/sausage fundraiser on March 21 will also offer the ever-popular basket raffle that is being added to “pick up the slack” since the parish’s annual craft show and purse bingo are currently suspended due to the pandemic.

Parishioners and volunteers at Our Lady of Victory Parish in Tannersville successfully navigated the COVID-19 waters to prepare 3,000 pierogi for a pre-Lenten take-out sale with all the safety guidelines in place.

“It was interesting to see our folks come in with all their coverings to guard against the virus and stay separated as they prepared the food,” Father Rich Czachor, pastor of Our Lady of Victory, remarked.

Shortly thereafter, the Pocono parish staged a successful take-out morning meal sale, featuring a breakfast sandwich and side of home fries to go. Father Czachor estimated about 80 patrons showed up for the drive-thru/pick-up event.

Our Lady of Victory is doing its part in providing meals for senior citizens, as the health crisis has closed many restaurants or has kept older people from dining out as much.

“We put on a weekly luncheon for seniors every Thursday,” the pastor said of the program that features a different menu each week. “Folks pre-order and pick up their lunch. Donations are accepted but not required.”

The parish’s traditional “Italian Dinner” in April is once again being planned, but with this year’s version requiring pre-ordering and take-out only. According to Father Czachor, should the Our Lady of Victory summer bazaar be canceled for the second year in a row due to the pandemic, “the food sales will go on” following all of the proper precautions.

“The process for all of these events has changed,” he said, “but the important thing is that we are still getting people together. Parishioners have also donated greatly for these causes, so I think the pandemic has really brought about goodness, generosity and more of a willingness to help.”

A complete list of Lenten food sales scheduled by parishes in the Diocese may be found on Page 27.



Donning their hair nets and masks, Maya Miseje and Rita von Schwedler pose with filling they prepared for a pre-Lenten pierogi sale at Our Lady of Victory Parish in Tannersville.

Latest COVID-19 vaccine can be used in good conscience

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The bishop's statement also included a link to an earlier Vatican statement from December that "has made clear that all the COVID vaccines recognized as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience."

The Johnson & Johnson one-shot is the third COVID-19 vaccine that has received approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, also reiterated that use of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine "can be used in good moral conscience" in a two-minute video posted on YouTube March 4.

"There's no moral need to turn down a vaccine, including the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which is morally acceptable to

use," Bishop Rhoades said in the video.

Bishop Rhoades also repeated comments that he made in a March 2 statement in conjunction with Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities, that if a choice of vaccines is available "we recommend that you pick one with the least connection to abortion-derived cell lines."

"What is most important is that people get vaccinated," Bishop Rhoades continued. "It can be an act of charity that serves the common good. At the same time, as we bishops have already done, it's really important for us to encourage development of vaccines that do not use abortion-derived cell lines. This is very important for the future."

Bishop Robert P. Deeley of Portland, Maine, added his voice advocating that



A man checks in at the National Western Complex in Denver where the health care workers administered COVID-19 vaccines to vulnerable seniors and members of underserved communities in February. (CNS photo/courtesy Gregg Moss, SCL Health)

people get vaccinated.

"When it is your turn to receive a vaccine, you can receive the one that is offered to you without moral reservation," he said in a statement.

Bishop Deeley continued, "during this pandemic, receiving a vaccine is not just for one's own health, but for the health and safety of those around you."

Parish provides space to pharmacy for COVID-19 vaccinations



Left: Betsy Kondrat, a member of the Sacred Heart of Jesus parish staff, who met the criteria to get a COVID-19 vaccine under Pennsylvania's Phase 1A regulations, receives her second shot through a Family Pharmacy team member at the parish hall.

Below: A message board at the entrance to Holy Family Hall at Sacred Heart Church in Peckville serves as a "sign of the times" to alert people when their appointments are ready.



PECKVILLE – As part of its outreach to the larger community, Sacred Heart of Jesus Church opened the doors of its parish center recently to the Family Pharmacy in the Mid Valley area. The pharmacy needed space to administer hundreds of COVID-19 vaccinations.

Since the facilities at the pharmacy are limited, the 20-year-old parish center at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, with its large hall and six modern meeting rooms, proved to be a perfect setting for the distribution of first and second-dose shots of the Moderna vaccine.

Father Andrew Kurovsky, pastor, stated, "Our parish motto is 'The Round Church Where There's Room for Everyone,' so it only made sense to open our doors to the larger community and do what we can to reach out during the pandemic to those in need, even beyond our walls. However, while we provide the space, those who qualify and desire vaccines need to contact Family Pharmacy directly."

This year is special for the growing church community because it is celebrating its 75th anniversary as a parish!



BISHOP BAMBERA'S SCHEDULE

- March 14 - Mass at All Saints Parish
Plymouth, 10:00 a.m.
- March 17 - Saint Patrick's Feast Day Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.
- March 19 - Closing Mass for the Year of Saint Joseph
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.
- March 19 - Solemnity of Saint Joseph Mass
Chapel, Oblates of Saint Joseph, Laflin, 7:00 p.m.
- March 21 - Mass at Saint Luke Parish
Stroudsburg, 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.
- March 28 - Palm Sunday Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:15 p.m.
- March 30 - Chrism Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 4:00 p.m.
- April 1 - Mass of the Lord's Supper
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 5:30 p.m.
- April 2 - Commemoration of the Lord's Passion
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.
- April 3 - Easter Vigil Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 8:00 p.m.
- April 4 - Easter Sunday Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 10:00 a.m.

Solemnity of Saint Joseph

- March 19 -

SCRANTON – Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will serve as principal celebrant and homilist for two Masses on the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, March 19, 2021.

First, the Diocese of Scranton will conclude its own special observance of the “Year of Saint Joseph” with a Pontifical Mass at 12:10 p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

The Mass is open to the public, following COVID-19 precautions which include wearing face masks and physical distancing. The Mass will also be broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton and livestream on the Diocese of Scranton website and social media platforms.

For the last year, Bishop Bambera has encouraged the faithful to turn to Saint Joseph, the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and guardian of the son of God, as a model for their lives.

In the evening, Bishop Bambera will also serve as principal celebrant and homilist for the concluding celebration of the Feast of Saint Joseph at Saint Joseph’s Oblate Seminary in Laffin.

The feast day Mass at 7:00 p.m. will culminate the annual Solemn Novena to Saint Joseph currently being hosted by the Oblates of Saint Joseph religious congregation based in the Pittston-area.

The Oblates’ nine-day Novena honoring

their patron saint, which began March 10, continues through Thursday, March 18.

The Novena is offered at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Seminary Chapel, located on Route 315, Laffin. Masses are celebrated daily at 8 a.m., noon and 7 p.m.

The noon-time Novena liturgies are livestream on the Oblates Seminary Facebook page and broadcast live on MJM Catholic Radio (98.9 FM/750 AM).

Saint Joseph Oblate priests serve as celebrants/homilists for the Novena Masses. Devotions to Saint Joseph conclude each Mass, prior to the distribution of Holy Communion.

Bishop Bambera will preside at the Saint Joseph feast day Mass on March 19, which will also be livestream and broadcast on MJM Catholic Radio. Feast day Masses will also be offered earlier at 8 a.m. and noon.

No reservations are required to attend the Novena Masses. However, the chapel’s maximum allowed capacity will be strictly observed, in addition to CDC and diocesan COVID guidelines mandating facial masks and proper physical distancing.

Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul McDonnell, rector of the OSJ religious community, invites all faithful to participate in the Novena and feast day celebrations during the current “Year of Saint Joseph.”

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



The year 2020 marked the 150th anniversary of Pope Pius IX proclaiming Saint Joseph as the patron of the Universal Church.

On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8, 2020), Pope Francis released an Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde* about Saint Joseph and also declared a “Year of St. Joseph” to be observed from Dec. 8, 2020 to Dec. 8, 2021.

As Pope Francis wrote in *Patris Corde*, “the aim of this Apostolic Letter is to increase our love for this great saint, to encourage us to implore his intercession and to imitate his virtues and his zeal.”

In *Patris Corde* (“With a father’s heart), Pope Francis said Christians can discover in Saint Joseph, who often goes unnoticed, “an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble.”

“Saint Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. A word of recognition and gratitude is due to them all,” the pope added.

Below are some excerpts from *Patris Corde* describing Saint Joseph in several different ways. We encourage the faithful to read *Patris Corde*, which can be found on the Diocese of Scranton website.

A beloved father

“The greatness of Saint Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. In this way, he placed himself, in the words of Saint John Chrysostom, ‘at the service of the entire plan of salvation.’”

A tender and loving father

“Joseph saw Jesus grow daily ‘in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor’ (Lk 2:52). As the Lord had done in Israel, so Joseph did with Jesus: he taught him to walk, by taking him by the hand; he was for him like father who raises an infant to his cheeks, bending down to him and feeding him” (cf. Hos 11:3-4).

An obedient father

“As he had done with Mary, God revealed his saving plan to Joseph. He did so by using dreams...In the first dream, an angel helps him resolve his grave dilemma: ‘Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins’ (Mt 1:20-21). Joseph’s response was immediate: ‘When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him’” (Mt 1:24).

An accepting father

“Joseph accepted Mary unconditionally...Joseph set aside his own ideas in order to accept the course of events and, mysterious as they seemed, to embrace them, take responsibility for them and make them part of his own history.”

A creatively courageous father

“Arriving in Bethlehem and finding no lodging where Mary could give birth, Joseph took a stable and, best he could, turned it into a welcoming home for the Son of God to come into the world” (cf. Lk 2:6-7).

A working father

“Saint Joseph was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one’s own labor.”

A father in the shadows

“He never made himself the center of things. He did not think of himself, but focused instead on the lives of Mary and Jesus.”



Caring for the sick is essential part of church's mission, Pope Francis says

SCRANTON – Caring for and healing the sick is an essential part of the Catholic Church's ministry, just as it was a constant part of Jesus' ministry, Pope Francis said last month in the days leading up to the annual World Day of the Sick.

"Taking care of the sick of every kind is not an 'optional activity' for the church, no," the pope said. "It is not something extra."

On Feb. 10, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera served as principal celebrant and homilist for the Diocese of Scranton's World Day of the Sick Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. The Mass included the Anointing of the Sick.

"More than ever before, the (COVID-19) pandemic that we are battling has caused us to realize our own vulnerability and need

for others. It has also prompted us to admit that for as capable a people as we have become, we are ultimately not in control of our future. That belongs to God alone," Bishop Bambera said during his homily.

The Catholic Church marks the World Day of the Sick on Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Instituted by Pope Saint John Paul II in 1992,

the first World Day of the Sick was marked the following year. The theme for this year's 29th annual observance was, "You have but one teacher and you are all brothers" (Mt 23:8).

The World Day of the Sick Mass is an opportunity to devote special attention to the sick as well as to those who provide them with care and assistance within healthcare institutions,

families and communities.

"Whether we are sick and touch others by our willingness to endure suffering with dignity and faith – or – we are those who spend time with the sick and care for them in their needs, in going outside of ourselves through our service of one another, we give life to the presence of Jesus in our midst," Bishop Bambera said.

Both Bishop Bambera and Pope Francis praised the multitude of men and women who have helped their sick patients and neighbors as the coronavirus continues to spread.

"A society is all the more human to the degree that it cares effectively for its most frail and suffering members, in a spirit of fraternal love," Pope Francis reiterated in his message for the 2021 World Day of the Sick.



Following COVID-19 safety protocols, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera uses a cotton ball for the Anointing of the Sick at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Feb. 10, 2021. (Photo courtesy Catholic Television)

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

SCRANTON – All people, including those with disabilities, have gifts to contribute to the life of the Church. During the month of March, the talents of individuals with disabilities are especially embraced and welcomed.

Shortly before Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month began on March 1, the Diocese of Scranton celebrated its annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness Mass on Feb. 14 at the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

"Because of you, our world is brighter, the power of love is stronger and our ability to see God at work in our world is far more possible than without you," Bishop Joseph C. Bambera told those with disabilities during his homily.

The Mass was open to the public and broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some people who would have traditionally attended the Mass in person participated instead by the televised broadcasts.

"My brothers and sisters with developmental disabilities, more than you realize, your unwavering trust in God and



Dozens of people attended the Diocese of Scranton's Mass for Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities Awareness on Feb. 14, 2021. The Mass raises public awareness of the needs and the potential of all individuals with developmental disabilities.

your example of acceptance, forgiveness, gratitude and selfless love provide us all with priceless lessons for how best to live as disciples of Jesus," Bishop Bambera added. "Simply put, you teach us that we are all a part of God's plan. Each of us is treasured by God, for being just the way we are. Each of us is more than well equipped to give witness to God's merciful presence among us and to bring hope and peace to our corner of God's world."

Drawing upon the Gospel reading for the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time in which Jesus cleansed a man of his leprosy at the very beginning of his public ministry, Bishop Bambera said Jesus boldly revealed God's great love and respect for every life.

"His love and mercy is not contained by religious laws, traditions or social norms but touches every soul because of the simple fact that every soul – every life – is made in the image and likeness of God and deserves

to be treated with respect and dignity," Bishop Bambera explained.

Partners in the annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness Mass include Saint Joseph's Center in Scranton, the Diocesan SPRED community (Special Religious Education), The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Order of the Alhambra and the Catholic Deaf Community of the Diocese of Scranton.



David Piehota, left, uses American Sign Language to assist the hearing impaired with the homily of Bishop Joseph C. Bambera during the Diocese of Scranton's Mass for Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities Awareness. (Photos/Mike Melisky)

Lent is a beautiful time for people to focus on the beauty of the Incarnation and reality that all are made in the likeness and image of God. During this Lenten season, please consider the following ways of giving voice to persons with disabilities and their families.

Prayer

1. Pray for belonging for all persons, particularly persons with disabilities during Mass and at other prayer services.
2. Consider prayers of thanksgiving for people who make the lives of persons with disabilities easier. For example: engineers who make prosthetic devices or designers that create clothing that is easy to put on if you use a wheelchair.

Fasting

1. Make sure that you and others do not use dated or derogatory terms for people with disabilities. Unkind words take dignity away from people who live important but sometimes invisible lives.
2. On your next movie night, watch a movie that highlights a person with a disability. Examples include: "Wonder," "The Peanut Butter Falcon," "A Patch of Blue," and "Children of a Lesser God."

Almsgiving

1. Focus on the fact that giving one's time and attention is often more valuable than giving money. Choose a Catholic organization that supports people with disabilities.
2. Ask families to donate a children's book to their school, parish or community library that has a person with a disability as a central character.

Returning from Iraq, Pope Francis discusses historic pilgrimage

ABOARD THE PAPAL FLIGHT FROM IRAQ (CNS) – The Catholic Church’s commitment to dialogue with other churches and with other religions flows from the Gospel, but Pope Francis said he knows some Catholics disagree.

“Often you must take a risk” to promote harmony, he told reporters March 8 as he flew back to Rome from Baghdad. “There are some criticisms: ‘The pope isn’t courageous, he’s reckless.’ He’s doing things against Catholic doctrine. He’s a step away from heresy.”

Still, he said, through prayer and listening to the advice of experts and aides, he has become convinced that God wants the church – and all humanity, for that matter – to continue promoting a sense of belonging to one human family.

And, he said, it does not matter if some religions, sects or groups seem further from sharing that vision.

“The rule of Jesus is love and charity,” the pope said. “But how many centuries did it take us to put that into practice?”

Preaching and living “human fraternity” – recognizing that all men and women, created by God, are members of the same human family and brothers and sisters to one another – is a process that requires effort, emphasis and repetition.

“You are human. You are a child of God. You are my brother or sister,” the pope said.

With sporadic violence continuing in Iraq, the pope’s trip March 5-8 involved a massive security operation with the deployment of thousands of police and military officers. Even the Vatican police and Swiss Guards wore bulletproof vests under their dark suits, an unusual practice on a papal trip.

But the other danger was posed by COVID-19 and the risk that people gathering to see the pope, who has been vaccinated,



Pope Francis releases a white dove during a memorial prayer for the victims of the war at Hosh al-Bieaa (church square) in Mosul, Iraq, March 7, 2021. Amid the rubble and bombed out remains of four churches destroyed by Islamic State militants, the pope paid tribute to Iraqi Christians who endured persecution and even death. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

would create a surge in the already-rising number of cases in Iraq.

Pope Francis said the pandemic – not the security issue – was what made him repeatedly think, “maybe, maybe not” about the visit.

Decisions about foreign trips are “stewed over time,” the pope said. “I thought so much, prayed so much” about the Iraq trip because of the coronavirus pandemic, “and in the end I made the decision freely, but it came from within. And I said to myself the one who helped me decide this will take care of the people.”

And even though many experts do not expect the pandemic to be resolved by the fall, Pope Francis said he has promised to go to Budapest, Hungary, for a day in September to celebrate the closing Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress, which was postponed from 2020.

The other trip he would like to make soon, he said, is a visit to Lebanon.

Cardinal Bechara Rai, patriarch of the Maronite Catholic Church, even asked him to stop in Lebanon on the way to or from Iraq, the pope said, but doing that would seem like giving the Lebanese people “crumbs” given how they are suffering.

Asked about his meeting March 6 in Najaf with Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, an authority figure for Shiite Muslims in Iraq and around the world, Pope Francis described him as “a great man, a wise man, a man of God.”

The meeting, he said, “was good for my soul” and was another step on the path of promoting greater understanding and cooperation with Muslims.

The day after meeting the ayatollah, Pope Francis traveled to Mosul, a city terrorized and left largely in ruin by Islamic State militants who controlled the area from 2014 to 2017.

Even though he said he had seen photos

of the ruined churches of Mosul, Pope Francis said standing amid the rubble was “unbelievable, unbelievable.”

But even more touching, he said, was the testimony of survivors, including of a mother who lost a son, who spoke about the importance of forgiveness and of rebuilding.

“We are so great at insulting people and condemning them,” he said, but too many people have forgotten the power of forgiving others.

Asked when, if ever, he will make a trip to Argentina, Pope Francis repeated that he imagined either dying or resigning and remaining in Rome, “my diocese.”

He joked that he had spent 76 years in Argentina and didn’t see why people wanted him to spend more time there.

But, denying he had what he termed “patrio-phobia,” he told reporters that he had planned a trip to Argentina, along with Chile, in November 2017. However, the trip was pushed back to January 2018 because of elections in Chile. And January in Argentina would have been just too warm.

“I don’t know if the trips will slow down now, but I can tell you that on this trip, I’ve felt more tired,” he said, adding that being 84 comes with some baggage.

However, he said, he does enjoy being with people, especially “after these months of imprisonment” because of the pandemic and the lockdown in Italy.

“I feel different when I am far from the people,” he said, adding that he would continue to follow the recommendations of government health authorities as far as holding general audiences or other events that could attract a large public.

“Closeness to the people of God” is an essential part of being a priest, the pope said. “The only ones who save us from pride are the holy people of God,” otherwise priests run the risk of acting like “an elite caste.”



Pope Francis and Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, one of Shiite Islam’s most authoritative figures, meet in Najaf, Iraq, March 6, 2021. The 90-year-old ayatollah, who turns down most meeting requests, issued a statement after the meeting, saying that world religious leaders should work to hold “great powers” to account, calling upon them “to give priority to reason and wisdom, to reject the language of war, and not to expand concern for their self-interests over the rights of people to live in freedom and dignity.” (CNS photo/Vatican Media)



Pope Francis swings a censer near a partially restored statue of Mary from a parish in Karmless as he celebrates Mass at Franso Hariri Stadium in Irbil, Iraq, March 7, 2021. The Islamic State militants decapitated the statue and cut off its hands. The restoration re-attached the head, but left the hands dangling. Having witnessed or even experienced persecution for their faith, the Christians of Iraq must be careful not to harbor thoughts of revenge, Pope Francis said during Mass. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)



Pope Francis and Iraqi President Barham Salih arrive for a meeting with authorities, civil society leaders and members of the diplomatic corps in the hall of the presidential palace in Baghdad March 5, 2021. To consolidate peace and ensure progress, the government and people of Iraq must never treat anyone as a second-class citizen and must work each day to promote harmony, the pope said. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

You can help the Diocesan Annual Appeal reach its goal!

SCRANTON—Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, along with pastors and parish life coordinators throughout the Diocese are asking parishioners to join together in hope to help reach the 2020 Diocesan Annual Appeal goal.

The Appeal has raised more than \$3.8 million in gifts and pledges, bringing the campaign to 84% of the \$4.5 million goal. The amount raised is down about \$200,000 from last year at this time.

“Thank you to all of our parishioners who have made a gift to the Annual Appeal. I am deeply grateful to you for your willingness to be instruments of God’s presence at a time when many of our parish families have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic,” Bishop Bambera said. “If parishioners are able to help, I ask those who have not yet made an Appeal gift to prayerfully consider making a contribution now so that we can continue to bring hope and comfort to our brothers and sisters in Christ

who depend on our Diocesan ministries.”

Annual Appeal efforts are continuing in our parishes during the Lenten Season to invite parishioners to consider support of the Appeal as a way to respond to the call to share God’s gifts with others as part of our Lenten commitment of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Gifts of any amount are welcome and appreciated.

Annual Appeal donations provide much needed support for the following Diocesan and parish ministries:

- Catholic Social Services programs that serve more than 300,000 people each year
- Food and clothing pantries and faith formation programs in our parishes that are supported by Diocesan Appeal grants
- In-person education that is continuing safely in our 19 Catholic schools
- Seminarian education and care for our retired and ill clergy
- Parish life and ministry

formation programs that now include innovative virtual offerings

• The broadcast and livestreaming of Mass from the Cathedral of Saint Peter

“Donors to the Appeal may designate their gift to any of these Diocesan ministries,” Jim Bebla, Diocesan Secretary for Development, said. “For example, parishioners may request that their donation be used to support our Catholic Social Services programs that are serving an increasing number of families and individuals in our food pantries and shelters as a result of the pandemic.”

For more information on the Diocesan ministries supported by gifts to the Annual Appeal, to view the Annual Appeal video or to make a donation online, visit www.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, 18503-1279.

“The call to experience Lent as a journey of conversion, prayer and sharing of our goods, helps us to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ...”



-Pope Francis' 2021 Lenten Message

During this Lenten season, provide help and hope to your neighbors!

Diocese of Scranton
2020 **DIOCESAN**
ANNUAL APPEAL

BOUND TOGETHER IN
Hope

To donate, visit AnnualAppeal.org
or call (570) 207-2250

YOUNG ADULT VIRTUAL RETREAT

Topic:
Diving Deeper Into Scripture

MARCH 21-28, 2021

WWW.DIOCESEOFSCRANTON.ORG

A ‘go at your own pace retreat’ for young adults (18-40) with three retreat sessions by Father Alex Roche, Father Brian J.T. Clarke and Father Ryan Glenn. There will be opportunities for small group discussion, prayer and spiritual direction throughout the week.

This retreat experience is FREE!

Opportunities to connect together:

Sunday, March 21- Opening Session at 8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 23 - Discussion and Prayer at 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 25 - Discussion and Prayer at 8:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 28 - Closing Session at 8:30 p.m.

To register and/or for more information, visit dioceseofscranton.org

Virtual Day of Reflection planned for religious education directors and others involved in faith formation

Faith formation leaders who are looking to grow their relationship with God or searching for more direction in this time of uncertainty are invited to a ‘Virtual Day of Reflection’ offered by the Diocese of Scranton’s Office for Parish Life later this month.

On Friday, March 26, from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., directors of religious education, lay ministry formation candidates or anyone involved in catechetical ministry or family faith formation is invited to take part in the session *Listening for God in Everyday Life*.

Parish leaders are expected to hear engaging stories and thoughtful reflections about the many ways God speaks to us every day - in nature, relationships, silence, struggle and more.

Dr. Joseph White and Katy Maier from *Our Sunday Visitor* will make presentations during the ‘Virtual Day of Reflection.’

In his session titled, “Listening for God in Everyday Life,” Dr. White 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.

In her session titled, “Courage Within,” Maier will explore ways in which individuals 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.

For more information on the ‘Virtual Day of Reflection,’ contact Jacki Douglas, Director of Word and Lifelong Faith Formation at (570) 207-2213, x1100 or email jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org.

By: Sister Kathy Kurdziel, IHM, Delegate for Religious in the Diocese of Scranton

Whole communities of consecrated women religious have blessed the Diocese of Scranton. In fact, the sisters were here before Scranton became a diocese.

These dedicated sisters arrived with a mission to serve the needs of the people of northeastern Pennsylvania and change their world for the better. They are celebrating National Catholic Sisters Week, March 8-14, 2021.

For the sisters, it is a time to articulate their charism (their unique spirit), to reach out to new people and to remind the people of our community that they love them and still serve them in any way they can. Sisters invite people to be in touch with them and to reach out in service to others to pay back and to pay forward.

As Sister Draru Mary Cecilia, LSMIG, Executive Director of the African Sisters Education Collaborative, (ASEC) says in her article, "During Catholic Sisters Week, we celebrate the charism of the sisters, which is the unique gift God entrusted to each congregation to share with humanity. We celebrate their spirituality, a specific divine aspect of God that drives sisters' altruistic service to humanity and the mission into which God invites them..."

ASEC is a perfect model of the way Sisters meet needs today – i.e. collaboratively. It is something the pandemic is teaching our world, but it something the sisters have known all along. We are better together!

Whether sisters are in Archbald or Africa, when they come together in prayer, in unconditional love, joyfully reaching out to the smallest needs or the largest endeavors, they CAN change the world! They already have!



African Benedictine Sister Varena Makumbuli helps Michelle, a resident of Saint Joseph's Center, prepare for a recent dance.

It starts with a mission to which God invites them in prayer, the foundation of all good works. God called, and the sisters began to come to northeastern Pennsylvania – Sisters of Christian Charity, Sisters of Mercy, Franciscans, Religious Teachers Filippini, Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHMs), Sisters of Sts. Cyril and Methodius – to teach the children the faith and the tools of life-long learning, and to keep them safe.

Sisters opened hospitals and health clinics, day cares, alternative schools, high schools, nursing schools, colleges, and universities. For the little ones, sisters set up day cares, orphanages, adoption agencies, residences and day centers for special needs children and adults, homes for impoverished pregnant women, mother infant homes for young and desperate new moms, shelters for homeless women and children.

The needs are still endless, soup kitchens for the hungry, food pantries, Friends of the

Poor for those who fall through the cracks. All the communities who came lent a hand in the parishes, helping to build the American church and accompany the people on their journey of faith, on the privileged task of raising children and caring for elders.

Throughout diocesan history, the contemplative Passionist Nuns and the retired elders of all the congregations provided the powerhouse of prayer that sustained the grand collaboration surging among generous women of faith who became the face of God among the people of the diocese.

Today, native African sisters are changing the face of Africa through participation in ASEC, an international collaborative ministry founded by American Sisters. How proud and happy we are to cheer on their marvelous accomplishments through diligent study, hard work, creative energy and trained leadership.

Together, Sisters are a force for good in our world. With the help of God, the support

of their communities and the generosity of people of good will, sisters have something to celebrate, during not only this National Catholic Sisters Week, but every day of their lives.

Celebrate with the Sisters; be in touch with a sister who made a difference in your life, support their ministries and if you feel called, become a sister yourself!

As a symbol that little things count and make a difference in many lives, in celebration of National Catholic Sisters Week, the IHM Sisters are partnering with "The Joy of Sox." Socks are the number one request from those who are homeless! It is important for the health and well-being of individuals to have dry, warm, clean socks.

In collaboration with "The Joy of Sox" can you provide new socks for those who cannot always afford them?

IHMs will collect new socks for the following local agencies: Saint Francis Soup Kitchen, Saint Joseph Baby Pantry, McAuley Center for Homeless Women and Children, NEPA Youth Shelter, The Women's Resource Center, and Friends of the Poor.

"The Joy of Sox" Donation

Drop Donations at the side door of McCarty Hall (1409 College Avenue) just inside the side gate of Marywood University. It's the first house on the right.



African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) operates programs in ten African countries. Pictured, left to right, Rosemary Shaver, Senior Program Manager; Sister Kathy Kurdziel, IHM, Delegate for Religious; and Sister Draru Mary Cecilia, LSMIG, ASEC Executive Director, discuss components of the ASEC programs including higher education, leadership, scholarship and service learning.



A happy, energetic and prayerful community of eight Sisters of Christian Charity live together at Saint Nicholas Convent and staff various ministries in the Wilkes-Barre area. Pictured here celebrating Vietnamese New Year, left to right, are: Sister Marie Jose, Sister Josephine, Sister Mary Theresa, Sister Anna, Sister Maria, Sister Ellen, Sister Chiara Marie and Sister Maria Angeline.

Right: Sister Sarah Holmes, IHM, and Langdon spend time together at Trinity Day Care - Saint Joseph's Center for children with special medical needs.



Eldercare has become a primary ministry for the Sisters of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. Sister Madonna Figura spends time with Sister Susan.



Catholic Social Services providing help and hope to individuals and families this Easter

With Easter quickly approaching, Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton is working to make sure that all families, children and seniors have enough food.

Over the last year, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected many households with unexpected job losses and reduced hours.

“The mission of Catholic Social Services is to serve individuals and families facing hardship,” Mary Theresa Malandro, Diocesan Secretary for Catholic Human Services and Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Social Services, said. “The need for assistance continues to grow and our staff has been working tirelessly to give people a helping hand.”

The numerous offices of Catholic Social Services are planning special Easter-time events to help the community.

While some events are still in the planning process, others have already been scheduled. Additional information will be made available on the Catholic Social Services Facebook page.

In addition to its normal pantry hours, the Catholic Social Services Office in Carbondale will host a special food distribution just before Easter on Tuesday, March 23.

The food distribution will be held from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. outside the Catholic Social Services Office, 34 River Street in Carbondale. Individuals and families can either drive-up or walk-up to receive assistance.

The Easter food distribution is open to everyone in need, no pre-registration is required.

“There are no income limits, no family size limits. We are here to help anyone in need. I turn no one away for food,” Michelle Santanna, Catholic Social

Services Carbondale Officer Manager, said. “Please do not be embarrassed. We are here because we know people need help!”

Over the last year, the Catholic Social Services Carbondale food pantry hosted a number of other emergency food distributions. It also expanded its pantry hours to five days a week. In 2020, 7,287 households were served in Carbondale alone. That translates to more than 10,000 children and adults receiving assistance.

“The food insecurity right now is bad enough and when a holiday comes around, people don’t know whether to spend their money on food or something for their children, Santanna added.

In the coming months, Catholic Social Services will be collaborating with the Carbondale Area School District to do a larger food distribution once a month at the high school. The dates and times will be forthcoming.

“We will do it in conjunction with the school district to keep this going for people who need it,” Santanna explained.

The Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen in Wilkes-Barre continues to operate daily, providing warm, nutritious meals to individuals and families in need. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, meals are currently being served in take-out containers.

The kitchen operates every day of the year, including holidays, and this Easter will be no exception.

Leading up to the holiday, Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen & Food Pantry is also planning a special food distribution for individuals and families in need.

The distribution is currently slated to take place on Tuesday, March 30. For additional information, please call (570) 829-7796.

Independent audit finds Diocese of Scranton in full compliance with child protection guidelines

SCRANTON – The Diocese of Scranton has once again been found to be in full compliance with U.S. bishops’ policies to prevent sexual abuse of children by clergy and other church personnel.

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 (USCCB) in 2002.

The USCCB spells out the policies that dioceses must follow in its “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.” The Charter is a comprehensive action plan for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. It also includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of future acts of abuse.

The audit was conducted by StoneBridge Business Partners, a private auditing firm based in New York, which has been contracted to conduct compliance audits of the nation’s 195 dioceses.

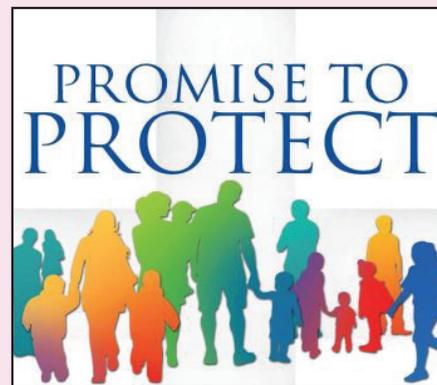
The findings are a result of a review of data collected for the 2019/2020 Charter audit period. The annual audit evaluates each diocese’s efforts to ensure the protection of children, including criminal background checks and educational awareness programs on recognizing and preventing abuse.

Among the information reported to the auditors: 11,526 students currently enrolled in Catholic schools in the Diocese or in parish religious education programs

have received Safe Environment training.

A total of 232 priests who are in active ministry, along with 72 permanent deacons and 25 seminarians and candidates for the Diaconate have also received that training.

More than 425 educators and administrators in Diocesan schools, more than 1,160 employees of the



Diocese of its parishes across 11 counties and 3,598 volunteers at schools, parishes and Diocesan facilities have also received valuable information to keep children safe.

More than 3,180

individuals also completed training on Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse in Pennsylvania.

In receiving the compliance audit results, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera stated, “This independent verification highlights the ongoing commitment that the Diocese of Scranton, along with its parishes and schools, has in protecting children. Our long record of compliance emphasizes that reliable reporting mechanisms are in place to ensure our zero-tolerance for any misconduct by a bishop, priest, deacon, lay employee or volunteer.”

The Diocese of Scranton’s Safe Environment Office ensures that Charter standards are continually met.

For more information on the Diocese of Scranton’s Safe Environment Program, or for a full overview of all policies and protocols, visit dioceseofscranton.org.

Scranton pastor receives “Man of the Year” designation

SCRANTON – The Paul “Hook” O’Malley Ancient Order of Hibernians Division #4 has given its “Man of the Year” honor to a Scranton pastor for the second consecutive year.

Father Richard Fox, pastor of Saint Patrick Parish in West Scranton, received the designation on Saturday, March 6, 2021. Father Fox was presented with a “Man of the Year” sash following the 4:00 p.m. Mass.

Father Fox is the current chaplain for

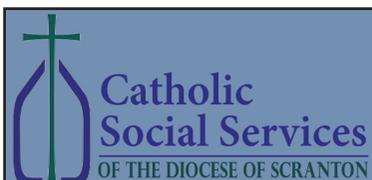


Rev. Richard Fox

the division and received the award because the organization felt that he has given so much back to the community and his parishioners during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The organization also plans to present a free movie night at the Circle Drive-In on Saturday, March 13.

The doors will open at 5:15 p.m. “The Quiet Man” will begin at 6:15 p.m., followed by the movie “Rudy.”



HELP FOR EASTER FOOD DISTRIBUTION

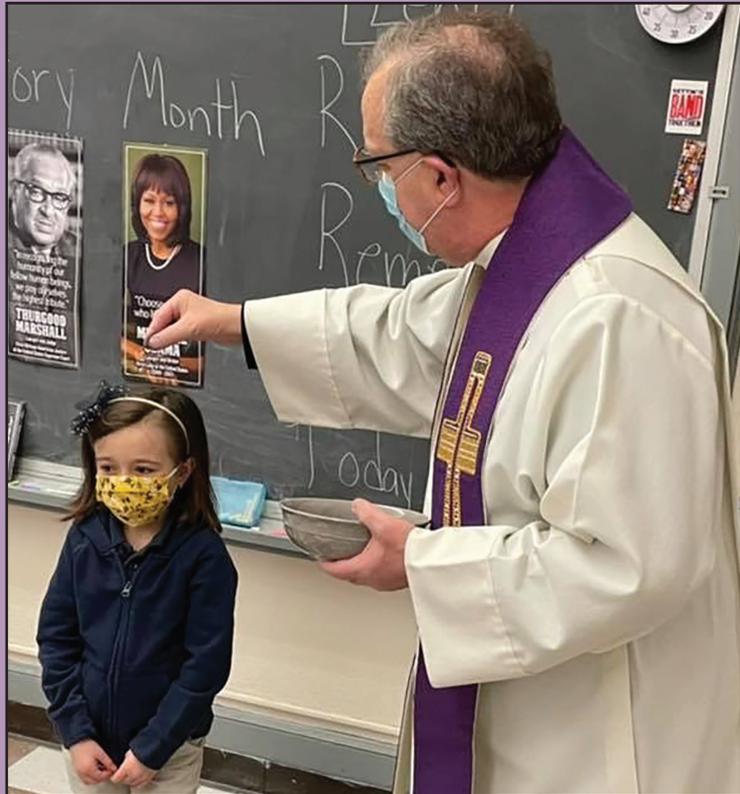
Tuesday, March 23, 2021
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Catholic Social Services
34 River Street
Carbondale



Drive-Thru and Walk-Up

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 receive ashes in their classroom on Ash Wednesday at **Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre.**



Deacon John Musyt, school guidance counselor, and Father Ryan Glenn, chaplain, conduct an Ash Wednesday prayer service which was livestreamed to all classrooms in addition to the virtual students who attend **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg.**



The students at **Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg** pray the Stations of the Cross while it is livestream to each classroom every Friday during Lent.



The eighth grade class at **Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School in Williamsport** prays the Stations of the Cross in the school's chapel.

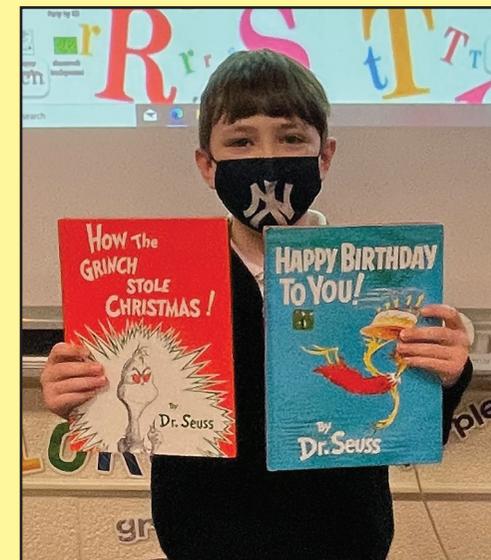
14 Celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday and Read Across America Week



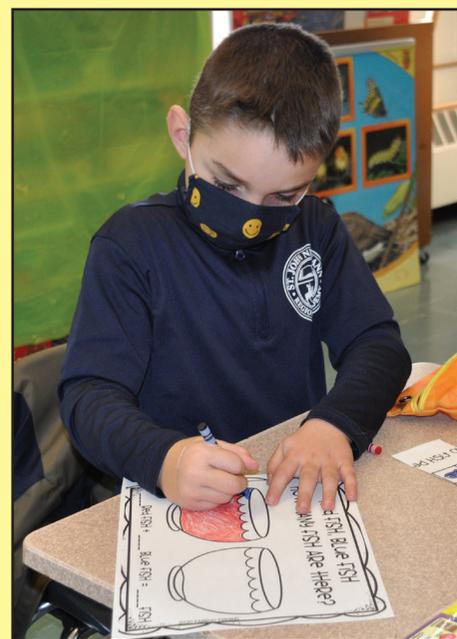
La Salle Academy in Jessup



Mrs. Nicolai, the librarian at **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston**, dressed as "The Cat in the Hat."



Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton



Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport



Epiphany School in Sayre



Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green

Our students are celebrating 100 Days of School! Students dressed as they believe they would when they are 100 years old.



Saint Jude School in Mountain Top



Holy Family Academy in Hazleton



The PK-4 students at **Saint Agnes School in Towanda** celebrate by popping 100 balloons in the gym.



All Saints Academy in Scranton



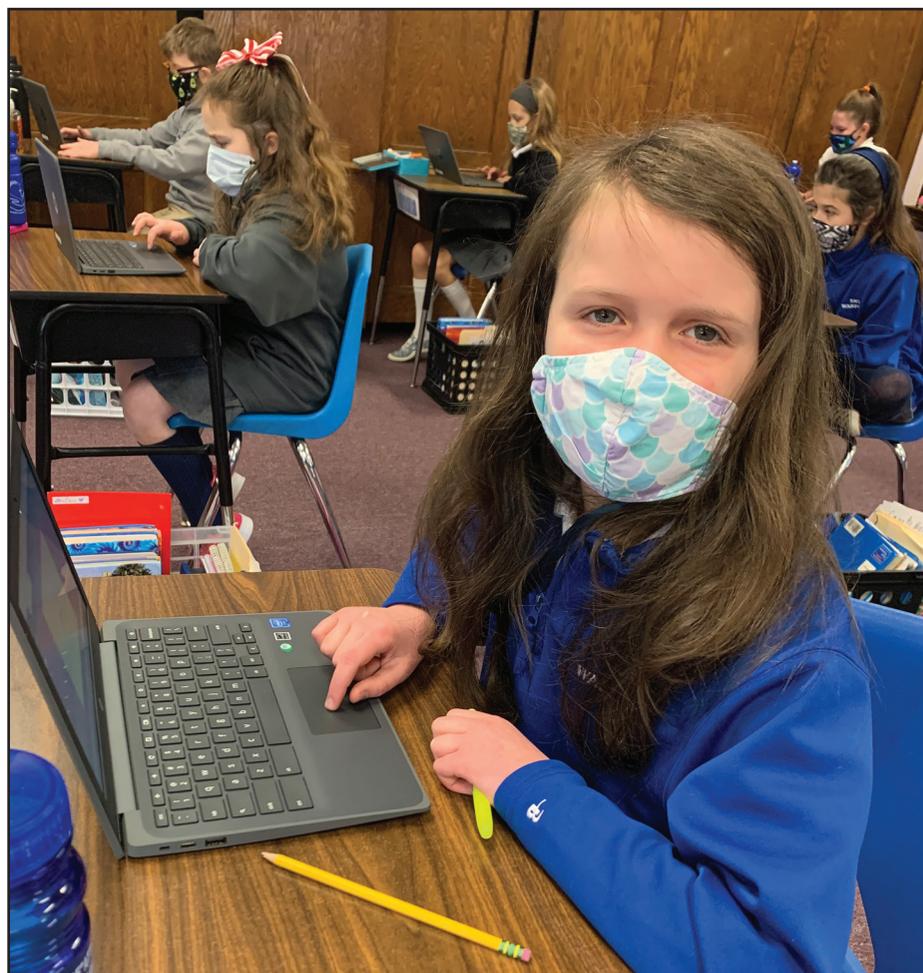
Incoming freshmen and their families are meeting with guidance staff at **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** to complete their course selections for the 2021-2022 academic year. Interested families are encouraged to call (570) 829-2424 today to schedule their appointment.



Evan Licari and Joshua Lentowski, eighth grade students at **Holy Rosary School in Duryea**, brave the cold weather to collect some of the canned goods school families are donating to Meals on Wheels during Lent.



Mia Meredith, a sophomore at **Holy Cross High School in Dunmore**, experiments with watercolor techniques during her Art I class.



Fourth graders at **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore** test out their brand new Chromebooks, another strategic learning tool helping students achieve excellence.



Mr. Fiore's fourth grade art class at **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter** recently completed some original artwork by drawing pictures on their backs just like Michelangelo did at the Sistine Chapel.

Devastating IHM Motherhouse fire at Marywood occurred 50 years ago

institution in its entirety and could be seen for miles.

News of the dramatic event reverberated throughout the region and even reached the walls of the Vatican, as Pope Paul VI was moved to offer his own personal words of sorrow for the tremendous loss.

In addition to serving as the home for nuns and other Marywood staff and seminarians, the majestic motherhouse opened in 1902 — predating the establishment of Marywood College by nearly 13 years.

The cornerstone for the new Motherhouse of Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters was laid on July 19, 1900, in the Green Ridge section of Scranton. Two years later, on Sept. 8, sisters, novices and postulants moved into the four-story brick

structure named Mount Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception.

A portion of the spacious landmark would become the home for elementary and high school students and eventually for Marywood College women in 1915. Along with housing sisters serving on the faculty of Marywood, the motherhouse was the site of the revered Marywood Seminary for girls.

The building also was home to the junior professed Sisters of IHM, who were pursuing their higher education and spiritual formation program.

While no lives were lost in the horrific blaze, two junior professed sisters were trapped by the flames. They were eventually rescued and hospitalized in critical condition. Several other IHM Sisters suffered multiple burns and smoke inhalation, requiring hospital treatment, and at least five firefighters were injured in battling the furious flames.

With the destruction of the west wing of the motherhouse, some 120 sisters were in need of immediate housing. Arrangements were made for many to stay in the newly



The night sky glows from the raging fire enveloping the Immaculate Heart of Mary Motherhouse beyond the entrance archway to Marywood College on Feb. 22, 1971.

completed wing of the Marian Convent, and others took up residence in the novitiate building.

Today, the Motherhouse and Seminary Morgan Memorial Garden stands in the center of the Marywood campus where the motherhouse once dominated the grounds.

Throughout 2021, the IHM Motherhouse will be commemorated in prayer, music, history and fond reflection. To mark the 50th anniversary, the IHM Sisters have also created a virtual tribute to the motherhouse and those who called it home.



SCRANTON — The entire Diocese of Scranton recently joined the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in sadly commemorating the 50th anniversary of the catastrophic fire that destroyed the venerable Marywood Motherhouse on the grounds of what is now Marywood University.

The somber milestone recalled the spectacular blaze in the early morning hours of Feb. 22, 1971, which ravaged the iconic

Catholic Women's Conference to take place on June 19

SCRANTON — This year's "Refresh Your Faith" Conference for Catholic Women will be held both in-person and via livestream on Saturday, June 19, 2021. The conference will begin at 8:45 a.m. under an open-air tent at Marywood University.

The conference will follow all recommended guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Diocese of Scranton for masks and physical distancing for those attending in person.

For those who wish to participate but have concerns about in-person gatherings, the conference will also be livestream and can be enjoyed in the safety and comfort of home. The theme of this year's conference is "With Merciful Love."

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an awakening for people of faith as the fear and isolation of the past year have worn on. "With Merciful Love" is an opportunity for women to explore and deepen their faith and spirituality in light of these challenging times.

Keynote speaker Therese Bonopartis, co-founder of *Entering Canaan Ministry: Healing After Abortion*, will share her journey of healing through divine mercy.

In addition to Therese Bonopartis, featured speakers include Father Chris

Alar of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, who will reveal the beauty and power of the message of Divine Mercy and Sister Virginia Joy, a member of the Sisters of Life religious order who will speak of the Love that frees you to live in the truth of who you are.

The day will include Eucharistic Adoration, the rosary, and a Mass celebrated by the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

Uplifting and inspirational music will be performed by Cleveland-born Christian music artist Taylor Tripodi and her band. Now residing in Nashville, Ms. Tripodi was named one of the top 30 Christian music artists in the world by *Aleteia* magazine in

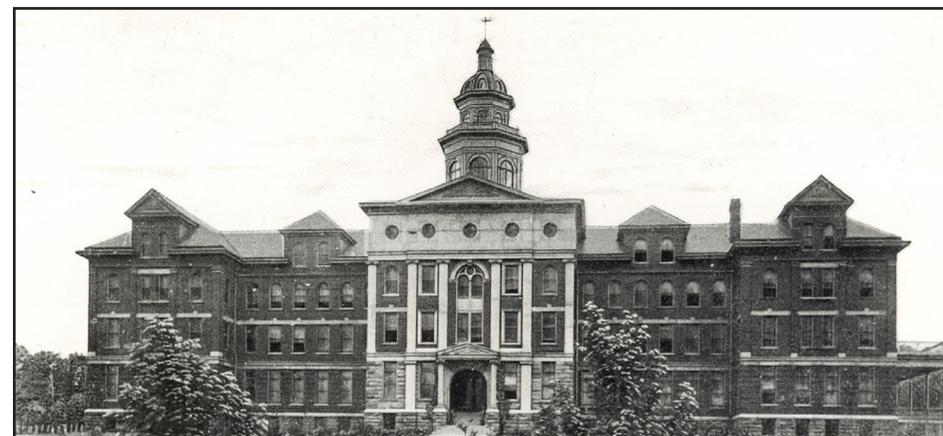
2018.

Participants can also enjoy a continental breakfast, lunch and shopping at the Catholic Vendor Marketplace.

The cost to attend the conference is \$40 for in-person and \$20 for virtual. Student tickets are \$20 and women religious are welcome free of charge.

Volunteers are always needed and those who sign up for four hours at the conference will receive a free ticket.

For more information and to register, visit cwcnepa.com.



The Marywood Motherhouse was originally named Mount Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception.

Prayer Requests for Priests

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

March 11, Holy Cross Father Robert Lozinski; March 12, Father Edward Lyman; March 13, Monsignor Peter Madus; March 14, Jesuit Father Ryan Maher; March 15, Father Thomas Major; March 16, Jesuit Father Richard Malloy; March 17, Father Thomas Maloney; March 18, Father Joseph Manarchuck; March 19, Capuchin Franciscan Father Pio Mandato; March 20, Father Michael Marchetti; March 21, Monsignor Francis Marini; March 22, Jesuit Father Leonard Martin; March 23, Bishop Emeritus Joseph F. Martino; March 24, Holy Cross Father Brendan McAleer; March 25, Passionist Father Thomas McCann; March 26, Father Michael McCormick; March 27, Father Glenn McCreary, V.E.; March 28, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul McDonnell; March 29, Holy Cross Father Russ McDougall; March 30, Father Patrick McDowell; March 31, Father James McGahagan; April 1, Pope Francis; April 2, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI; April 3, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; April 4, Father Gerard McGlone; April 5, Monsignor Stephen McGough; April 6, Father John McHale; April 7, Father Connell McHugh.



Fourth Sunday of Lent, March 14, 2021



FIRST READING 2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23

In those days, all the princes of Judah, the priests, and the people added infidelity to infidelity, practicing all the abominations of the nations and polluting the LORD's temple which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

Early and often did the LORD, the God of their fathers, send his messengers to them, for he had compassion on his people and his dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised his warnings, and scoffed at his prophets, until the anger of the LORD against his people was so inflamed that there was no remedy.

Their enemies burnt the house of God, tore down the walls of Jerusalem, set all its palaces afire, and destroyed all its precious objects. Those who escaped the sword were carried captive to Babylon, where they became servants of the king of the Chaldeans and his sons until the kingdom of the Persians came to power. All this was to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah: "Until the land has retrieved its lost sabbaths, during all the time it lies waste it shall have rest while seventy years are fulfilled."

In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD inspired King Cyrus of Persia to issue this proclamation throughout his kingdom, both by word of mouth and in writing: "Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD, the God of heaven, has given to me, and he has also charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever, therefore, among you belongs to any part of his people, let him go up, and may his God be with him!"

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6

Response: Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

SECOND READING Eph 2:4-10

Brothers and sisters: God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ — by grace you have been saved — raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast. For we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them

GOSPEL READING Jn 3:14-21

Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil.

For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.



Fifth Sunday of Lent, March 21, 2021



FIRST READING Jer 31:31-34

The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant, and I had to show myself their master, says the LORD.

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and relatives how to know the LORD.

All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15

Response: Create a clean heart in me, O God.

SECOND READING Heb 5:7-9

In the days when Christ Jesus was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.

Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

GOSPEL READING Jn 12:20-33

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus."

Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.

"I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour?' But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name."

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again."

The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself."

He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

"All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more."

—Jer 31:34





Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, March 25, 2021



FIRST READING

Is 7:10-14; 8:10

The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying: Ask for a sign from the LORD, your God; let it be deep as the nether world, or high as the sky!

But Ahaz answered, "I will not ask! I will not tempt the LORD!"

Then Isaiah said: Listen, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary people, must you also weary my God? Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us!"

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 40:7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 11

Response: Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

SECOND READING

Heb 10:4-10

Brothers and sisters: It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats take away sins. For this reason, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; in holocausts and sin offerings you took no delight. Then I said, 'As is written of me in the scroll, behold, I come to do your will, O God.'"

First he says, "Sacrifices and offerings, holocausts and sin offerings, you neither desired nor delighted in."

These are offered according to the law.

Then he says, "Behold, I come to do your will."

He takes away the first to establish the second. By this "will," we have been consecrated through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all.

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.



Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, March 28, 2021



FIRST READING

Is 50:4-7

The Lord GOD has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning he opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back.

I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting.

The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24

Response: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

SECOND READING

Phil 2:6-11

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped.

Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

GOSPEL READING

Mk 14:1-15:47

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were to take place in two days' time. So the chief priests and the scribes were seeking a way to arrest him by treachery and put him to death.

They said, "Not during the festival, for fear that there may be a riot among the people."

When he was in Bethany reclining at table in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of perfumed oil, costly genuine spikenard. She broke the alabaster jar and poured it on his head. There were some who were indignant.

"Why has there been this waste of perfumed oil? It could have been sold for more than three hundred days' wages and the money given to the poor."

They were infuriated with her.

Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you make trouble for her? She has done a good thing for me. The poor you will always have with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them, but you will not always have me. She has done what she could. She has anticipated anointing my body for burial. Amen, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed to the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went off to the chief priests to hand him over to them. When they heard him they were pleased and promised to pay him money. Then he looked for an opportunity to hand him over.

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?"

He sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city and a man will meet you, carrying a jar of water. Follow him. Wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"'" Then he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready. Make the preparations for us there."

The disciples then went off, entered the city, and found it just as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover.

When it was evening, he came with the Twelve. And as they reclined at table and were eating, Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me."

They began to be distressed and to say to him, one by one, "Surely it is not I?"

He said to them, "One of the Twelve, the one who dips with me into the dish. For the Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born."

While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body."

Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it.

He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many. Amen, I say to you, I shall not drink again the fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will have your faith shaken, for it is written:

I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be dispersed.

But after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee."

Peter said to him, "Even though all should have their faith shaken, mine will not be."

Then Jesus said to him, "Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows

twice you will deny me three times.”

But he vehemently replied, “Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you.” And they all spoke similarly.

Then they came to a place named Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” He took with him Peter, James, and John, and began to be troubled and distressed.

Then he said to them, “My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch.” He advanced a little and fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass by him; he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me, but not what I will but what you will.”

When he returned he found them asleep.

He said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.”

Withdrawing again, he prayed, saying the same thing. Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open and did not know what to answer him.

He returned a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough. The hour has come. Behold, the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. Get up, let us go. See, my betrayer is at hand.”

Then, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs who had come from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. His betrayer had arranged a signal with them, saying, “The man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him and lead him away securely.”

He came and immediately went over to him and said, “Rabbi.” And he kissed him. At this they laid hands on him and arrested him. One of the bystanders drew his sword, struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his ear.

Jesus said to them in reply, “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs, to seize me? Day after day I was with you teaching in the temple area, yet you did not arrest me; but that the Scriptures may be fulfilled.” And they all left him and fled.

Now a young man followed him wearing nothing but a linen cloth about his body. They seized him, but he left the cloth behind and ran off naked.

They led Jesus away to the high priest, and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. Peter followed him at a distance into the high priest’s courtyard and was seated with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they found none. Many gave false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree.

Some took the stand and testified falsely against him, alleging, “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands and within three days I will build another not made with hands.’” Even so their testimony did not agree.

The high priest rose before the assembly and questioned Jesus, saying, “Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?”

But he was silent and answered nothing.

Again the high priest asked him and said to him, “Are you the Christ, the son of the Blessed One?”

Then Jesus answered, “I am; and ‘you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.’”

At that the high priest tore his garments and said, “what further need have we of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?”

They all condemned him as deserving to die. Some began to spit on him. They blindfolded him and struck him and said to him, “Prophecy!” And the guards greeted him with blows.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the high priest’s maids came along. Seeing Peter warming himself, she looked intently at him and said, “You too were with the Nazarene, Jesus.”

But he denied it saying, “I neither know nor understand what you are talking about.”

So he went out into the outer court. Then the cock crowed. The maid saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.” Once again he denied it.

A little later the bystanders said to Peter once more, “Surely you are one of them; for you too are a Galilean.”

He began to curse and to swear, “I do not know this man about whom you are talking.” And immediately a cock crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times.” He broke down and wept.

As soon as morning came, the chief priests with the elders and the scribes, that is, the whole Sanhedrin held a council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate questioned him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

He said to him in reply, “You say so.”

The chief priests accused him of many things.

Again Pilate questioned him, “Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of.” Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now on the occasion of the feast he used to release to them one prisoner whom they requested. A man called Barabbas was then in prison along with the rebels who had committed murder in a rebellion. The crowd came forward and began to ask him to do for them as he was accustomed.

Pilate answered, “Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?”

For he knew that it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead.

Pilate again said to them in reply, “Then what do you want me to do with the man you call the king of the Jews?”

They shouted again, “Crucify him.”

Pilate said to them, “Why? What evil has he done?”

They only shouted the louder, “Crucify him.”

So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified.

The soldiers led him away inside the palace, that is, the praetorium, and assembled the whole cohort. They clothed him in purple and, weaving a crown of thorns, placed it on him. They began to salute him with, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and kept striking his head with a reed and spitting upon him. They knelt before him in homage. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him out to crucify him.

They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

They brought him to the place of Golgotha — which is translated Place of the Skull. They gave him wine drugged with myrrh, but he did not take it. Then they crucified him and divided his garments by casting lots for them to see what each should take.

It was nine o’clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, “The King of the Jews.”

With him they crucified two revolutionaries, one on his right and one on his left. Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself by coming down from the cross.”

Likewise the chief priests, with the scribes, mocked him among themselves and said, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.” Those who were crucified with him also kept abusing him.

At noon darkness came over the whole land until three

in the afternoon.

And at three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*” which is translated, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Some of the bystanders who heard it said, “Look, he is calling Elijah.”

One of them ran, soaked a sponge with wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink saying, “Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to take him down.”

Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

(Here all kneel and pause for a short time)

The veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he breathed his last he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joses, and Salome. These women had followed him when he was in Galilee and ministered to him. There were also many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

When it was already evening, since it was the day of preparation, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a distinguished member of the council, who was himself awaiting the kingdom of God, came and courageously went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate was amazed that he was already dead.

He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had already died. And when he learned of it from the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. Having bought a linen cloth, he took him down, wrapped him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance to the tomb.

Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses watched where he was laid.



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Mission Message

Go Forth

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



Koji and Gustav were both minding their own business as they blissfully walked through a Hollywood neighborhood. Seemingly out of nowhere, gunshots rang out and Koji and Gustav were taken away, kidnapped by the gunman. Scenes such as this occur more often than we are aware and that we'd care to admit.

This situation is unique for sure because Koji and Gustav are not children brazenly taken from their parents and held for ransom. They are French Bulldogs belonging to the famous American music artist, Lady Gaga. The dogs were taken after their dogwalker, Ryan Fischer, was shot and left reeling with very serious wounds.

Like many of you, I appreciated the outrage on television and on the internet as details of this heinous act came

to light. As so much began to unfold and as so many were left incredulous in the wake of these events, it hit me: So many are coming more unhinged over the dogs than the dogwalker.

More people are becoming emotionally invested in two dogs — said to be worth perhaps \$100,000 each — than over Ryan Fischer. There were more news stories and online updates over Koji and Gustav than over 317 schoolgirls kidnapped by assailants in Jangebe, Nigeria.

An internet search left me utterly stunned: 3.9 million hits for the dogs, 270,000 for the Nigerian schoolchildren. That's 3.6 million more stories, more op-eds, more cries for justice for two designer dogs, than over 317 helpless girls who bear God's image and likeness.

A \$500,000 reward was offered to the person who would facilitate the release of the dogs; no such value was placed on the lives of these precious children. As of the time of me writing this, the dogs and the girls have returned home safely, thank God.

I may be channeling the curmudgeonly attitudes of a "zoophobic" uncle, but I mean no disrespect. It is plain, though; we need to be better. Our society has reduced the dignity of the

human person and the sanctity of human life to the point that we retweet and share stories about a dognapping more quickly and with more facility than sharing with others the chilling stories of little girls, missionaries and priests and nuns in Nigeria who have been held for ransom and in some cases murdered.

Where are the prayers for them? Where is the outrage?

I wrote many months ago suggesting that we do more deliberate research to raise our awareness of, and our empathy for, those whose daily lives throughout the developing world and beyond are riddled with fear and misery. Many of these same people are among the most resilient and hopeful folks we could imagine.

That said, these men, women and children need our prayers and deserve our attention and our advocacy.

Dog is man's best friend, so the saying goes. A fellow man is our brother and sister, a joint heir to the kingdom. We can love both, but let us remember the Greatest Commandment: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength and thy neighbor as thyself (Mark 12:30). Thanks for letting me rant and rave.



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Papal Intention for March 2021

Sacrament of Reconciliation —
Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

U.S. Bishop Chairmen: 'Equality Act' would discriminate against people of faith and threaten unborn life

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The House of Representatives passed the Equality Act in a 224-206 vote Feb. 25.

A couple days ahead of the vote, the chairmen of five U.S. bishops' committees said its mandates will "discriminate against people of faith" by adversely affecting charities and their beneficiaries, conscience rights, women's sports, "and sex-specific facilities."

The bill, known as H.R. 5 and recently reintroduced in the House, also will provide for taxpayer funding of abortion and limit freedom of speech, the chairmen said in a Feb. 23 letter to all members of Congress.

H.R. 5 amends the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, public education, federal funding, the credit system and jury duty.

"Human dignity is central to what Catholics believe because every person is made in the image of God and should be treated accordingly, with respect and compassion," they said. "This commitment is reflected in the church's charitable service to all people, without regard to race, religion or any other characteristic."

"It means we need to honor every person's right to gainful employment free of unjust discrimination or harassment, and to the basic goods that they need to live and thrive," they continued. "It

also means that people of differing beliefs should be respected. In this, we wholeheartedly support nondiscrimination principles to ensure that everyone's rights are protected."

H.R. 5 "purports to protect people experiencing same-sex attraction or gender discordance from discrimination. But instead, the bill represents the imposition by Congress of novel and divisive viewpoints regarding 'gender' on individuals and organizations," they said.

"This includes dismissing sexual difference and falsely presenting 'gender' as only a social construct," they said. "As Pope Francis has reflected, however, 'biological sex and the sociocultural role of sex - gender - can be distinguished but not separated.'"

Signing the letter were: Bishop Michael C. Barber of Oakland, California, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Catholic Education; Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, chairman of the USCCB Committee for Religious Liberty; Bishop David A. Konderla of Tulsa, Oklahoma, chairman of the USCCB Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage; and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

"It is one thing to be

understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality," the bishops said, further quoting Pope Francis.

"Tragically, this act can also be construed to include an abortion mandate, a violation of precious rights to life and conscience," the committee chairmen added.

"Rather than affirm human dignity in ways that meaningfully exceed existing practical protections, the Equality Act would discriminate against people of faith," they said. "It would also inflict numerous legal and social harms on Americans of any faith or none."

The measure first passed the House May 17, 2019, in a bipartisan 236-173 vote, but the Senate did not act on the bill after receiving it. President Donald Trump had threatened to veto the measure if it ever reached his desk.

House leadership pledged to see it reintroduced in the 117th Congress. On Feb. 18, Rep. David Cicilline, D-Rhode Island, reintroduced it. Democratic Sens. Jeff Merkley of Oregon, Cory Booker of New Jersey and Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin are expected to reintroduce a Senate version soon.

The USCCB and the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference have both posted on their websites an "Action Alert," asking Catholics to write to their representatives and senators to urge them to vote against the Equality Act.

Novena Devotion in Wilkes-Barre

Weekly Novena Devotion to Saint Anthony of Padua — MARCH 16-JUNE 8, hosted by Our Lady of Hope Parish, 40 Park Ave., Wilkes-Barre; 13-week Saint Anthony Novena devotion held on consecutive Tuesday evenings, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the parish church. Novena theme: "Venerable Matt Talbot: Patron Saint of Those Battling Alcohol Addiction." All faithful are welcome; social distancing and facial coverings required. For more information, call (570) 824-7832.

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Misericordia University names 15th President

DALLAS – The Board of Trustees of Misericordia University has appointed Daniel J. Myers, Ph.D., professor and acting chairperson of Sociology at American University in Washington, D.C., as the next president of Misericordia University. Dr. Myers will begin his presidential term on July 1, 2021.



Dr. Daniel J. Myers

“Dr. Myers brings extensive experience in the areas of planning, new program development, community engagement, faculty development, enrollment management, fundraising, and diversity and inclusion,” Dr. Deborah Smith-Mileski, chair, Misericordia University Board of Trustees, said. “His strategic vision and administrative experience will serve this university well into the next century.”

Myers earned a bachelor’s degree in political science and a master’s degree in higher education and student affairs from Ohio State University before completing a master’s and doctorate in sociology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He is a well-known expert in the study of collective behavior and social movements. He has published books and articles primarily focused on protest and unrest, the diffusion of social phenomena, social psychology, and urban politics. He has won awards for both his research and teaching.

Myers previously served as provost at American University and Marquette University. Before

Center for the Study of Social Movements.

“I am tremendously excited to join the Misericordia community and contribute to the wonderful work done by this engaged community,” Myers said. “I want to thank the search committee, the board of trustees, and all of the faculty, staff, and students who participated in the interview process. Their testimony about the commitment to the charisms and mission of Misericordia were powerful, meaningful, and resonated deeply with me.”

Myers will succeed Kathleen Owens, Ph.D., who continues to serve as president of Misericordia through June 30, 2021. Dr. Owens was appointed to serve as president for the 2020-2021 academic year, succeeding Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., who left Misericordia for the presidency of the University of Mount Union in June 2020.

that, he spent 17 years at the University of Notre Dame serving as vice president and associate provost for Faculty Affairs, Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Letters, and as chair of the Department of Sociology. Myers had also been the director of Faculty Development and Research in the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and he founded and directed the

Statement of the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, on the appointment of Dr. Daniel J. Myers as President of Misericordia University

“I take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Daniel J. Myers on being selected to serve as the 15th president of Misericordia University. At the same time, I would also like to thank Dr. Kathleen Cieplak Owens for serving as president of Misericordia University for the 2020-21 academic year and leading the institution through the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis.

“Dr. Myers brings significant leadership experience to his new position, having served at American University in Washington, DC, Marquette University and the University of Notre Dame. As Misericordia University continues to build on its strong tradition of academic excellence, it will no doubt benefit from Dr. Myers’ background and skills. I look forward to working with Dr. Myers to make sure Misericordia University remains faithful to its mission as well as the charisms of the Sisters of Mercy.

“Rooted in Our Lord’s love and mercy, we ask God’s blessing on Dr. Myers, as well as all of the students, faculty and staff of Misericordia University.”

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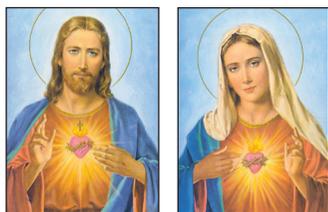
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Blue Army Reparation Vigil

The next monthly First Friday Reparation Vigil, dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary and sponsored by the Blue Army, will be held **May 7** at Saint Joseph's Oblate Seminary, 1880 Highway 315, Laflin (Pittston).

The Reparation Vigil for April will not be held since the First Friday of the month falls on Good Friday (April 2).

Devotions begin Friday evening at 8 p.m. with recitation of the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary, during which time confessions are heard. Mass of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is celebrated at 8:55 p.m.,



followed by benediction, litany and consecration to the Sacred Heart.

The vigil continues with the crowning of the Blue Army Pilgrim Virgin Statue, the Blue Army Pledge, Fatima prayers and Marian hymns, followed by litany and consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The vigil concludes with scapular enrollment at 10:15 p.m.

Pro-Life Gathering

End of "40 Days for Life" Pro-Life Rosary Gathering

March 11-26, offered for the special intentions of ending abortion and closure of Planned Parenthood location in Wilkes-Barre; Rosary is prayed each weekday, Monday thru Friday, at 10 a.m. in front of the offices of Planned Parenthood, 101 N. Main St., Wilkes-Barre (across from King's College). Pro-life campaign draws attention to the evil of abortion through prayer & fasting, constant vigil, and community outreach.



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Assistant Superintendent of Schools

The Diocese of Scranton is looking for an innovative educator to join the Catholic Schools Office leadership team. The diocese is seeking a dynamic Catholic leader with the experience and entrepreneurial spirit to build upon the transformational change occurring in the fifteen (15) elementary schools and four (4) high schools in the diocesan school system. The Assistant Superintendent will have primary responsibility to manage and support the program areas of curriculum and assessment, school safety, non-public federal and state programs, and assist with leadership development for principals in an assigned region. In addition, this position will work with the Superintendent to establish benchmarks to ensure growth in a data-informed approach to instruction.

Interested applicants are encouraged to review the comprehensive job description for this position that appears on the diocesan website at www.dioceseofscranton.org. Submissions should consist of a narrative letter of interest, a current curriculum vitae, professional references, required clearances and salary history. The deadline for submissions is **March 19, 2021** and should be sent to:

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MARCH SCHEDULE

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

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
12:00 AM	DAILY MASS	SUNDAY MASS (Encore)	DAILY MASS (Encore)					
1:00 AM	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)	EWTN NEWS IN DEPTH	
1:30 AM	ICONS SPOTLIGHT	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Encore)					
2:00 AM	THEY MIGHT BE SAINTS		EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	
2:30 AM		EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	SPECIALS	REAL LIFE CATHOLIC	LIFE ON THE ROCK	BATTLE READY	LITURGY OF THE HOURS	
3:00 AM	EWTN GALLERY	DEFENDING LIFE		PAPAL AUDIENCE	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY (Call in Thurs)		AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY	
3:30 AM		REFURBISHING THE SOUL	HOPE TO DIE		BOB AND PENNY LORD	WEB OF FAITH 2.0	SAVORING OUR FAITH	
4:00 AM	EWTN LIVE (Encore)	(4:35)SUNDAY BEST WITH FR GROESCHEL	GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR A HAPPY LIFE	(4:40)ANGELUS FROM NAZARETH	FORGOTTEN HERITAGE	LIFE IS WORTH LIVING	GK CHESTERTON	
4:30 AM		EWTN BOOKMARK	THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL	SUFFERING AND WHAT TO DO WITH IT	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY	EWTN SPECIALS	CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS	
5:00 AM	LENT, A SEASON OF GRACE	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN	APOSTOLATE FOR FAMILY CONSECRATION	GENESIS TO JESUS				CATHOLICS COME HOME
5:30 AM	FUNDAMENTALS OF CATHOLICISM							
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	
7:30 AM	THE HOLY ROSARY						CHAPLET OF ST. MICHAEL	
7:50 AM	THE HOLY ROSARY	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)	CAT CHAT	
10:00 AM	SUNDAY MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL	RELIGIOUS CATALOG					ROAMIN' CATHOLIC	
10:30 AM		LENTE PRAYER SERVICE	MOTHER ANGELICA LIVE	LIVE WITH PASSION	FOCUS	MOTHER ANGELICA LIVE CLASSICS	LENTE REFLECTIONS	
11:00 AM		OFOD OR SPECIALS		ST ANN'S WEEKLY NOVENA	CHOICES WE FACE	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY CALL IN	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY	
11:30 AM	EWTN NEWS IN-DEPTH	THEY MIGHT BE SAINTS	TERESA OF AVILA	SAINTS FOR TODAY	EUCCHARISTIC JOURNEY	STATIONS OF CROSS (CTV)	BOB & PENNY LORD PRESENT	
12:00 PM	SUNDAY MASS (Encore)	THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, LIVE AT 12:10 p.m.						
12:30 PM		"DIOCESAN DATEBOOK" airs before and after Mass.						
1:00 PM	(1:10PM) LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART	WOMEN OF GRACE						
1:30 PM		AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	PRO LIFE WEEKLY	AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	LENTE PRAYER SERVICE / OFOD	WOMEN OF GRACE HOUR LONG	EWTN BOOKMARK	
2:00 PM	IN CONCERT	CALLED TO COMMUNION	SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION	FR. SPITZER'S UNIVERSE	THE JOURNEY HOME	STATIONS OF THE CROSS(CTV)	EWTN ON LOCATION	
2:30 PM						STATIONS OF CROSS		
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 FROM LOURDES
4:00 PM	LENTE REFLECTIONS	THE HOLY ROSARY						SUNDAY VIGIL MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL
4:30 PM	SAVORING OUR FAITH	DIOCESAN DATEBOOK						
4:30 PM		LUCY AND FRIENDS	BUG TIME ADVENTURES	TRUTH IN THE HEART	MY CATHOLIC FAMILY	THE FRIAR		
5:00 PM	SUNDAY PASSIONIST MASS	EWTN BOOKMARK	THE CHOICES WE FACE	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR A HAPPY LIFE	THEY MIGHT BE SAINTS	THE REFORMATION	
5:30 PM	SUNDAY MASS FROM ST PETERS CATHEDRAL	SPECIALS						HOPE TO DIE
6:00 PM	(6:15) LENTE PRAYER SERVICE, ST. PETERS CATHEDRAL	EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Live)						LENT, A SEASON OF GRACE
6:30 PM		CATHOLICS COME HOME	REAL LIFE CATHOLICS	CHURCH UNIVERSAL	VATICANO	WHAT IS GOD'S WILL?		
7:00 PM		THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, (Encore)						DAILY MASS
7:30 PM	SUNDAY MASS	THE HOLY ROSARY		POPE'S AUDIENCE	THE HOLY ROSARY			
8:00 PM	(8:20) LITANY OF SACRED HEART	DIOCESAN DATEBOOK						
8:00 PM		THE JOURNEY HOME (Live)	OFOD OR SPECIALS (CAN BE 90 MINUTES) MUSIC AND SPOKEN WORD	EWTN LIVE	THE WORLD OVER (Live)	SPECIALS		
8:30 PM	CATHOLICS COME HOME						EWTN CINEMA	
9:00 PM	LIFE ON THE ROCK	EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Encore)						
9:30 PM	HOLY ROSARY W MOTHER ANGELICA	WEEKLY NOVENA TO ST. ANN	THE CHOICES WE FACE	FOCUS	LIVE WITH PASSION	STATIONS OF THE CROSS(CTV)		
10:00 PM		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	
10:30 PM	EWTN SPECIALS				DEFENDING LIFE	ICONS SPOTLIGHT		
11:00 PM	CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS	BATTLE READY	LONG RIDE HOME	CROSSING THE GOAL	REAL LIFE CATHOLIC	WOMEN OF GRACE HOUR LONG	WEB OF FAITH 2.0	
11:30 PM	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN	WOMEN OF GRACE						JOURNEY THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

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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 Respeto de Reportar el Abuso Sexual de Un Menor de Edad

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

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

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

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

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Scranton parish hosting Lenten Holy Hours, Divine Mercy Sunday event

SCRANTON — Saint Lucy Parish in West Scranton announces a weekly Holy Hour is being observed every Wednesday during Lent from noon to 1 p.m. at Saint Lucy Church, 949 Scranton St.

A celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday will also be celebrated at Saint Lucy's on the Second Sunday of Easter, April 11.

The Divine Mercy Sunday observance begins with sacramental confessions from 1 to 2 p.m., followed by the celebration of Sunday Mass.

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy will be offered at 3 p.m., concluding with benediction and a blessing with the relic of Saint Faustina — the saint of Divine Mercy.

All faithful are invited to both the Lenten Holy Hour and Divine Mercy Sunday devotions. COVID guidelines regarding facial masks and physical distancing will be observed.

Marian Devotion prayer services set

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

Upcoming Marian Devotion events are scheduled as follows:

Monday, March 15, 6 to 6:50 p.m. — Lenten Rosary Devotion at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Seminary Chapel, Laffin; includes Lenten songs & prayers and Litany of the Most Precious Blood.

Monday, March 29, 6 to 7:30 p.m. — Holy Week Rosary Devotion at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, Laffin; includes Holy Week songs & prayers and Litany of the Most Precious Blood.

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

IHM Sisters continue series of virtual prayer evenings

SCRANTON — The Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters will continue their monthly "Evenings of Prayer with the Sisters of IHM" on Wednesday, April 14.

Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the Evenings of Prayer are offered on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. via videostreaming. Participants may access the devotions at: <https://video.ibm.com/channel/ihm-tv>.

The theme for the April 14 Evening of Prayer is "Prayer for our Earth and the Environment."

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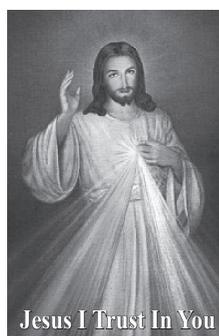
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APRIL 11, 2021

AT

St. Lucy's Church
949 Scranton St., Scranton Pa.

Rev. Sam J. Ferretti, Pastor
Deacon Carmine Mendicino
Divine Mercy Sunday Coordinator

SCHEDULE

1-2:00 PM – Confession • 2:00 PM – Liturgy
3:00 PM – Chaplet, Benediction, and Blessing with Relic of St. Faustina

- All are invited -

COVID-19 regulations will be observed. Masks are required.

For further information call 570-347-9421 (Mon. thru Thurs, 9am to noon)

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Providing for all of God's creatures



Above: Young volunteers manage the “Mary’s Closet” free clothing ministry at the Cultural Center of Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish in Nanticoke. Below left: A trunk full of donated items for Endless Dreams Animals in Huntington Mills in Luzerne County is pictured at Saint Faustina’s, where the parish Confirmation class recently sponsored a donation drive to benefit the sanctuary for rescued pets. Below right: One of the shelter’s more popular residents, Elvira the goat, was on hand for the drop-off day and quickly made friends with Saint Faustina pastor Father Jim Nash, much to the delight of Jess Exley, owner of Endless Dreams Animals.



NANTICOKE — Throughout the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, this year’s Confirmation class at Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish continues to serve the needs of all members of the community — be it two-legged or four-legged.

The students’ latest service projects involved providing for the Mary’s Closet free clothing ministry, operating out of the Saint Faustina Cultural Center at 38 West Church St., Nanticoke, and for the special furry (and not so furry) guests of the Endless Dreams Animal shelter and sanctuary in nearby Huntington Mills.

The parish’s Confirmants have organized contactless drop-off donations for Mary’s Closet, where they volunteer under the guidance of Debbie Jefferies of Saint Faustina’s. The ministry provides clothes and other useful items free of charge to anyone in need.

Clothing of all sizes for infants through adults is available every Wednesday from 9 a.m.

to noon in the basement of the Cultural Center.

There are no income requirements, but CDC guidelines for social distancing and facial coverings are strictly observed.

Drop-off donations for Mary’s Closet may be made every Tuesday, from 3 to 8 p.m., and Wednesday, from 9 a.m. to noon. The ministry accepts new and gently used clothes, clothing accessories and small household items.

Endless Dreams has been a unique member of the Saint Faustina Kowalska family for the past ten years, providing live animals for the parish’s “Miracle of Bethlehem” Christmas play each December. Residents of the animal shelter also continue to educate and entertain youngsters attending the Saint Faustina Vacation Bible School every summer.

Members of the Confirmation class recently coordinated a successful donation drive to benefit Endless Dreams, which garnered much-needed blankets, supplies and feed for the animals that have been abandoned.

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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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Fourth Annual Lenten Pierogi Sale — MARCH 11-22, sponsored by Saint Catherine of Siena Parish in Moscow; homemade pierogi are prepared fresh daily and frozen for pick-up. Featuring potato cheese pierogi: \$8/baker's dozen and \$15/two dozen; cabbage pierogi: \$9/baker's dozen and \$17/two dozen. Orders may be placed Monday thru Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 26 is the final day for order pick-up. To place orders, call Jan at (570) 842-2325, Mary Ann at (570) 842-4960, or Betty Ann at (570) 842-6195.

Lenten Friday Fish Bake — MARCH 12, hosted by St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Williamsport; held from 4 to 6:30 in the parish's Fleming Center. Sale is take-out only. Cost: adults, \$10; children (age 10 & under), \$5. For more information, call (570) 323-9456.

Lenten Friday Food Sale — MARCH 12-26, sponsored by St. Barbara Parish, 212 Memorial St., Exeter; meatless food items sold for take-out only on the Fridays of Lent from 3 to 6 p.m. at the Parish Center in the parking lot of St. Anthony of Padua Church (Erie St.). Menu includes potato pancakes (\$1 each); pierogi (\$5/six); and halushki (\$6/quart). All orders taken at the door (no pre-orders).

Lenten Friday Fish Fry — MARCH 12 & 26, sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 12572 in Scranton. Sale is take-out only; available each day at St. Ann Basilica Shrine, West Scranton. Dinners include two pieces of Alaskan cod, fries, tartar sauce and soft drink; cost: \$8 each. Tickets available at the St. Ann Shrine Gift Shop, online at Scrantonknights.com, or by calling (570) 591-1375.

Lenten Weekend Soup Sale — MARCH 13-28, sponsored by SS. Peter & Paul Parish, 1307 W. Locust St., West Scranton; homemade meatless soups sold during the remaining weekends of Lent in the church hall on Saturday at 4:45 p.m. and Sunday at 11:45 a.m. Clam chowder available every week along with a featured weekly special; soup specials include cream of broccoli, minestrone, tomato with cheese, tortellini, and cream of mushroom.

Take-Out Spaghetti Dinner — MARCH 13 & APRIL 10, sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 356 in Great Bend; held from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Knights' Hall, 65 Kilrow St., Great Bend. Cost: adults, \$8; children, \$4. To reserve advanced orders, call (570) 879-4875. Walk-ins are welcome. Dinner held on the second Saturday of the month, September thru May.

Take-Out Ham & Cabbage Dinner — MARCH 20, sponsored by Holy Family Parish, 828 Main St., Sugar Notch; take-out dinners only, sold from 3 to 6 p.m. Cost: \$12 each. For more information, call the parish rectory at (570) 822-8983.

Take-Out Homemade Pasta & Sausage Dinner — MARCH 21, hosted by St. Maria Goretti Parish, 42 Laflin Road, Laflin; take-out dinners served from noon to 4 p.m. in the church hall (containers provided & facial masks required). Dinner also includes salad, bread roll & dessert. Cost: \$12. For more information, call the parish office (570) 655-8956.

Drive-Thru Ham & Cabbage Dinner — MARCH 21, sponsored by St. Mary of the Lake Parish in Lake Winola; pick-up sale begins at 2 p.m. in the church parking lot, 1872 Dalton Road. Ham & cabbage dinner includes potatoes, carrots, roll/butter, and cookie. Cost: \$10.

Annual Saint Joseph Day Breakfast — MARCH 21, hosted by St. Joseph Melkite Catholic Church, 130 North St. Frances Cabrini Ave., West Scranton; breakfast is take-out only from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Orders include eggs, honey-baked ham, olives, home fries, pancakes and bread. Cost: adults, \$8; children (age 6 to 10), \$4. St. Joseph Bread will be available in two-loaf packages. Advance orders preferred; walk-ins welcome with tickets at the door. For more information or to pre-order, contact melkite.scranton@gmail.com or call the rectory office (570) 343-6092.

Lenten Friday Food Sale — MARCH 26, sponsored by Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, 420 Main Road, Hanover Township; take-out sale of select

meatless food items held from 2 to 7 p.m. in the church hall. Lenten Friday menu includes: pagach, \$3/slice; halushki, \$7/quart; and Manhattan Clam Chowder (red),

\$10/quart. All orders must be placed in advance. For orders, call Georgette at (570) 824-5941, or Carol at (570) 466-5126, or go online at: www.exhc.org.

Gift Card Raffle — APRIL 2021, sponsored by Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, Hanover Township; match PA Lottery number. Call (570) 328-4004.

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Message provided by The Scranton Chapter of the Order of Malta

USCCB Administrative Committee's pastoral message on pandemic

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Life in the United States has “dramatically changed” due to the yearlong pandemic, and alongside it, racial injustices and political divisions have shaken the nation, yet there is “comfort in God’s promise,” the U.S. bishops’ Administrative Committee said in a March 9 pastoral message.

There also “is much to learn from this global suffering,” it said, adding that going forward, people must build on the many acts of sacrifice and kindness exhibited amid the scourge of COVID-19.

March 11 marks one year since the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, “ushering in immense suffering,” the pastoral message said. This was WHO’s first such designation since declaring H1N1 influenza a pandemic in 2009.

To date, 525,000 lives have been lost to the disease just in the U.S., according to data from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Worldwide, the death toll is 2.6 million.

“Many have endured extraordinary hardships: sickness, death, mourning, a lack of food, unstable housing, loss of work and income, struggles with education, separation, abuse, isolation, depression and anxiety,” said the message, approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Administrative Committee during its virtual meeting.

The committee is led by the USCCB president, who is Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez, and is made up of all chairmen of USCCB’s committees and a representative from each U.S. episcopal region. The committee operates as the board of directors.

“We witnessed racial injustices, the diminishment of the poor and the elderly, and painful divisions in our political life,” the Administrative Committee’s message said. “Yet we know, as the Psalms remind us, that we find comfort in God’s promise that gives us life (Ps 119:50).”

The pastoral message pointed to an innumerable “acts of sacrifice” and “acts of kindness” that have helped ameliorate in many ways some of the suffering—physical, emotional and financial—the pandemic has wrought.

“We also saw countless acts of sacrifice by health care workers, first responders, chaplains, those who work in our soup kitchens and homeless shelters, mail carriers, agricultural and grocery store workers, friends and even strangers,” the committee said.

“Countless acts of kindness were offered by so many people, which served to remind us that we are all in this together. For all these acts of sacrifice, we are very grateful,” it continued.

“We are also very grateful to our priests, deacons, religious, teachers, catechists and lay ecclesial ministers who have ministered to the people of God during these difficult times.”

Shortly after WHO declared a pandemic, U.S. archdioceses and dioceses, like their counterparts around the globe, adopted wide-ranging plans to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

“In the pandemic, God has once more revealed us to ourselves,” the committee’s pastoral message said. “As Pope Francis reminded us in St. Peter’s square last year, we are not as powerful or as in control as we thought. Rather than being ashamed of this powerlessness, or crushed by the fear of what we cannot control, our interconnectedness and dependence on God has been revealed.

“As Christians, this is a very familiar lesson: St. Paul reminds us to bear one another’s burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ (Gal 6:2). And that law is the law of love.”

The pandemic also has “revived our sense that we are a global community, and that each of us is indeed each other’s keeper,” it said.

“While the growing availability of vaccines is a clear sign of hope that this pandemic, too, will pass, that hope must be given to every human being on the planet by making the vaccines universally available,” it continued. “Richer nations and pharmaceutical companies must work together to ensure that no nation, no person is left behind.”

The Administrative Committee members said that “renewed by this season of Lent, we ... place our confidence in the Lord, who suffered, was crucified and is resurrected.”

The Catholic Light

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The Church Celebrates the Family

On March 19, 2021, the Church celebrates the fifth anniversary of the publication of Pope Francis’s apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, on the beauty and joy of love in the family. On this same day, Pope Francis will launch the year “Amoris Laetitia Family,” which will conclude on June 26, 2022, during the World Meeting of Families in Rome.

The “Amoris Laetitia Family” year will include forums, symposiums, video projects and catechesis as well as resources for family spirituality, pastoral formation and marriage preparation.

YOU can feed 250 people!

While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect our community, one of the realities that hasn’t changed is the fact that many people don’t have the resources to feed themselves or their families.



Fortunately the Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen in Scranton remains able to alleviate this need. Since 1978, the Kitchen has been serving a free, hot, nutritious meal to 250 men, women and children each day. In addition to the daily midday meal, the Kitchen also provides an evening meal on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The Mid-Valley Outreach Program offers weekly meals in Carbondale, Archbald and Olyphant. The Kitchen also operates the Saint Francis Client-Choice Food Pantry and the Saint Francis Free Clothing Store.

During the pandemic, the Kitchen has been providing meals in take-out containers to ensure that anyone who needs a meal receives one in a safe manner.

The annual Host-for-a-Day Campaign enables the Kitchen to continue its mission. For a donation of \$100 or more, an individual, family, business, community organization or faith-based group can help to sponsor the day’s meal.

You can be a Host-for-a-Day:

Please help us feed the hungry. Call the Kitchen at (570) 342-5556, ext. 3

Or you may send your gift to:

St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen

500 Penn Ave. • Scranton, PA 18509

Donations can also be made online at: www.stfranciskitchen.org

Thank you for your generosity!



This year the Appreciation Reception that concludes the campaign will be marked with a Virtual Celebration consisting of a pre-recorded program. The release date will be Wednesday, April 28, at 6 p.m. on: [facebook.com/stfranciskitchen](https://www.facebook.com/stfranciskitchen). To help sponsor the Virtual Reception, call the Kitchen at 570-342-5556