



# *The Catholic Light*

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

**Weekly E-Newsletter**

**April 1, 2021**

***He is Risen!***  
**Bishop Bambera's 2021 Easter Message**



Dear Friends,

In the Gospel from Saint Mark that will be proclaimed during the great Vigil of Easter this year, we are told that women, who were followers of Jesus, went to his tomb to anoint his body in the early hours of that first Easter day. They had witnessed the torture and death of their friend and teacher whom they had come to know as their Lord and Master. Their grief was mixed with pain, uncertainty and fear for themselves, their families and friends. Yet, despite the obstacles that they faced, they made their way to the tomb of Jesus.

Pope Francis reflected on the faith of these first believers.

“In this situation, the women did not allow themselves to be paralyzed. They did not give in to the gloom of sorrow and regret, they did not morosely close in on themselves, or flee from reality. . . . They did not stop loving; in the darkness of their hearts, they lit a flame of mercy,” Pope Francis said. “They responded to sorrow with trust in the Lord. And then they met Jesus, the giver of all hope . . . who proclaimed: ‘Do not be afraid.’”

Through their encounter with the risen Jesus, the lives of those who ventured to his tomb just days after his crucifixion were changed forever! Their lives were changed because God had redirected the course of human history through the resurrection of his Son. By embracing our humanity, Jesus not only gave us hope by identifying with us in his life, suffering and death. He also provided us a way forward amid the pain and struggles of our lives by defeating death through the power of the resurrection!

A year ago at this time, it seemed as if our world had suddenly come to a crashing halt! Not unlike what was experienced by the first followers of Jesus, we were confronted with unexpected suffering and death. We were uncertain of how best to respond. We hid in our homes for fear of what we might experience, not only from unknown individuals but also from neighbors, co-workers and those whom we love the most. While our churches were closed, we prayed fervently that the wave of suffering enveloping our world might stop before it crashed into our lives.

Even though our days found us consumed with uncertainty, pain and confusion, we took great comfort in the example of healthcare workers, first responders, clergy, women and men religious, essential workers, volunteers and so many others. They consoled us and more importantly, they inspired us, didn't they? Like the women who ventured to the tomb of Jesus on that first Easter day, these selfless souls would not allow

themselves to be paralyzed, but instead, worked tirelessly to keep the flame of hope burning in our lives. And so did all of you! More than you might realize, you provided hope. In so many and different ways, you responded to the needs of your brothers and sisters and you served generously and selflessly.

In short, my friends, through your faith and belief in the resurrection of Jesus and all that it means for our lives, you made as your own the teaching of Pope Francis in his most recent encyclical letter, *Fratelli tutti*, that reminds us, “No one is saved alone; we can only be saved together.” This reality, my friends, that you and so many have lived and experienced especially during this past year, was born in an empty tomb in the initial moments of the life of our Church on that first Easter morning.

On Palm Sunday, just a few days ago, Pope Francis reminded us of the power of the resurrection in the midst of the uncertainty and pain of these challenging days.

“God is at our side in every affliction, in every fear; no evil, no sin will ever have the final word. God triumphs . . . through the wood of the cross,” he said.

Therein, my friends, is what we believe as Christians and the real blessing and gift of Easter. The risen Jesus alone has the power to carry us through the darkest of days to discover consolation, joy and the true meaning and purpose of our lives as his people.

To over 85 catechumens and candidates who await baptism and full communion in the Catholic Church, please know of our prayers for you. Your openness to the Spirit of God is cause for great joy. Welcome to our Catholic family. In so many ways, you are witnessing the Church at its best as so many selflessly serve their brothers and sisters.

My friends, thankfully we are beginning to see glimmers of light and hope emerge throughout our world, even as we continue to confront that challenges that we have faced for well over a year. During this Holy Week, I pray that we will all come to appreciate more deeply than ever the fact that we are indeed blessed in more ways than we might believe or imagine. May we trust in God’s promise to sustain us and dispel our deepest fears. And may we open our hearts to the risen Jesus and allow him to fill them with his love and peace.

This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad!

Faithfully yours in the Risen Christ,

*Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.  
Bishop of Scranton*

Read Bishop Bambera's Easter Message on the Diocese of Scranton website

## **Bishop Bambera expresses gratitude to priests during Chrism Mass**



SCRANTON – Referencing Psalm 133, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera began his homily during this year’s Chrism Mass by saying how wonderful it was to have all of the priests from across the 11 counties of the Diocese of Scranton together in one place.

“It is so very good to be with all of you,” Bishop Bambera said. “Thank you for your selfless, creative and faithful ministry to this local Church.”

The Chrism Mass, held on Tuesday, March 30, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter, was the first time that priests have been able to all come together in more than a year – since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We have all been wounded and broken during this past year. If we’re honest, we must admit that we’ve been confronted like never before in our lives,” the bishop added.

[Read the Full Story](#)

### *Local Paschal Triduum Services on CTV*

- ✦ 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.



**DIOCESE OF SCRANTON**

CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will broadcast Triduum and Easter services from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton which will be celebrated by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera.

For a direct link to any of the Masses for the Paschal Triduum, please click on the link below.

[Watch Catholic Television Broadcasts from the Cathedral of Saint Peter](#)





## **Focus on the example of Jesus, Bishop Bambera says on Palm Sunday**

SCRANTON – As Laura Welde celebrated Palm Sunday Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter on March 28, she reflected on how much has changed since Holy Week last year.

“It is a blessing because last year we weren’t able to come to church and this year we are able to come and I really missed it last year,” she said.

The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant and homilist for the 12:15 p.m. Mass on Palm Sunday at the Cathedral of Saint Peter. Safety protocols, which included masks and physical distancing, were strictly enforced.

Speaking with the media after Mass, the bishop said it is extremely important for the Church to celebrate the Eucharist communally.

“It was so meaningful to be able to see as many people as we did here today, coming together. The Eucharist is meant to be celebrated as a community. While we were able to do that from afar (through livestream Masses and Catholic Television), it clearly resonates with all of our spirits to be able to join with brothers and sisters of faith to affirm our beliefs,” Bishop Bambera said.

[Read the Full Story](#)



## **With Easter joy, Diocesan faithful return to pews for the holiest of seasons**

SCRANTON — “Hallelujah!”

Faithful of the Diocese of Scranton will undoubtedly be filled with “greater joy than ever during this Easter season” as churches once again open wide their doors for the most solemn time of the year in the Christian world.

As the coronavirus pandemic suspended in-person participation at houses of worship and *The Catholic Light* front-page headline at this time last year read “Holy Week at Home,” Catholics had to resort to social media to “attend” traditional Holy Week and Easter services and liturgies celebrated before empty pews.

It has been a long year indeed.

But the hope of Easter takes on a whole new meaning in 2021 as worshippers are joyfully returning to their rightful place to

personally take part in the sacred ceremonies, both in person and as faith communities, beginning with the start of Holy Week on Palm Sunday.

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## **Sharing the Gospel means embracing the cross, pope says at Chrism Mass**

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Living and preaching the Gospel always involves embracing "the cross," whether it be in the form of misunderstanding, hostility or outright persecution, Pope Francis told Rome priests gathered for the chrism Mass.

In the life of Jesus and in the lives of his disciples today, "the hour of joyful proclamation, the hour of persecution and the hour of the cross go together," the pope said at the Mass April 1 at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter's Basilica.

Pope Francis did not celebrate a chrism Mass last year because Italy, and much of the world, was in the midst of the first huge wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.



But even with vaccines being distributed and death rates dropping, Italy was under a modified lockdown, so only about 75 priests representing their confreres in the Diocese of Rome were able to attend the Mass with their bishop, the pope.

[Read the Full Story](#)



## **"Food is not a luxury, it is a necessity" Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen holds Easter food distribution**

WILKES-BARRE – Just five days before Easter, Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen and Food Pantry opened its doors to the community for a special holiday food distribution on March 30.

“A lot of people are struggling. We’re here to help them and support them,” Kitchen Director Mike Cianciotta said. “Food is not a luxury. It is a necessity.”

The Easter food distribution was open to anyone in need, no pre-registration was required. It took place at the Kitchen and Food Pantry property on East Jackson Street.

[Read the Full Story](#)

# APRIL Is Child Abuse Prevention Month



## **Bishop Bambera to celebrate Healing Mass for Survivors of Abuse**

The month of April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. It is a time to recognize the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child mistreatment.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will celebrate a Healing Mass for Survivors of Abuse at 12:10 p.m. on Thursday, April 8, 2021 at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

The Mass is open to the public following COVID-19 safety protocols. No reservations are required.

The Mass will also be broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton and livestream on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel and social media platforms.

For More Information

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