



GoodNewsNotes

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON OFFICE FOR PARISH LIFE

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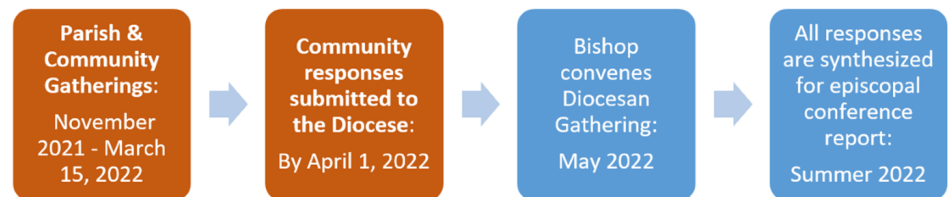


Synod on Synodality

By calling for the Synod on Synodality, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, is inviting the Church to *gather* and to *listen* to each and every Catholic to find the Church's path forward at this time in our history.

The Diocese of Scranton has officially launched the listening phase of the Synod on Synodality. Details, resources (available in both English and Spanish), as well as informational webinars for this three-pronged approach to listening to the many voices of the faithful in the Church of Scranton can be found on the diocesan website at [this link](#). While the synod survey and phone line can be accessed on the diocesan website, **all parishes are highly recommended to offer a parish gathering** that integrates prayer and reflection in discussing the ten themes of the Synod.

The diocesan listening phase will follow the following timeline:



**World Day of the Poor
Sunday, November 14**

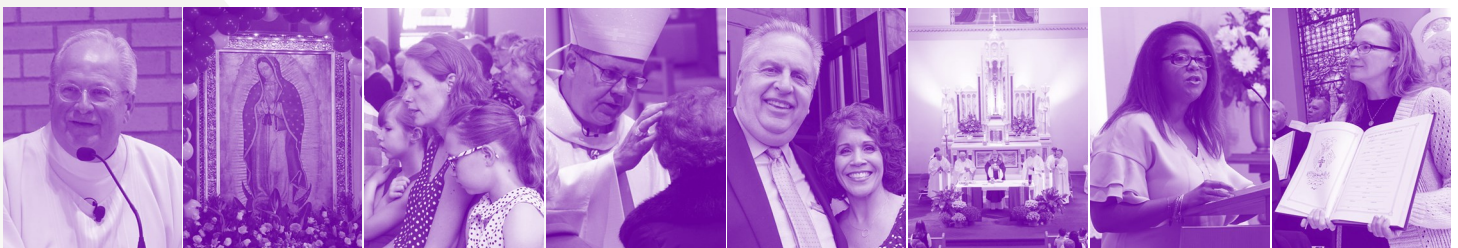
**National Catholic Youth
Conference (NCYC)
November 18-20
Indianapolis, IN**

**Diocesan Annual
Appeal Mass
for Donor Intentions
Sunday, November 21
at 10:00AM
Cathedral of St. Peter**

As always, the Office for Parish Life is ready to assist you every step of the way in the process. Please contact us at synod@dioceseofscranton.org for more information, and pray for the fruitfulness of this synodal journey!

PRAYER FOR THE SYNOD

*We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.
With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.
We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.
Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.
All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.*



Formed

Unlimited Access to Life-Changing Catholic Content

Office for Parish Life is pleased to announce that all parishes in the Diocese of Scranton that do not presently have a FORMED subscription may register to participate in a special grant opportunity to reduce the cost of a one-year subscription by as much as \$400.00. Parishes that currently have a FORMED subscription are eligible for reduced renewal pricing as well.

A great big thank you to those parishes that joined us for our webinar Advent Journey with Formed. We learned so many great ways to utilize Formed over Advent. Don Walter from Formed will join us for a question and answer session about Formed on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 11AM.

If your parish has already sign up for Formed, watch your email for our next Webinar, "Celebrating Christmas with the Holy Family," on Wednesday, December 1st at 11:00AM.

For those who are interested in Formed but have not signed up yet, the grant through Augustine Institute has been extended until November 15th to help with the cost of the subscription.

For more information about Formed, please contact Jacki Douglas at jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org or at (570) 207-2213 x-1100.

Creating a Thriving Faith Formation Program

It is not surprising that we are experiencing adverse effects from the pandemic in our catechetical programs. After the past year and half of navigating the pandemic, it has become ever more clear, that we must fully invest in our catechetical programs. With this in mind, the Office for Parish Life has launched a new initiative called "Rekindling Our Faith."

The overall content of this program will help DREs and catechists to:

- Get practical ideas for faith formation programs (prayer ideas, lesson planning ideas, tips for engaging the whole family in catechesis etc.)
 - Prioritize the necessary time they need to renew themselves with prayer
 - (Re)connect with other DREs and Catechists in the diocese, to share ideas and to support one another as they journey together in catechetical ministry
- "Rekindling Our Faith" will be an effective and enjoyable way to help your DRE and catechists to grow more comfortable in teaching the faith, while also giving them a chance to grow in their own vocation. We appreciate all that you do to encourage the Director

of Religious Education and Catechists of your parish as they grow in missionary discipleship. Watch your email for upcoming dates. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jacki Douglas.

Remote Networking Meetings

Save the Dates—We are excited to continue our Remote Network Meetings for DREs, and Youth Ministers. These meetings will keep with the focus that we began at the onset of the pandemic. We will center on Lifelong Faith Formation through Catechesis, youth ministry and parish life whether virtually or in person. Members of the Office for Parish Life team will be on hand to lead our discussions and to keep all parishes well-informed of upcoming events. We would love to have every parish represented. So we invite each of you to join us every other Wednesday at 11AM. Our next meeting date is Wednesday, December 15th. For more information on how to stay connected, please contact Jacki Douglas.

Year of the Family—Family Faith Formation

Looking for a way to help your parish envision and design family faith formation?

Announcing a New Family Faith Formation Program for Diocese of Scranton Parishes:

Leading Families Home Through Faith Formation

Designed for Catechetical Leaders

Presented by **Tom East**

Build your own family faith formation program with our help.



Amoris Laetitia Family
Year 2021 - 2022

Join **Tom East** for the first workshop for catechetical leaders and teams to promote the vision and practice of Family Lifelong Faith Formation in the Diocese of Scranton. This workshop will provide instruction for lifelong faith formation, an experience of a faith festival, and all the tools for implementing the faith festival in your parish.

This first of three workshops is scheduled for **Saturday, November 13, 2021 from 9:00AM-3:00PM** at the **Diocesan Pastoral Center in Scranton**. It is going to be a great day! **The link to sign up for this workshop is on the Diocese of Scranton website.** The cost for the day is \$30. Lunch and all necessary materials will be provided.

For questions, contact Jacki Douglas at jdouglas@dioceseofscranton.org or call 570-207-2213 ext. 1100.

Liturgical Guidance for Christmas 2021

The following liturgical guidance for the Christmas season was sent to pastors and parish life coordinators and is re-printed here for your information.

- Any of the current diocesan guidance regarding public Masses during the COVID-19 pandemic will also apply to parish observances during the Christmas season. For reference, the current COVID-19 guidelines can be located [here](#). If there are any updates prior to Christmas, they will be communicated to you.
- Celebrating an earlier Christmas Vigil Mass, which was permitted last year, is **not** foreseen for this year unless something quite unexpected surfaces relative to the COVID-19 pandemic. **As of now, the earliest time that the Christmas Vigil Mass may be celebrated is 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 24, 2021.**
- Parishes can hold Christmas Masses in larger spaces such as a nearby gymnasium or auditorium and/or are encouraged to utilize any available overflow areas (church basements and halls, etc.) available to them to livestream Mass broadcasts to avoid overcrowding in churches. Parishes should continue to be sensitive to the overall time that people are gathered in church for Christmas Masses.
- Since Christmas falls on a Saturday this year, it is **not** recommended that parishes celebrate a Vigil Mass for Sunday (Feast of the Holy Family) on Christmas evening.
- Because the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God (January 1) falls on a Saturday this year, the obligation to attend Mass is abrogated, however, a reduced Holy Day schedule **could** be considered on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. **If a parish chooses to celebrate a Vigil Mass for Sunday (the Solemnity of Epiphany of the Lord) in the evening on New Year's Day, the proper orations for the Vigil of Epiphany and readings for Epiphany would be used at that Mass since it is a higher-ranking feast than the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God.**
- Parishes may plan holiday events, fundraisers and other activities, but should continue to be cautious, keeping health and safety as a top priority – especially if the event is indoors. Planning should remain flexible and parishes should make sure COVID-19 safety protocols are in place. Risk factors that parishes should consider include: the number of COVID-19 cases in the community, the setting and length of the event and the number of people expected. Any event that might take place in a Diocesan Catholic School is subject to guidelines established by Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Catholic Schools Office.

Virtual "Check-In" with Music Ministers

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted many parish activities, especially music ministry. The Office for Parish Life and the Scranton Chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians invites all parish music directors, choir directors, organists, cantors, choir members to participate in a virtual "check-in" event on **Monday, November 15, 2021 at 7:00PM**. The focus of the evening will be to discuss where we are currently as music ministers, to share what we have learned as a result of the pandemic, and to discern where we go from here. To register please [click here](#) or email David Baloga, Director for Worship at David-Baloga@dioceseofscranton.org.

Advent/Christmas Liturgical Resource

The Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) has compiled an Advent/Christmas Liturgical Resource that includes links to its webinars on the Seasons of Advent and Christmas, a sample reconciliation service, music suggestions, liturgical calendar advisories for Advent and Christmas Time, and more. To access this free resource, please [click here](#).



Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation

The University of Dayton VLCFF is adding a 'bonus' 8th Cycle in English, usually they only have 7 per year. This Cycle will offer two options for enrichment during the Advent Season: **Advent: A Holy Waiting** and **Let This Be the Time: Spiritual Essentials for Life's Second Act**. Session Dates for Cycle 8 are November 28 - December 25, 2021, with open registration until November 25.



PROGRAMA SEMANAL

Del Ministerio Hispano de la Diócesis de Scranton

**CRECIENDO & FORTALECIENDO
NUESTRA FE CATÓLICA**
CONOCE, AMA & VIVE TU FE

SÁBADOS por LA MEGA
11 AM - 12 PM 95.3 FM WILKES BARRE
94.9 FM SCRANTON

 Ministerio Hispano - Diócesis de Scranton



DESCARGA LA APLICACIÓN

COMMUNITY

"I CALL us to be servant leaders who build COMMUNITY through hospitality, respect, inclusion and holiness."

Recording Now Available: A Conversation with Deacon Ed Shoener

Responding to Suicide: A Pastoral Handbook for Catholic Leaders, majorly attributed to Deacon Ed Shoener of the Cathedral of Saint Peter Parish, has been named Resource of the Year by the Association of Catholic Publishers.

Deacon Ed shared information about the book, *Responding to Suicide...* and the companion book, *When a Loved One Dies by Suicide*. Deacon Ed — one of the founders of the Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers — reflected on the spiritual insights he gained after losing a loved one to suicide and he discussed the support that pastoral leaders can provide to individuals and communities who are affected by suicide.

Deacon Ed also facilitates a parish grief support group through the Cathedral of Saint Peter Parish and has great wisdom, experience, and knowledge to share. This was a wonderful learning opportunity for those involved in parish grief and bereavement ministry, many of whom are ministering to those affected by losses due to suicide.

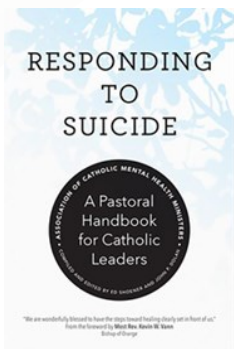
The recording of the conversation is available [here](#). (The passcode is 4d=J7H@P) If you have any questions about this event or the recording, contact Jen Housel, jhousel@dioceseofscranton.org, 570-207-2213 x 1104.

Additionally, Deacon Ed and the Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers collaborated with the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#) for Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for November.

We pray that people who suffer from depression or burn-out will find support and a light that opens them up to life.

The message of Pope Francis' prayer intention addresses a central issue in the lives of millions of people: mental health. In the video, he explains that in many cases, "sadness, apathy, and spiritual tiredness end up dominating people's lives, which are overloaded due to the rhythm of life today."

To [see the Holy Father's video](#) and to learn more about the Pope's prayer intention for November, click [here](#).



Join Us for a Live, In-Person Conversation with Deacon Ed Shoener!

The event will take place on Wednesday, December 1 at 6:30 PM at the Heaven and Earth Café at the corner of Mulberry Street and Wyoming Avenue in Scranton

Deacon Ed will reprise some of the same information shared through our webinar, and he will also address the ways the Holiday Season can impact Mental Health, Suicide, and Grief issues.

If you have any questions about this event or to register for it, please contact Jen Housel, jhousel@dioceseofscranton.org, 570-207-2213 x 1104.

November Is National Adoption Month

"To adopt a child is a great work of love. When it is done, much is given, but much is also received. It is a true exchange of gifts." — St. John Paul II, *Address to Adoptive Families*

The Catholic Church recognizes the beauty of adoption as a reflection of God the Father adopting us as His sons and daughters. To learn more about adoption and foster care, click [here](#).



Fortieth Anniversary of *Familiaris consortio*

November 22 is the 40th anniversary of the release of Saint John Paul II's letter to families, *Familiaris consortio*. Click [here](#) to refamiliarize yourself with this beautiful letter.

Thanksgiving Week (November 21-27) Is Also National Family Week

For more than 45 years, the week including Thanksgiving has been proclaimed National Family Week. It has been proclaimed by every President of the United States since the early 1970s. National Family Week is a time to be thankful for the family as a national heritage and resource.

"The family is important, and it is necessary for the survival of humanity. Without the family, the cultural survival of the human race would be at risk. The family,...is the foundation." — Pope Francis, Radio Interview, July 27th, 2013

As we continue to observe the [Year of Amoris Laetitia Family](#), consider particular ways in which you will encourage, support, and show gratitude to your family and to the families in your parish and community during National Family Week.

SERVICE

¡La Semana Nacional de Concientización para las Vocaciones es del 7 al 13 de noviembre! Oremos por todos aquellos que discernen su vocación como santos sacerdotes, diáconos y mujeres y hombres consagrados.

WHO LIVES IN POVERTY USA? All those who make less than the Federal government's official poverty threshold... which for a family of four is about \$25,700. People working at minimum wage, even holding down multiple jobs. Seniors living on fixed incomes. Wage earners suddenly out of work. Millions of families everywhere from our cities to rural communities. Poverty does not strike all demographics equally. For example, in 2018, 10.6% of men, and 12.9% of women lived in Poverty USA. Along the same lines, the poverty rate for married couples in 2018 was only 4.7% - but the poverty rate for single-parent families with no wife present was 12.7%, and for single-parent families with no husband present was 24.9%. In 2018, the poverty rate for people living with a disability was 25.7%. That's nearly 4 million people living with a disability—in poverty. Learn more about how you can encounter, educate and act at PovertyUSA.org



Catholic Campaign for Human Development

On Sunday, November 21st, the special collection supports the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. Twenty-five percent of funds we collect will stay here in the diocese for antipoverty projects. The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is the national anti-poverty program of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, working to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ "*... to bring glad tidings to the poor ... liberty to captives ... sight to the blind, and let the oppressed go free.*" (Luke 4:18)

The belief that those who are directly affected by unjust systems and structures have the best insight into knowing how to change them is central to CCHD. CCHD works to break the cycle of poverty by helping low-income people participate in decisions that affect their lives, families and communities. CCHD offers a hand up, not a hand out.



The Diocese of Scranton is excited to join the national #iGiveCatholic celebration of Catholic philanthropy!

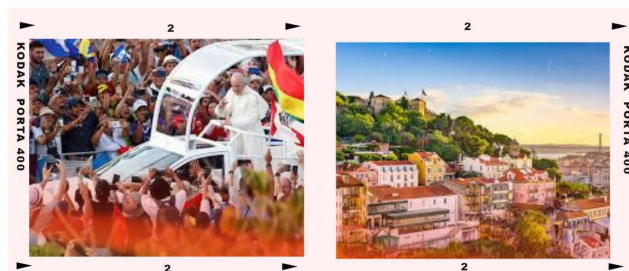
Make a gift of at least \$20 between November 15th through November 30th and be entered to win fabulous prizes like a Yeti Hopper backpack cooler, a Blackstone tabletop griddle, a deck heater, and more! Plus, there are cash incentives for your parish as well.

Follow us on Facebook at [@iGiveCatholicDioceseofScranton](https://www.facebook.com/iGiveCatholicDioceseofScranton), or visit scranton.igivecatholic.org to learn more and to make your gift.



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

WORLD YOUTH DAY PILGRIMAGE



Young Adults from the Diocese of Scranton will be heading to World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon!

For More Information, Please Contact
Shannon Kowalski at
Skowalski@Dioceseofscranton.org

OPL Month At A Glance

November 2021

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|-----|---|--|-----|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 Jubilee Mass for Men and Women Religious 12:15PM Cathedral Leave a Mark Mass 5:00PM Cathedral | 8 | 9 | 10 DRE/YM Remote Networking Meeting with Don Walter from Formed 11AM | 11 Veterans Day | 12 | 13 Leading Families Home through Faith Formation 9AM-3PM DPC |
| National Vocation Awareness Week | | | | | | |
| 14 World Day of the Poor | 15 Virtual "Check-In" for Music Ministers 7:00PM | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | | | | National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC), Indianapolis | | |
| 21 Christ the King Diocesan Annual Appeal Mass for Donor Intentions Cathedral 10:00AM | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 Thanksgiving VLCFF Registration for Season 8 Closes | 26 | 27 |
| 28 First Sunday of Advent VLCFF Season 8 Begins | 29 | 30 | Webinar: "Celebrating Christmas with the Holy Family" Dec. 1 at 11:00AM | | | |

OPL TEAM MEMBERS

Diocesan Secretary for Parish Life:

Director for WORD and Lifelong Faith Formation: **Jacki Douglas**

Director for WORSHIP: **David Baloga**

Director for SERVICE and Mission: **Shannon Kowalski**

Coordinator for Pilgrimages: **Fr. Andrew Hvozdovic**

Director for COMMUNITY and Family Development: **Jen Housel**

Coordinator for Ecumenical/Interfaith Relations: **Msgr. Vincent Grimalia**

Coordinator for Lay Ministry Formation: **Kitty Scanlan**

Coordinator for Hispanic Ministry: **José Flores**

Consultant for Pastoral Council Development: **Ann Marie Cawley**

Diocesan Pastoral Center Manager: **Kitty Scanlan**

Administrative Assistant: **Jennifer Andres**



Office for Parish Life
 330 Wyoming Ave.
 Scranton, PA 18503
 phone: 570-207-2213
 fax: 570-207-2204
oplgeneral@dioceseofscranton.org
www.dioceseofscranton.org



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