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“To us a son is given”

2021 CHRISTMAS MESSAGE



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.”

In his Christmas homily a year ago, Pope Francis reflected upon this familiar passage from the prophet Isaiah: “To us a son is given.”

Pope Francis began, “We often hear it said that the greatest joy in life is the birth of a child. It is something extraordinary and it changes everything ... That is what Christmas is: the birth of Jesus is the ‘newness’ that enables us to be reborn each year and to find, in him, the strength needed to face every trial. Why? Because his birth is for us – for me, for you, for all of us, for everyone ... Yet what do those words – for us – really mean? They mean that God came into the world as a child to make us children of God. What a magnificent gift! This day, God amazes us and says to each of us: Are you tempted to feel you were a mistake? God tells you, ‘No, you are my child!’ Do you have a feeling of failure or inadequacy, the fear that you will never emerge from the dark tunnel of trial? God says to you, ‘Have courage, I am with you.’ This is the starting point for any rebirth. This is the undying heart of our hope, the incandescent core that gives warmth and meaning to our life.”

The Holy Father continued: “Jesus, you are the Child who makes me a child. You love me as I am, not as I imagine myself to be; this I know! In embracing you, the Child of the manger, I once more embrace my life. In welcoming you, the Bread of life, I too desire to give my life. You, my Savior, teach me to serve. You, who did not leave me alone, help me to comfort your brothers and sisters, for you know that, from this night forward, all are my brothers and sisters.”

Pope Francis’ words capture so beautifully both the sublime gift that we have been given in the birth of Jesus and the responsibility that is ours to give the same gift of his life to others.

Through the Incarnation, God has immersed himself in our human condition – not because of our righteousness – but because of his grace and mercy. This fundamental belief in the limitless love of God, given human shape and form in Jesus’ birth, confronts the brokenness of our lives with hope. It beckons us to move beyond the division and fear that have engulfed our world, our Church and our lives to recognize an essential reality of humankind: we are all far more similar than we are different. As such, we are all brothers and sisters who, on our own, are powerless to save ourselves. And we are all in need of the heart of Christmas and the power and presence of Jesus – born to save us, to give us life and to enfold us in his peace.

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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.

POLICY STATEMENT

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Christmas Broadcasts on CTV



Tuesday, December 21, 2021

The Miracle of Bethlehem, 8:00 p.m.

A Christmas play depicting the life of Jesus from his birth in Bethlehem to his resurrection, depicted in narration, music and dance. Presented by St. Faustina Kowalska Roman Catholic Church in Nanticoke. This presentation consists of dozens of cast members and many volunteers who help with the production.

Encores: Wednesday, December 22, 10:30 a.m. and Monday, December 27, 10:30 a.m.

Friday, December 24, 2021

Solemn Mass of Christmas Eve in Rome, 1:30 p.m.

Live from Vatican City, Pope Francis presides over Midnight Mass at Saint Peter's Basilica.

Encore: Saturday, December 25, 4:00 a.m.

Pontifical Vigil Mass of Christmas from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, 4:00 p.m.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist for the Solemn Pontifical Vigil Mass of Christmas live from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

The EWTN Family Christmas Special, 8:00 p.m.

The Choir of the Eternal Word Television Network performs twelve timeless Christmas hymns on location at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament. With special introduction by Fr. Joseph Mary Wolfe, M.F.V.A.

Blessed Christmas, 9:00 p.m.

Jesus came to bring us eternal life and through Him we're transformed and divinized. Discover the gift that we are being given.

Choral Meditations on the Nativity, 10:00 p.m.

Experience the uplifting sounds of the Choir of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, as they present an evening of Choral Meditations to celebrate the Nativity, live on Christmas Eve.

Solemn Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve, 10:30 p.m.

Live from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

Saturday, December 25, 2021

Solemn Mass & Office of Readings from the Holy Land, 1:00 a.m.

From Saint Catherine's Church in the Holy Land, celebrate this Solemn Mass at Christmas.

"Urbi Et Orbi:" Pope Francis' Christmas Message & Blessing to the World, 6:00 a.m.

Pope Francis delivers his Christmas blessing to the city of Rome and the world.

Encore: Saturday, December 25, 3:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

Solemn Mass of Christmas from EWTN, 8:00 a.m.

The Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word celebrate the Solemn Christmas Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Chapel in Irondale, Alabama.

Solemn Mass of Christmas from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, 10:00 a.m.

Celebrate the Solemn Mass of Christmas Day live from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Encore: Saturday, December 25, 4:00 p.m.

Solemn Mass of Christmas Day, Noon

The Solemn Mass of Christmas from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

Encore: Sunday, December 26, Midnight

Sunday, December 26, 2021

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, 10:00 a.m.

Celebrate Mass for the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, live from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Encore: Sunday, December 26, 6:00 p.m.

“A nosotros se nos da un hijo”

MENSAJE DE NAVIDAD 2021

Obispo Joseph C. Bambera

Queridos hermanos y hermanas:

“Porque un niño nos ha nacido, un hijo nos es dado; sobre su hombro descansa el dominio. Lo nombran Consejero Maravilloso, Dios-Héroe, Padre-Eterno, Príncipe de Paz”.

En su homilía de Navidad hace un año, Francisco reflexionó sobre este conocido pasaje del profeta Isaías: “Se nos ha dado un hijo.”

El Papa Francisco comenzó: “A menudo escuchamos decir que la mayor alegría en la vida es el nacimiento de un niño. Es algo extraordinario y lo cambia todo... Eso es la Navidad: el nacimiento de Jesús es la ‘novedad’ que nos permite renacer cada año y encontrar en él la fuerza necesaria para afrontar cada prueba. ¿Por qué? Porque su nacimiento es para nosotros, para mí, para ti, para todos... Sin embargo, ¿qué significan realmente esas palabras, para nosotros? Quieren decir que Dios vino al mundo como un niño para hacernos hijos de Dios. ¡Qué magnífico regalo! Este día, Dios nos asombra y nos dice a cada uno de nosotros: ¿Estás tentado a sentirte que eres un error? Dios te dice: ‘No, tu eres mi ¡hijo!’ ¿Tienes un sentimiento de fracaso o insuficiencia, miedo de no salir nunca del oscuro túnel de la prueba? Dios te dice: “Ten ánimo, yo estoy contigo”. Este es el punto de partida para cualquier renacimiento. Este es el corazón eterno de nuestra esperanza, el núcleo incandescente que le da calidez y significado a nuestra vida”.

El Santo Padre prosiguió: “Jesús, tú eres el Niño que me hace niño. Me amas como soy, no como me imagino que soy; ¡Esto lo sé! Al abrazarte, el Niño del pesebre, una vez más abrazo mi vida. Al darte la bienvenida, Pan de vida, también yo deseo dar mi vida. Tú, mi Salvador, enséñame a servir. Tú, que no me dejaste solo, ayúdame a consolar a tus hermanos y hermanas, porque sabes que, desde esta noche en adelante, todos son mis hermanos y hermanas”.

Las palabras del Papa Francisco capturan de manera tan hermosa el don sublime que se nos ha dado en el nacimiento de Jesús y la responsabilidad que tenemos de dar el mismo don de su vida a los demás.

A través de la Encarnación, Dios se ha sumergido en nuestra condición humana, no por nuestra justicia, sino por su gracia y misericordia. Esta creencia fundamental en el amor ilimitado de Dios, dado forma humana en el nacimiento de Jesús, confronta el quebrantamiento de nuestras vidas con esperanza. Se nos invita a ir más allá de la división y el miedo que han envuelto a nuestro mundo, nuestra Iglesia y nuestras vidas para reconocer una realidad esencial de la humanidad: somos todos mucho más similares que diferentes. Como tal, somos todos hermanos y hermanas que, por nuestra cuenta, no tienen poder para salvarnos. Y todos necesitamos el corazón de la Navidad y el poder y la presencia de Jesús, nacido para salvarnos, darnos vida y envolvernos en su paz.

La forma más segura de encontrarnos con el poder salvador y la presencia de Jesús, particularmente en medio de estos tiempos inquietantes, es buscarlo en aquellos lugares donde nos ha dicho que lo encontraríamos. Reconocer y abrazar a Jesús mientras alimentamos a los hambrientos, cuidamos a los enfermos, abrazamos a los marginados, perdonamos con generosidad, amamos incondicionalmente y acogemos en nuestros corazones su presencia viva en la Sagrada Eucaristía, fuente y cumbre de nuestras vidas.

Hermanos y hermanas, se nos ha dicho dónde buscar para encontrar aceptación, perdón y misericordia y hemos aprendido lo que es necesario para que podamos dar vida a Jesús en un mundo que necesita tan desesperadamente experimentar su gracia salvadora. Durante estos días que continúan desafiando nuestra paz, oremos por la sabiduría y la humildad para abrir nuestra vida a este gran misterio de fe que celebramos a través de la Encarnación de Cristo. ¡Solo en eso, encontraremos la verdadera y duradera razón de nuestra esperanza!

Con gratitud por el privilegio de servir como su Obispo y con oraciones por una Navidad santa y bendita para usted, su familia y todos sus seres queridos, soy

Fielmente suyo en Cristo,

+ Joseph C. Bambera

Reverendísimo Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.
Obispo de Scranton



The Christmas tree decorates St. Peter's Square after a lighting ceremony at the Vatican Dec. 11, 2021.
(CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Bishop Bambera's 2021 Christmas Message

Continued from Page 1

The surest way for us to encounter the saving power and presence of Jesus – particularly in the midst of these unsettling times – is to seek him out in those places where he has told us he will be found. Recognize and embrace Jesus as we feed the hungry, care for the sick, embrace the outcast, forgive generously, love unconditionally and welcome into our hearts his living presence in the Holy Eucharist, the source and summit of our lives.

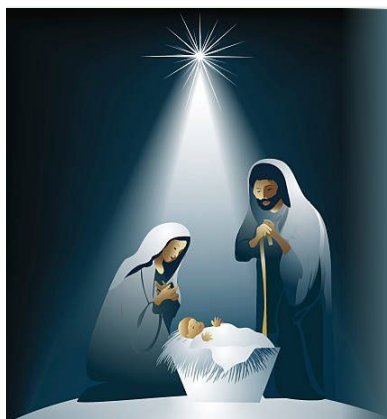
Brothers and sisters, we have been told where to look to find acceptance, forgiveness and mercy and we have learned what is necessary in order for us to give life to Jesus in a world that so desperately needs to experience his saving grace. During these days that continue to challenge our peace, may we pray for the wisdom and humility to open our lives to this great mystery of faith that we celebrate through the Incarnation of Christ. Therein alone, we will find the true and lasting reason for our hope!

With gratitude for the privilege of serving as your Bishop and with prayers for a holy and blessed Christmas for you, your family and all you hold dear, I am,

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+ Joseph C. Bambera

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



We invite you home for Christmas!

**For a full schedule of Mass times for all parishes in the
DIOCESE OF SCRANTON
visit: dioceseofscranton.org**

As Christmas approaches, faithful reminded of COVID-19 protocols



Parishioners attending Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass at Saint Nicholas Church in Wilkes-Barre wear face coverings on Dec. 12, 2021. (Photo/Mike Melisky)

SCRANTON – With Christmas quickly approaching, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera reminds the faithful about the COVID-19 protocols that remain in place for parishes throughout the Diocese of Scranton. Christmas often brings many visitors to churches throughout the Diocese, so the bishop has encouraged parishes to share the protocols in bulletins and via other communication methods.

While all of the protocols have been in place since August, in recent weeks the number of new, daily COVID-19 infections throughout the 11 counties of the Diocese of Scranton has continued to be high.

The bishop encourages everyone to remain vigilant and not let their guard down, using our best judgment to protect our own health and the health of our neighbors.

COVID-19 Protocol Reminders for Christmas 2021

- The Diocese of Scranton **strongly recommends** that all parishioners wear a mask while attending Mass, regardless of vaccination status. As Catholics, we have a responsibility to protect our friends and neighbors and mask wearing remains an important mitigation tool against community spread.

- Parishes should post signs strongly recommending the use of face masks by all parishioners, especially for those individuals who may be visiting for Christmas or have not attended Mass in-person recently. Bulletin announcements and announcements prior to Mass are also ways that can be used to help communicate this message.

- Anyone who is sick should stay home and participate in the celebration of Mass through Catholic Television or a parish livestream Mass. In addition, anyone displaying COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, headache, or muscle pain) should not attend Mass in-person.

- Altar servers need to wear a mask while performing their duties.

- Priests, Deacons and other ministers involved in entrance/exit processions are strongly encouraged to wear masks.

- Priests, Deacons and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must wash or sanitize their hands prior to the distribution of Holy Communion. All ministers should put their mask on **BEFORE** going to wash or sanitize their hands.

- Priests, Deacons and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must wear a mask during the distribution of Holy Communion. All ministers should sanitize their hands immediately if they come into contact with a recipient's tongue.

- At no time should church leaders demand information about vaccination status (or any other protected health information), request vaccination cards be shown on admittance, or pressure attendees in any way to show proof of vaccination. When in doubt, parishes should continue to plan their gatherings with the caution that some participants may be unvaccinated.

- Parishes should continue to be vigilant in the planning of any Christmas events that might bring together a large number of people from various households. Masks would be strongly recommended for any such indoor events.

Prepare for Christmas by serving others, Pope Francis says



A figurine of the baby Jesus is seen as people gather in St. Peter's Square for the Angelus led by Pope Francis at the Vatican Dec. 12, 2021. Children brought their Nativity figurines of baby Jesus to be blessed by the pope. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – With Christmas just over a week away, Christians should prepare for Jesus' birth by serving those in need rather than focusing on what awaits them under the Christmas tree, Pope Francis said.

"We are so busy with all the preparations, with gifts and things that pass," the pope said Dec. 12 during his Sunday Angelus address. "But let's ask ourselves what we should do for Jesus and for others! What should we do?"

Many children along with their families came to St. Peter's Square with their baby Jesus figurines for a traditional blessing by the pope.

Assuring them that he would bless their statues after praying the Angelus, Pope Francis greeted the little ones and asked them to take "my Christmas greetings to your grandparents and all your dear ones."

In his main address, the pope reflected on the Sunday Gospel reading from St. Luke which recalled the crowds of people who, after being moved by St. John the Baptist's preaching, asked him, "What should we do?"

Their question "does not stem from a sense of duty" but from their hearts being "touched by the Lord," and their being enthusiastic for his coming.

Just like the preparations people make to welcome a guest to their home by cleaning and preparing "the best dinner possible," Christians must do "the same with the Lord," he said.

St. Luke's Gospel, the pope added, also encourages one to ask, "What should I do with my life? What am I called to? What will I become?"

"By suggesting this question, the Gospel reminds us of something important: Life has a task for us. Life is not meaningless; it is not left up to chance. No! It is a gift the Lord grants us, saying to us: Discover who you are, and work hard to make the dream that is your life come true!"

The pope encouraged Christians to prepare for Christmas by continuously asking God what should they do for themselves and others in order to contribute to the good of the church and society.

St. John the Baptist's answers, he said, responded to each individual in a way that fit his or her situation in life, a reminder from the Gospel that "life is incarnated" in concrete situations.

"Faith is not an abstract theory, a generalized theory; no!" he said. "Faith touches us personally

and transforms each of our lives. Let us think about the concreteness of our faith. Is my faith abstract, something abstract or concrete? Does it lead me to serve others, to help out?"

Pope Francis said there are several ways people can serve others during Advent, including by doing "something concrete, even if it is small" to help others," especially by visiting the lonely, the elderly, the sick or someone in need.

Then the pope added to the list: "Maybe I need to ask forgiveness, grant forgiveness, clarify a situation, pay a debt. Perhaps I have neglected prayer and after so much time has elapsed, it's time to ask the Lord for forgiveness."

"Brothers and sisters," he said, "let's find something concrete and do it!"

"The joy of His coming makes us ask: what should we do?"

-Pope Francis

'Miracle of Bethlehem' presented at Nanticoke parish

Performance is being made available for viewing on CTV: Catholic Television

NANTICOKE – A beloved holiday tradition at Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish returned this year with an in-person audience – much to the delight of a thankful community.

On Dec. 3 and 4, the parish presented the play “Miracle of Bethlehem,” depicting the birth, life and death of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, at the Saint Faustina Cultural Center. In 2020, the production took place virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The reviews of this year’s performance were quick and immediate.

“I think it was wonderful. I had a great time. I have a great time every year,” Christie Davison said.

“I had the goosebumps and the tears,” Dorothy Hudak added. “It was extraordinary. It just brings Christmas into your lives. The ending is breathtaking.”

The play features dozens of actors. Many belong to the parish and its youth ministry program. The play also uses live animals from Endless Dreams Animals in Benton.

Ted Mike portrayed Jesus in this year’s production for another year.

“It’s one thing to talk about the Christmas story. It’s one thing to see it on TV but to sit here in person and see the actors and see all that is going around, see the animals ... it registers and it touches your heart,” he explained.

Judy Minsavage directed this year’s production once again.



The Blessed Virgin Mary, portrayed by Serafina Higdon of Saint Faustina Parish, presents the baby Jesus to the people of Bethlehem.

Throughout the past year, she has fielded many questions from people curious to know if the play was going to return to a live performance. She believes the play helps many rediscover the joy of Christmas.

“I really do feel that is what the Miracle of Bethlehem is really all about. It’s getting the people back into going to church, celebrating the Christmas holiday as well as telling the story and the true meaning of Christmas,” she said.

That message resonated with many of the people who turned out for the performance.

“There’s been so much commercialism in the holiday that we forget the true meaning (of Christmas), and the true meaning of it is we’re celebrating a birthday. It’s one of the most miraculous birthdays that ever occurred,” Jerry Hudak explained.

“It’s like we’re right there with them,” Shelly Marcella added. “This is the true meaning of Christmas. This play brings out the joy in me. I just love this play.”

When the first production of “Miracle of Bethlehem” took place more than ten years ago, it was held outdoors. The weather didn’t always cooperate.

“When we first saw ‘Miracle of Bethlehem’ it was held in a field. I recall being all wrapped up in my parka and hat,” Chester Zaremba said. “When we saw it the first time, the conclusion was so dramatic that it burned a hole into you.”

For those who helped pull off the production, they are happy to know that it helps to bring their parish – and entire community – together.

“I feel sorry for the people who didn’t attend because they don’t know the treasure that they’re



Jesus, portrayed by Ted Mike of Saint Therese Parish in Shavertown, carries the Cross during the play’s depiction of the Passion of Christ.



Ted Mike portrays Jesus Christ at the Resurrection during the play ‘Miracle of Bethlehem’ on Dec. 4, 2021. (Photos/Dan Gallagher)

missing,” Jerry Hudak said.

CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton filmed this year’s performance of “Miracle of Bethlehem” and is making the performance available to everyone

in the Diocese of Scranton. The showing premiered on Dec. 15. The following are the dates for the rebroadcast: Dec. 16 at 10:30 a.m.; Dec. 21 at 8 p.m.; Dec. 22 at 10:30 a.m.; and Dec. 27 at 10:30 a.m.

Three parishes collaborate for annual Advent Service of Word and Song

LUZERNE – Musicians from three local parishes came together once again this year to the delight of crowds in two counties.

This year marks the twelfth year that Holy Family Parish in Luzerne, Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish in Dunmore and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Dunmore have collaborated for an Advent Service of Word and Song.

This year’s theme was “Light and Life to all He brings.”

The first service was held Dec. 9 at Holy Family Parish in Luzerne while the second service was held Dec. 12 at Saint Anthony of Padua Church in Dunmore.

“Separately, we’re all pretty good but together we’re really great,” Linda Houck, music director, Holy Family Parish, said. “It brings the Gospel message and the Advent message of hope to so many more people than we could reach independently.”

Father David Cappelloni helped to develop the partnership more than a decade ago. He was first pastor at Holy Family until 2007 before moving to Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish. He suggested bringing the music ministries together.

“It is really a great sound and there’s not many places that can



The first Advent Service of Word and Song service was held at Holy Family Parish in Luzerne on Dec. 9, 2021. (Photo/Catholic Television)

produce that kind of sound with that number of people. People are excited to be a part of it,” Father Cappelloni said. “It does remind us

of what we can do when we come together to make a joyful noise for God.”

Each year, scripture readings

and songs are chosen around the theme of the Advent service.

“The music tries to uplift us and to remind us what the purpose of the scripture is,” Father added.

Donna Piekanski, a musician from Holy Family Parish, enjoys being a part of the joint choir.

“It’s hard not to cry because it brings joy. You want to give that joy to everybody,” she said.

If you missed the recent performances, the collaboration is being featured on this month’s “Our Faith Our Diocese” program on CTV: Catholic Television. The next airing of the program will be Monday, Dec. 20, at 11:00 a.m.

Pierogi making is time-honored tradition

LARKSVILLE – For parishioners at Saint John the Baptist Parish, it is all about the “pinch.” The perfect “pierogi pinch” that is.

Beginning on Oct. 25 – and continuing every Monday morning through Dec. 6 – dozens of parishioners gathered in the basement of their church to prepare all of the delicious dumplings that were to be sold for the parish’s annual Advent Pierogi Sale.

“Pierogi are kind of synonymous with Christmas, just like the Christmas tree and the manger,” Rev. Gerald J. Gurka, pastor, Saint John the Baptist Parish, said.

With their fingers deep in dough, each volunteer explained why they loved coming together to make the thousands of pierogies necessary.

“Everybody loves to be together. It really is a mission of love. We get to share our good pierogies with people all around the valley,” parishioner Rose Feddock said.

For many in the room, making pierogies is also a beloved family tradition.

“I think it’s passed on from generations. Their parents or great-grandparents, they all made the pierogies,” she added.

The pierogi pinching party always brings back personal memories for Father Gurka. He believes the beloved tradition helps to unite the past and present.

“My mother would always make pierogies on the Sunday before Christmas so you have those wonderful memories and I think pierogies bring back those wonderful memories to people with their loved ones that are no longer here,” he said.

Bob Lewis, longtime volunteer, said the pierogi pinching parties have become a well-oiled operation.

“We all have a specialty here. Everyone



The basement of Saint John the Baptist Church in Larksville was busy recently on Monday mornings as volunteers came together to make pierogies for the parish’s annual Advent pierogi sale.

knows their job and it just goes really smooth,” Lewis explained.

But – what is the secret to the perfect pierogi? What makes people come back year after year to Saint John the Baptist Church? Is it the dough, the filling, or the perfect pinch?

Unfortunately, the volunteers won’t tell.

“That’s a secret. The ingredients are a secret and only Father Jerry knows!” Lewis joked.

What is known is one of the benefits of the pierogi pinching parties. All ages are involved, including many young people.

Josephine Krzak and her sister, Virginia, were eager to help this year.

“My grandparents are here and it’s fun,” Josephine explained. “It’s not work, like chores or anything, it’s being with friends.”

The young women helped wherever

they were needed, from passing out supplies to bringing the pinched pierogies over to be cooked.

Father Gurka is thankful to all of the parishioners who volunteer their time to help the parish. Each Monday, some arrive as early as 3:30 a.m. to get the stoves and supplies ready.

“That’s a lot of sacrifice and a lot of love for parish and I think they extend that love to the tables of the people when they take the pierogis home with them,” Father Gurka ended by saying.



Parishioners of Saint John the Baptist Church in Larksville take pride in the dough they use to make their popular pierogies. (Photos/Dan Gallagher)



Above: Volunteers work hard to pinch each pierogi to make sure it doesn’t leak when it is cooked.

Scranton billboard reminds all “Families Need a Stable Background”

SCRANTON – With thousands of drivers passing by it each day, a Scranton parish hopes a new billboard will remind them of the importance of Christmas.

Mary, Mother of God Parish has put up the billboard at the intersection of North Main Avenue and Providence Road in North Scranton, aiming to catch their eye and invite them to church.

“We have to work very hard to come up with new and creative ways to get the message out, to get the invitation public. We put campaign-style signs all over North Scranton in visible places which said, ‘Shopping for a church this Christmas’ with our very visible, massive church that most people recognize if they live in the city of Scranton. The billboard was the next step up,” Father Cyril Edwards, pastor, said.

The billboard features the words “Families Need a Stable Background.”

It features a drawing of the parish along with the manger scene in front.

Father Edwards asked Advanced Placement Art students at Holy Cross High School in Dunmore for help in designing the billboard.

Senior Jordyn Glover responded.

“I just always loved to draw, even with chalk, simply on a sidewalk, even with a rock,” Glover explained. “I just wanted to showcase Jesus and Mary.”

With the billboard in place, Father Edwards is hoping it has an impact.

“In a day where the Advent season is lost to secular shopping, if we’re not reaching the family, we’re wasting our time. If it’s not about the stable, then we’re just shopping for presents. It has to be about celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ,” Father Edwards explained.

Glover was excited the first time she saw her billboard on full display.



Jordyn Glover, a senior at Holy Cross High School, helped Mary, Mother of God Parish design this billboard which has been put up at the intersection of North Main Avenue and Providence Road in Scranton. The billboard, which reads, “Families Need a Stable Background,” is an invitation to the community to return to church this Christmas. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

“It was really amazing,” she said. “I just like driving by it now. It’s really amazing that something I did is out there.”

Father Edwards says if the billboard helps to bring one person back to church – or even make Jesus present in the minds

of people – the effort will have all been worth it.

“The church exists to evangelize,” he noted. “If it just catches a few eyes, oh yeah, I need to get going back to church ... it is worth it.”

Catholic Social Services distributes toys to families in need for Christmas

7 THE CATHOLIC LIGHT • DECEMBER 16, 2021

DICKSON CITY – Nearly 1,200 children in the greater Scranton area will have presents under the tree Christmas morning thanks to the generosity of the community and an ongoing partnership between Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton, Friends of the Poor and the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program.

“It is truly an honor to be able to serve families and their children,” Mary Theresa Malandro, Diocesan Secretary for Catholic Human Services & Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Social Services, said. “We do not want to see any child go without a gift on Christmas.”

On Dec. 14 and 15, more than 500 families who pre-registered were able to visit LCBC Church on the Scranton Carbondale Highway to select toys for their children as part of the “Christmas Gifts for Kids” program.

Last year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, gifts were pre-bagged for families and given out via a drive-thru system. This year, Catholic Social Services and Friends of the Poor were thrilled to announce that parents would once again be allowed to select their own gifts.

“Parents know their children better than anyone and for them to be able to come into this environment and feel like they’re shopping and selecting the gifts they know will put a smile on the face of their children is very fulfilling,” Malandro added.

One of the core values for both organizations is dignity.



Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton and Friends of the Poor collaborated for the annual “Christmas Gifts for Kids” toy distribution on Dec. 14 and 15, 2021. (Photos/Eric Deabill)

Both agencies feel that allowing families to make their own choices is more empowering and personal.

“Coming in and choosing the toys that they’re going to give their children is a big part of that. No parent wants to be just as surprised as the kids when they open up a gift on Christmas morning,” Meghan Loftus, President and CEO of Friends of the Poor, explained.

When the doors opened to the first families at 9 a.m. on Dec. 14, a large room was filled with presents separated by age groups. From dolls and trucks for younger children – to scooters and sports equipment for older kids – there was plenty for families to choose.

“It is truly an honor and a joy,” Brady Funkhouser, Operations Manager with Friends of the Poor, said about assisting all of the families. “This is what Christmas

is all about. Everyone I speak to is just so grateful for the opportunity that they have to have something for their kids at Christmas. It is an awesome feeling.”

In an effort to promote social distancing and allow for a smooth and timely selection of gifts, parents signed-up for a 15-minute time slot in which to select their gifts when they registered for the “Christmas Gifts for Kids” program.

Organizers say every child is expected to get at least two or three gifts.

“We were able to collaborate with other agencies in the community and make sure that we weren’t duplicating who they had already registered so we could reach more people and make sure there is no child in Scranton without a gift underneath their



Parents were able to shop for their own toys inside LCBC Church during the toy distribution. The toys were all separated by age range to help parents find the perfect present.

tree,” Loftus said.

All of the agencies involved in the toy distribution explained how this project is a collaborative effort.

“We couldn’t do it without the support of the community and the volunteers who take time off from work to help the families shop and help people pick out toys. We’re both small teams but we’re making a really big impact and that’s because of the volunteers that we have,” Loftus added.

Malandro added that since the Diocesan Annual Appeal

supports the work of Catholic Social Services, this project is just another example of how donations help their agency serve the community.

“This is serving those in need. I’m passionate about that,” she explained.

In addition to the toy giveaway in Scranton, Catholic Social Services also sponsored several other toy distributions this year. Hundreds of other families in the Carbondale and Hazleton areas also received toys as well in separate distributions.



Catholic Social Services
OF THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

CHRISTMAS FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Wednesday, December 22, 2021

Noon - 2:00 p.m.

34 River Street, Carbondale

Sponsored by Catholic Social Services, Ancient Order of Hibernians Division #2 of Carbondale



NO PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED. DRIVE-UP OR WALK-UP SERVICE

Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen

CHRISTMAS FOOD DISTRIBUTION

December 20, 2021

9:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.
AND
4:00 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.

No pre-registration is required. Anyone in need is welcome!

39 E. Jackson Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA

Vision 2030 blueprint process strives to create parish communities rooted in the life of Jesus Christ

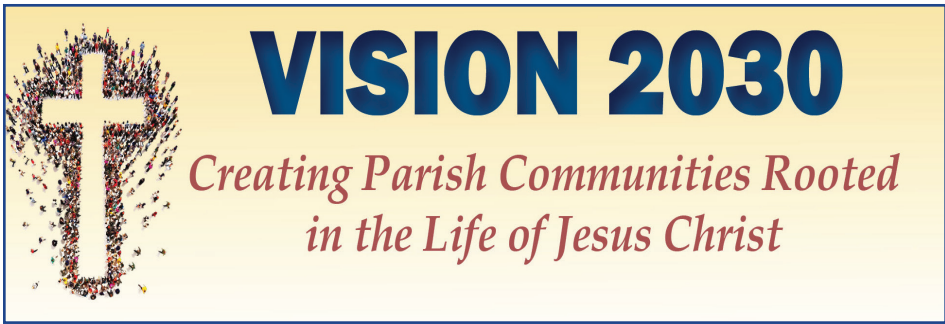
SCRANTON – As we move into 2022, the *Vision 2020 Blueprint Process*, launched in 2019, will now be known as the *Vision 2030 Blueprint Process*.

The goal of Vision 2030 remains the same. The long range planning process aims to look proactively at the realities of our local Church in the present moment while striving to meet the opportunities and challenges of the coming decade.

Put simply, Vision 2030 will assist the diocese in creating and sustaining vibrant parishes rooted in the life of Jesus Christ that are able to respond to the needs of as many members of the Christian faithful as possible.

“Our ongoing pastoral planning process in the Diocese is both important and necessary to have vibrant parishes and rich participation in the sacraments,” the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, has said about the process. “At its very core, (this process) is about putting our relationship with Jesus first in our own lives and in the life of our Church. We must desire to help all people meet Christ and build God’s Kingdom – not our own.”

Bishop Bambera first introduced the pastoral planning process to every parish in



the Diocese through a video homily played at all Masses on Dec. 8, 2019. Since that time, a lot of work has taken place. Before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the bishop led several regional sessions with parishioners and provided a video presentation to other parishes that were not able to gather in large groups because of the coronavirus.

In 2021, the blueprint process was utilized to help bring together the parish of Sacred Heart of Jesus in Weston with the parish of Saint John Bosco, Conyngham, upon the retirement of the pastor at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish. Likewise, the blueprint process was also utilized to help Holy Family Parish in Sugar Notch consolidate with Saint Leo the Great Parish in Ashley upon the retirement of the pastor at Holy

Family Parish.

The blueprint process has also assisted with parish linkages in the two largest cities of the Diocese of Scranton. Saint John Neumann Parish and Saint Paul of the Cross Parish have been linked in South Scranton under the pastorate of Monsignor Joseph G. Quinn, and Saint Nicholas Parish and Our Lady of Fatima Parish have been linked in Wilkes-Barre under the pastorate of Father Joseph D. Verespy.

In January 2022, the diocese plans to release updated data and information regarding the number of faithful who are

supporting the mission of the Church locally as well as information on the decreasing number of priests that will be available in the next decade because of retirements. This information will provide all the faithful with facts as we best determine how to plan for the future. By the essence of our Baptism, each person is called to take an active role in realizing the mission of the Vision 2030 Blueprint process.

The Diocese of Scranton is not alone in undertaking pastoral planning efforts. Diminishing and aging populations in some sections of the country impacting the number of men pursuing a priestly vocation in the Church, among other factors, have many other Dioceses and Archdioceses undertaking similar measures.

Over the past half century, the number of priests across the U.S. has dropped by about 40 percent — from nearly 60,000 priests in 1970 to 35,513 in 2020, according to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

APPOINTMENTS

His Excellency, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, announces the following appointment, effective as indicated:

Reverend Brian J. W. Clarke, from Pastor, Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton, and Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton, to Pastor, Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco, effective January 3, 2022.

Diocese adds name to List of Credibly Accused

Following the release of the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report in August 2018, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera made a promise that he would be open and transparent in the way that the Diocese of Scranton handles occurrences of child sexual abuse. That commitment remains true.

In August 2018, the Diocese published on its website a list of all clergy, staff and volunteers who had been credibly accused of child sexual abuse. Since that time, additional names have been added to the online list as necessary, with public notification.

The Diocese was recently notified by the Franciscan Friars, Holy Name Province, that the name of a friar who had previously been stationed in ministry within the Diocese was being included on its listing against whom credible sexual abuse/misconduct claims have been made. As a result of this information, the Diocese of Scranton has also decided to add the following name to its original list of credibly accused individuals:

MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Hennessy, Placid (OFM)

If you are aware of additional allegations of wrongdoing or any information that should be included on this list, please contact our Victim Assistance Coordinator, Mary Beth Pacuska at (570) 862-7551 or Father Gerald W. Shantillo, Vicar General, at (570) 207-2269. If you have suffered abuse by clergy or anyone working on behalf of the Diocese, you are encouraged to immediately contact law enforcement and/or Mary Beth Pacuska.

BISHOP BAMBERA’S SCHEDULE

December 22 - Advent Mass for Chancery Staff
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.

December 24 - Christmas Eve Vigil Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 4:00 p.m.

December 24 - Midnight Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, Midnight

December 25 - Mass at Gino Merli Veterans Center
Scranton, 9:30 a.m.

December 29 - Project Andrew Evening Prayer
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 5:30 p.m.

January 1 - Our Lady of the Cloud Mass
Notre Dame High School Theater, East Stroudsburg
4:00 p.m.

January 3-8 - Region III Bishops’ Retreat

January 9 - Mass for the Baptism of the Lord
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:15 p.m.

January 22 - Mass for the Filipino Community
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 6:00 p.m.



We Are Listening!

Take the Diocese of Scranton Survey for the Synod on Synodality

The Diocese of Scranton looks forward to listening to your voice as we answer the call of Pope Francis to participate in the local listening phase of the 2023 Synod on Synodality. It is our hope that you will prayerfully consider each question and offer feedback about your experience as a member of the Diocese of Scranton.

The following questions are all available in an online survey with available responses of strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree or no opinion. **To take the survey, click on “Synod on Synodality” on the mainpage of dioceseofscranton.org.**

Anyone that does not have internet access can answer these questions on the Diocese of Scranton Synod Voicemail System. Simply call **(570) 591-5024** and leave your answers via the message system. The message system will not ask each question individually, but will invite you to leave your answers in one combine message. Thank you for your participation in this process.

Question 1: *In the Church and in society, we are called to walk together, side-by-side, as we journey through life.*

The Catholic Church in the Diocese of Scranton is inclusive, meaning every person has the ability to participate as equals?

Question 2: *Listening is one of the most powerful and deeply human experiences we can have. The act of listening respects and validates the voice that is being heard.*

The Catholic Church in the Diocese of Scranton listens to all people?

Question 3: *Catholics in the Diocese of Scranton are encouraged to speak up, be brave and boldly trust we are loved by God.*

Catholics in the Diocese of Scranton are provided with the opportunity to speak candidly with their parish priest and our bishop?

Question 4: *One of the foundations of the Catholic faith is the belief that God is alive in each and every human person. For Christians, we are baptized and anointed with the Holy Spirit and are nourished by Christ in the Eucharist.*

The celebration of the Mass inspires me toward a more joyful and holier life?

Question 5: *Every Catholic has a responsibility to participate actively in the mission of the Catholic Church, sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.*

The Catholic Church in the Diocese of Scranton is succeeding in the following areas of its mission?

- *Leading People to a Deeper Relationship with God*
- *Educating People of All Ages in the Faith*
- *Helping the poor, lonely and vulnerable*
- *Welcoming immigrants, refugees and other newcomers*
- *Being compassionate to those in prison*
- *Ensuring Racial Equality*
- *Promoting Pro-Life Issues*
- *Protecting Human Rights*
- *Caring for the Environment*
- *Supporting Families*

Question 6: *From Pope Saint Paul VI to Pope Francis, successive popes have actively called the People of God to be a Church in dialogue. Through dialogue, all of the Christian faithful shape the way the Church achieves her mission.*

Catholics in the Diocese of Scranton are provided with the opportunity to discuss, debate and dialogue about the future direction of the church?

Question 7: *Christ calls all His disciples, united by Baptism, to work side-by-side with diverse groups and other faith communities.*

It is a priority of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Scranton to work with other faith communities in promoting the well-being of all?

Question 8: *Through Baptism and Confirmation, the mission of the Catholic Church belongs to all the Christian faithful. Everyone is called to play an active role.*

All Catholics, including young people, lay men and lay women, are challenged to use their gifts and talents in the life of the Church?

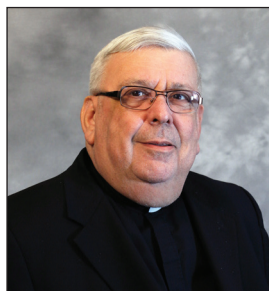
Question 9: *The Christian faith is accessible to everyone. Because the mission of the Catholic Church belongs to the Church's members, every voice has a right to be heard.*

In making important decisions, the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Scranton is transparent and accountable in its decision-making processes?

Question 10: *The Church's Tradition, received from the Apostles, carries the Christian faith through history. A synod is meant to identify the needs, challenges and opportunities of the present moment.*

While respecting Tradition, the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Scranton is responsive to the needs, challenges and opportunities at the present moment?

Ecumenical prayer service to celebrate annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



**By Monsignor Vincent
J. Grimalia**

**Diocesan Coordinator
for Ecumenical
and Interfaith Relations**

SCRANTON — Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as both leader of prayer and homilist when the Diocese of Scranton hosts the traditional ecumenical prayer service for next month's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity on Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 12:10 p.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

Bishop Bambera is past chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and formerly served as Scranton Diocesan Director of Ecumenism and Interfaith Relations.

Held annually each January following the Christmas season and Solemnity of the Epiphany, the theme for the 2022 celebration of Prayer for Christian Unity fittingly is taken from the Gospel account of the three magi traveling to Bethlehem to pay

homage to the Christ Child: "We saw the star in the East and we came to worship him."

All faithful are welcome to attend the Jan. 19 Ecumenical Prayer Service at the Scranton Cathedral, as well as encouraged to participate in local Christian unity events.

The prayer service will be broadcast live at 12:10 p.m. on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton. It will also be made available on the Scranton Diocese website and across all Diocesan social media platforms.

Under the direction of music and theology teacher Patrick Dalrymple, students from Holy Cross High School in Dunmore will provide liturgical music for the service.

The Decree on Ecumenism of Vatican II begins: "The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns

of the Second Vatican Council."

First published in 1998, the Directory for the Application and Principles and Norms on Ecumenism begins with a declaration of the commitment of the Catholic Church to ecumenism.

Emphasizing that prayer and efforts to promote Christian unity must begin in the parish, the Directory is addressed to the pastors of the Catholic Church, but concerns all the faithful who are called to pray and work for the unity of all Christians.

In this regard, the Ecumenical Directory states: "The parish, as an ecclesial unity gathered around the Eucharist, should be and proclaim itself to be the place of authentic ecumenical witness. Thus a great task for the parish is to educate its members in the ecumenical spirit. It calls too for a pastoral program... (that) will help in the various forms of collaboration with the corresponding parishes of other Christians. Finally it demands that the parish be not torn apart by internal polemics, ideological polarization or mutual recrimination between Christians, but that everyone, according to his or her own spirit and calling, serve the truth in love."

In his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* ("That they may be one"), Saint Pope John Paul II

wrote: "Ecumenism...is not some sort of 'appendix' which is added to the Church's traditional activity."

He further noted: "Ecumenism is an organic part of (the Church's) life and work, and consequently must pervade all that she is and does; it must be like the first fruit borne by a healthy and flourishing tree which grows to its full stature."

Every division or barrier contradicts the prayer of Jesus for unity among his disciples. Sadly today, we must admit there are examples of polarization, division and barriers in the Catholic Church. We must begin our efforts for Christian unity within our Catholic community and continue our prayers and efforts for unity with other Christian churches.

These words of Cardinal Walter Kasper, President Emeritus of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, succinctly express the thinking of the Second Vatican Council: "Christian ecumenism is concerned with the unity of the Church in service to the unity and peace of the world."

Every Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an opportunity to renew our commitment and efforts to pray and work for Christian Unity "in service to the unity and peace of the world."

Parish's Orphan Ministry continues caring for severely challenged half a world away

BRODHEADSVILLE — It was two years ago *The Catholic Light* first reported of the incredible ministerial journey of Sandie Flannery of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville, which began in 2009 when she accompanied friends to the Ukraine to adopt three children with Down syndrome.

Six years later, Flannery established the Orphan Outreach Ministry at her parish in the Poconos that continues to provide much-needed aid to destitute Ukrainian orphan children and young adults — many with severe disabilities and often subjected to deplorable conditions.

The hallmark of the support effort is an ambitious fundraiser Queen of Peace hosts to coincide with worldwide "Orphan Sunday" each November, as it collaborates with the DePaul Society of Ukraine which provides trained staff to serve the orphans' needs.

A retired special education teacher and the mother of a daughter with special needs, Flannery routinely traveled two to three times a year to Ukraine

to help provide educational, therapeutic and sensory materials.

For the first time since the pandemic lockdown in 2020, Flannery was allowed to visit two orphanages in August. Not surprisingly, the global health crisis has gravely affected the residents.

"The conditions of the orphans had declined," Flannery related. "The DePaul staff were not allowed to work during that time due to COVID and the children really missed their attention and activities. Regular staff was reduced to a minimum, and there was not enough time for the extra love and attention they so sorely need."

Compounding the program, Flannery said, are the country's new orphan reform policies which have relocated and centralized the orphaned charges of the state. According to Flannery, the radical changes and disruptions have caused great distress and confusion among the orphans.

"Zulachchia is now the regional orphanage for all disabled children," she said, "and many of



Two residents of the orphanage in Zulachchia, Ukraine, proudly wear their Our Lady Queen of Peace Church Orphan Outreach Ministry t-shirts — among the 100 signature shirts provided by the Brodheadsville parish to outfit the children and young adults at the orphanage.

the older men were transferred to the men's Boarding House (institution in Synatyn) after living their entire lives in Zulachchia."

Flannery had the opportunity to visit the Boarding House where many of the men recognized her. "It was so sad to see how very distressed they were and want to be transferred back," she related. "Also, new children with lesser disabilities were placed with more disabled and these children want out!"

In Synatyn, Flannery noted, more than 300 men often spend their days sitting idly and "staring into space." Due to these stark conditions, the Orphan Outreach Ministry has begun collecting soft "fidget toys," such as poppits, to keep the orphans' hands and minds busy.

Collection boxes for the fidget toys are located in Queen of Peace Church, with the goal being to amass 500 of the popular gadgets to provide for all children and adults in both settings.

In November, the annual parish Tricky Tray/Basket Raffle raised more than \$10,000, which helped supplement DePaul's budget and pay for a heated tile floor, in addition to crucial educational, therapeutic and

medical equipment.

Despite the onset of the pandemic last year, the Orphan Ministry contracted to have two gazebos built on orphanage grounds, along with helping to pay for an industrial washing machine.

Most recently, Flannery spearheaded the packaging of essential supplies that were transported by United Ukrainian Relief Committee in Philadelphia to be shipped overseas in a cargo container.

"Some equipment will go to a rehabilitation center run by the Sisters of Mercy," she explained. "Another cargo container will go out in January with more equipment currently in storage!"

Flannery emphasized donations of all kinds are accepted, suggesting that accessories no longer needed or outgrown by a loved one are most welcomed — especially good electric beds, wheelchairs, scooters, cell phones and tablets.

For more information, contact Sandie Flannery at (570) 350-9652, or the parish office at (610) 681-6137.

Justices seem willing to allow Mississippi's 15-week abortion ban

WASHINGTON (CNS) – In the Supreme Court's first major abortion case in decades – which looked at Mississippi's ban on abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy – the majority of justices Dec. 1 seemed willing to let that ban stay in place.

But it was unclear if they would take this further and overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

While the justices considered the state law and the possible ramifications of supporting it or not, people on both sides of the issue were on the steps of the Supreme Court revealing the divide on this issue by what they were shouting or with their placard messages calling abortion murder or an essential right.

At several points during the argument, Chief Justice John Roberts continued to bring the focus back to the question at hand: the 15-week ban on abortions in Mississippi, which was struck down by a federal District Court in Mississippi in 2018 and upheld a year later by the New Orleans-based U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit.

A 15-week ban is not a “dramatic departure from viability,” Roberts said.

The point of viability – when a fetus is said to be able to survive on its own – was key to the discussion because the Supreme Court has consistently ruled that states cannot restrict abortion before 24 weeks or when a fetus is said to be able to survive on its own.

Roberts seemed hesitant to take this further, asking if the court were to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, if it also would be asked to reconsider several other cases that people could say have been wrongly decided.

And that discussion of previous court decisions, the use of “stare decisis” came up frequently. The term, which literally means to stand by things decided, was used in reference to previous abortion cases but also several other cases with some justices pointing out that precedence should not always be a deciding factor and that some cases did need to be overturned.

Justice Stephen Breyer indicated the court was treading on contested ground and was concerned that its decision could be seen as merely being political.



A pro-life activist holding a crucifix joins a protest outside the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington Dec. 1, 2021, ahead of the court hearing oral arguments in the case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, an appeal from Mississippi to keep its ban on abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy. (CNS photo/Jonathan Ernst, Reuters)

Justice Sonia Sotomayor took this a step further, saying the court would be seen as highly politicized if it were to overturn *Roe* and other related rulings. “Will this institution survive the stench that this creates in the public perception that the Constitution and its reading are just political acts?” she asked. “I don’t see how it is possible.”

But as the arguments continued, more reflection seemed to be on the issue of abortion itself and the possibility of bringing the issue “back to the people,” as Mississippi Solicitor General Scott Stewart suggested.

Stewart stressed that *Roe* and *Casey* court decisions “haunt our country” and “have no home in our history or traditions.”

Roe v. Wade is the 1973 decision that legalized abortion. *Casey v. Planned Parenthood* is the 1992 decision that affirmed *Roe* and also stressed that a state regulation on abortion could not impose an “undue burden” on a woman “seeking an abortion before the fetus attains viability.”

Justice Brett Kavanaugh emphasized the court was being forced to “pick sides” on a contentious issue and questioned why the court had to be the arbiter here.

“The Constitution is neither pro-life nor pro-choice,” he said, noting that it “leaves the issue to the people to resolve in the democratic process.”

Justice Clarence Thomas asked what those opposed to

the state ban thought was the constitutional right to an abortion, and Justice Samuel Alito spoke of the fetus having “an interest in having a life.”

Julie Rikelman, of the Center for Reproductive Rights, who represented the Jackson Women’s Health Organization in its challenge of Mississippi’s abortion law, said keeping the law in place

would cause “profound damage to women’s liberty, equality and the rule of law.”

U.S. Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar went on to argue that overturning the court’s previous abortion rulings would have “severe and swift” effects causing abortion restrictions in other states.

If the court sides with Mississippi, it would be the first time the court would allow an abortion ban before the point of viability and could lay the groundwork for other abortion restrictions that other states could follow.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a court brief supporting Mississippi, stressed that abortion is not a right created by the Constitution and called it “inherently different from other types of personal decisions to

which this court has accorded constitutional protection.”

Referring to the court’s major abortion decisions, the brief warned that if the Supreme Court “continues to treat abortion as a constitutional issue,” it will face more questions in the future about “what sorts of abortion regulations are permissible.”

Just as the arguments started, the USCCB issued a statement from Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities, which said: “We pray that the court will do the right thing and allow states to once again limit or prohibit abortion and in doing so protect millions of unborn children and their mothers from this painful, life-destroying act.”

A ruling in the case is expected in July.

Prayer resources available

Catholic and ecumenical prayers and resources for community engagement and action as we await the Court’s decision in this case may be found at www.prayfordobbs.com. All are encouraged to participate.

Pro-life headlines from Around the Nation

Court keeps Texas abortion law in place, allows challenge to continue

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The Supreme Court said Dec. 10 that clinics can continue to challenge a Texas law that bans most abortions after six weeks of pregnancy but in the meantime the law would remain in effect.

Eight justices said the challenge could go forward. Justice Clarence Thomas opposed it.

The Texas abortion law, signed by Republican Gov. Greg Abbott in May, went into effect Sept. 1.

During oral arguments about it Nov. 1, the justices considered whether the Justice Department and state abortion clinics can even challenge the abortion law in federal court because of the way the law was set up with citizens’ enforcement.

Catholic bishops decry California’s plan to become ‘sanctuary’ for abortion

LOS ANGELES (CNS) – California’s Catholic bishops slammed a new plan endorsed by Gov. Gavin Newsom to make the state a “sanctuary” for legal abortion if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned.

“When families are struggling to put food on the table and pay rent, it is absurd for the state to focus on expanding abortion when the real needs of families for basic necessities remain unmet,” said Kathleen Buckley Domingo, executive director of the California Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the state’s Catholic bishops.

“California doesn’t need more abortion. It needs to support women and help them be the mothers they want to be,” she said in a Dec. 9 statement.

March for Life 2022: Unborn must be part of current U.S. debate over inequality

WASHINGTON (CNS) – The theme of the 2022 March for Life in Washington is “Equality Begins in the Womb.”

“We want to expand” the nation’s current “rigorous debate about inequality” to the unborn, said Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund.

Calling the theme a cry for “inherent human dignity because of who we are in our essence,” she added, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to injustice everywhere, including in the womb.”

The March for Life is scheduled for Jan. 21. It is always held on a date near the anniversary of the Supreme Court’s 1973 rulings, *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*, which legalized abortion nationwide.

Help Your Parish Meet its Goal for the 2021 Diocesan Annual Appeal

Lackawanna and Wyoming Counties



Thomas & Stephanie Dzwonczyk
Rev. Jeffrey J. Walsh

Serving the 2021 Diocesan Annual Appeal as regional lay and clergy chairs on behalf of Lackawanna and Wyoming counties are Thomas Dzwonczyk and Stephanie Boyarsky Dzwonczyk, North Abington Township, and Father Jeffrey Walsh, pastor of Saint Rose Parish and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Carbondale.

For Tom and Stephanie, who are parishioners at Saint John Vianney Parish, Montdale, their connection to the Diocesan Annual Appeal is rather personal. They are parents to Katherine, who is a junior at Villanova University, as well as to Thomas Jr., who is currently a seminarian at Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore.

"We need to support these faithful, smart and charismatic young men with their priestly formation. They will return to northeastern Pennsylvania as priests and help ensure the vitality of the Diocese of Scranton going forward," they said.

Father Walsh saw firsthand how important support from the Appeal is to young men in formation. Seminarian Mike Boris spent his pastoral year with Father Walsh at Saint Rose Parish and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish.

"We know the Appeal helps with the expenses associated with the years of seminary formation," Father Walsh said.

For the Dzwonczyks, their gift to the Appeal reflects the essence of their faith.

"We have received many blessings from God throughout our lives and supporting the Appeal is an opportunity to give thanks and show love for our neighbors," they said.

They added that if every parishioner who had never given to the Appeal made a gift of just ten dollars, it would go a long way to provide food, shelter and support to the less fortunate in our communities.

"Every contribution to the Appeal helps the Church fulfill her mission at the local level in the Diocese of Scranton. When you make a gift to the appeal, it's both meaningful and transparent," Father Walsh explained.

Lycoming and Tioga Counties



Dr. Brian & Julie Foresman
Rev. William D. Corcoran

Serving the 2021 Diocesan Annual Appeal as regional lay and clergy chairs on behalf of Lycoming and Tioga counties are Dr. Brian and Julie Foresman, Muncy, and Father William Corcoran, Saint Boniface Parish, Williamsport and Saint Lawrence Parish, South Williamsport.

Julie and Brian, parishioners of Resurrection Parish in Muncy, appreciate all of the ministries the Appeal supports, but Catholic Schools are near and dear to their hearts. Julie is a Catholic school graduate, as are her daughters, Bridget and Molly Rose, both valedictorians of their respective classes at Saint John Neumann Regional Academy.

"In addition to excellent academics, Catholic school students have daily exposure to the Catholic faith, which is very important in developing a strong religious foundation. They attend and participate in weekly Mass, and the importance of service to others is instilled in children as early as pre-K. This allows students to live out the Gospel and be a disciple of Christ," Julie said.

Father Corcoran noted the importance of funds for schools throughout the ongoing pandemic.

"The funds supplied to Saint John Neumann allowed safety measures to be introduced for the children," he said.

Our Diocesan Catholic schools were able to maintain face to face instruction throughout the pandemic in a safe environment conducive to learning. Catholic schools saw a nine-percent increase in enrollment overall last year.

Julie said that a gift to the Appeal puts her faith into action.

"God's love is the source of charity and what enables us to overcome our self-centeredness and to love others with the same redeeming love He revealed on the cross," she added.

Father Corcoran remarked that giving to the Appeal is a way to overcome the isolation of modern life, which has been exacerbated by the pandemic.

"Since the Apostles, we have been bound together under a bishop and united in helping each other," the pastor said, and then added the words of the beloved Saint Francis prayer, "It is in giving that we receive."

Monroe County



Joe & Linda McDonald and Dr. Ann McDonald
Rev. Donald J. Williams

Serving the 2021 Diocesan Annual Appeal as regional lay and clergy chairs on behalf of Monroe County are Dr. Ann McDonald, Swiftwater; Linda Fangio McDonald and Attorney Joseph McDonald Jr., Stroudsburg; and Father Don Williams, pastor of Saint Matthew's Parish, East Stroudsburg.

Ann, her brother Joe, and his wife Linda, all mentioned their upbringing, their education, as well as their faith as their inspiration to serve both their community and the Church.

Linda said, "We must go beyond ourselves, our family, our parishes, and our community to serve God to help others in need."

Father Williams said his parish has been blessed thanks to funds from the Diocesan Annual Appeal.

"We have received support for parents whose children attend Notre Dame Elementary and High School. We've received grants for religious education, our ministry to the homeless, our pro-life initiatives, as well as for Hispanic and campus ministry and we have two seminarians currently in formation from our parish," Williams said.

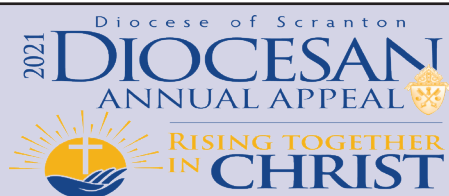
Joe added that their parish, Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, Brodheadsville, has the support of two deacons thanks to funds raised for the Appeal.

The McDonalds and Father Williams all agree that it comes down to our willingness to heed God's calling to support our neighbors in need as well as our Church.

Joe said, "Any gift to the Appeal funds six tangible ministries, including a hot meal, a place to call home, a school to learn, and an empathetic ear for spiritual guidance during a moment of strife."

As a Catholic school graduate, Ann credits the I.H.M. Sisters as the driving force behind her success and her continued growth as a Catholic. Ann is currently a member of Saint Luke Parish, Stroudsburg. To her, the call is simple. "Give what you can!" she said.

Father Williams added, "As Catholics it's important to remember that we belong to something much bigger than our individual parishes. We are a part of a universal church, a servant church. Please help us further our mission! Your support is needed now more than ever."



What Do Your Annual Appeal Donations Support?

- Clergy & Seminarian Support
- Catholic Social Services
- Catholic Education
- Faith Formation Grants for Parishes
- Catholic Communications
- Office for Parish Life
- Social Justice Grants for Parishes

Pike and Wayne Counties



Chris & Sherry Wood
Rev. Richard W. Beck

Serving the 2021 Diocesan Annual Appeal as regional lay and clergy chairs on behalf of Wayne and Pike Counties are Christopher and Sherry Wood, Milford, and Father Richard Beck, Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Hawley.

For Chris and Sherry, who belong to Saint Joseph Parish in Matamoras, the Diocesan Annual Appeal is an opportunity for them to share their treasure with their community, and to impact many people.

Chris said, “Assistance from the Appeal has supported our local food pantries, provided support and abortion alternatives through aid to the Tri-Country Pregnancy Center, and Christian counseling to individuals and families having a difficult time today.”

Father Beck has seen the direct effect of the Appeal funds in his parishes.

“We have received several grants for Social Justice, Faith Formation, and also for other specific ministries, such as our Bereavement ministry,” Beck said.

The Woods believe that a gift to the Annual Appeal is the perfect way to support many Diocesan ministries with one gift. The Diocesan Annual Appeal also supports seminarians in formation, care for ill and retired priests, Catholic communications, and parish life and programming.

Chris and Sherry urge those who have never made a gift to the Annual Appeal to consider making a gift. While many people might think a small gift doesn’t make a difference, the fact is, many small gifts can make a difference. In fact, the most popular gift amount made is \$25.

Father Beck added that giving to the Appeal “professes our faith in action. Show the world your works and show the world your real faith.”

Bradford, Sullivan and Susquehanna Counties



Jack & Sandy Ryan
Rev. Kevin M. Miller

Serving the 2021 Diocesan Annual Appeal as regional lay and clergy chairs on behalf of Bradford, Sullivan, and Susquehanna Counties are Jack and Sandy Ryan, Athens, and Father Kevin Miller, Saint Brigid Parish, Friendsville.

Jack and Sandy are parents to two children in high school and have relied upon their spirituality and faith throughout their lives. Their faith has informed their involvement in their parish, Church of the Epiphany, Sayre.

“Volunteering and giving to the Diocese are among the ways we can ‘walk the talk’ and set an example for our children and the next generation. It’s a way to give back or pay forward all of our blessings,” they said.

Father Miller underscored the importance of giving, and how it allows us to live the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy by providing for both the physical and spiritual needs of those in our community. He said, “The smallest amount makes a big difference. ‘Give, and it will be given to you (2 Corinthians 9:11).”

The Ryans have seen the benefits of the appeal in both their parish and their community.

“From disaster response, to Epiphany School, and the live-streaming of masses (during the pandemic),” they said, there have been many instances where the Diocese has been able to provide needed funds and services thanks to gifts to the Appeal.

According to Father Miller, the gifts made to the Appeal are more than just monetary. They are indicative of our faith and of our higher calling to love our neighbors.

He said, “We are called by our Baptism to live the life of a disciple of Christ in faith, hope, and above all, love. When we give generously, we love well.”

Luzerne County



Jeff & Susan Metz
Rev. Joseph J. Pisaneschi

Serving the 2021 Diocesan Annual Appeal as regional lay and clergy chairs on behalf of Luzerne County are Jeffrey and Susan Metz, Dallas, and Father Joseph Pisaneschi, pastor of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Swoyersville.

Jeff and Susan are parents to Kaitlyn, Ashley, and Jeffrey Jr., and belong to St. Theresa Parish in Shavertown. For Jeff and Susan, donating to the Appeal every year comes naturally as their faith constantly guides all aspects of their lives. But they also understand how important the funds are to the greater Catholic Church.

“The Appeal is what keeps the Diocese moving forward and growing so it’s very important that everyone help in any way they can,” Jeff said.

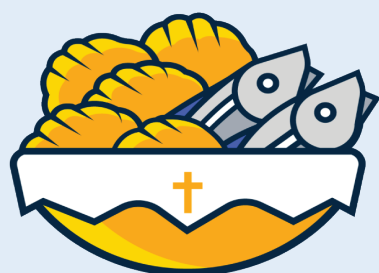
Father Pisaneschi has found that the Appeal supports many initiatives in his parish that he otherwise would struggle to fulfill.

“I depend on the Office of Parish Life on a regular basis to assist in a variety of areas. The Religious Education Office and Liturgy Office are very valuable to the everyday needs of the parish. Plus, the Appeal has helped our parish come together and understand that the Church is more than just our parish,” he said.

Jeff added, “The Appeal is a great way to give back so that the Diocese can continue to offer these services and more.”

Father Pisaneschi said, “The Appeal take priority in my own giving each year. It’s a worthy cause. This is a way to reach out beyond the parish boundaries and help the larger Church.”

To donate to the 2021 Diocesan Annual Appeal, please visit annualappeal.org.



#iGIVECATHOLIC

Diocese of Scranton raises nearly \$64,000 for Diocesan Annual Appeal during inaugural #iGiveCatholic campaign

For the first time this year, the Diocese of Scranton participated in the nationwide #iGiveCatholic movement in conjunction with Giving Tuesday.

Between the campaign’s launch on Nov. 15 and Nov. 30, a total of 511 unique donors made gifts totaling \$63,917. This year, funds were earmarked for the ministries and programs supported by the Diocesan Annual Appeal.

More than 40 dioceses across the country participated in #iGiveCatholic this year. On #GivingTuesday, several parishes from the Diocese of Scranton, including Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish in Hanover Township and Saint Ann Parish in Williamsport, were ranked on the Top 100 leaderboard for amount of unique donors.

We are thankful to all donors who participated in the #iGiveCatholic campaign this year!

Large crowds celebrate Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

WILKES-BARRE – Masses and special processions were held throughout the Diocese of Scranton on Dec. 12 to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

More than 300 people took to the streets of Wilkes-Barre for a procession that started on Old River Road and ended up at Saint Nicholas Parish on South Washington Street. Throughout the entire procession, a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe was hoisted high on a rose-covered platform as the faithful danced, sang and threw rose petals in her honor.

Andrea Perez, who is originally from Mexico, calls the procession a beloved tradition.

“The Virgin Mary is the mother of Jesus and that is why we love her,” she explained. “We are from Mexico and she appeared in Mexico.”

The annual Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe commemorates the appearance of the Virgin Mary to a Mexican Indian peasant – now venerated as Saint Juan Diego – in December 1531 in Tepeyac, near present-day Mexico City. The Blessed Mother’s appearance is believed to have resulted in millions of conversions to Catholicism, and her message of hope continues to inspire those of Hispanic descent.

“For us, this is one of the biggest events,” Gilberto Vasquez, parishioner of Saint Nicholas Church, said. “She is the mother of Jesus and our mother too!”



A group of dancers in the procession to Saint Nicholas Church make their way through the streets of Wilkes-Barre. (Photos/Mike Melisky)

The procession featured every age group. Yasmin Guzman, a young adult herself, says she has been participating since she was little.

“We do this all together as a family tradition and it’s been going on from generation to generation,” Guzman said.

Father Fidel Ticona of Saint Nicholas Parish was not surprised by the large crowd that turned out for the procession or the 5 p.m. Mass that followed with the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

“Our Blessed Mother holds a special place in our hearts, especially among the Hispanic community. She is our intercessor. She is our friend. She is our mother who walks with us, who understands our joys and also our needs and sufferings,” he said.

In addition to the Mass at Saint Nicholas Parish, Bishop Bambera also celebrated Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe – which took place on the Third Sunday in Advent – at Saint John Neumann Parish in Scranton.

Long before sunrise, beginning at 3 a.m., parishioners of Saint John Neumann Parish also held a procession from the Cathedral of Saint Peter to Saint John Neumann Parish. The bishop joined the faithful for a Mass at 1 p.m.

“We gather today in joy and gratitude to celebrate many things: our cultural roots, our traditions, but most especially our faith – a faith that reminds us all that with faith in God, all things are possible,” Bishop Bambera noted in his homily.

Bishop Bambera also shared words from Pope Francis, in



Hundreds of people celebrate the 1 p.m. Mass at Saint John Neumann Parish in South Scranton for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

which he said, “because she is the handmaid of the Lord, she became a servant of her brothers.”

“It would be well for us to learn from her example and to reflect upon our relationship with Jesus and the simple gifts that he comes to bring: the gift of life, the gift of each new day, the gift of faith and peace at our center and the gift of joy, born from our service of our brothers and sisters,” the bishop said.

Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrations also took place at



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera blesses the statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe at Saint Nicholas Church.

Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg, Annunciation Parish in Hazleton, Holy Name of Jesus Parish in West Hazleton, Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary Parish in Jermyn, Saint Joachim Parish in Meshoppen and Saint Boniface Parish in Williamsport.

Guadalupe Torch passes through Scranton diocese

EAST STROUDSBURG – For more than a decade, Saint Matthew Parish has received the “Guadalupe Torch,” a burning symbol of hope, in the days leading up to the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 12. This year is no exception.

Dozens of people gathered in the Rite Aid Pharmacy parking lot in East Stroudsburg on Dec. 1 awaiting the torch’s local arrival.

“It is our faith, our tradition,” Carlos Albuja, parishioner of Saint Matthew Parish, explained.

“This is all about our faith. It is very important to us,” Julio Sanchez, parishioner of Saint Matthew Parish, added. “We are one family, one church, one community.”

The Guadalupe Torch

comes from the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City and goes across parishes in the United States before ending in New York City on Dec. 12.

After its arrival in Monroe County, a procession was held to Saint Matthew Parish where Mass was celebrated at the church.

“It is beautiful seeing that the torch is being passed down all the way from Mexico, all the way through several states and seeing all these people coming together,” Martin Sanchez, parishioner of Saint Matthew Parish, said.

On Dec. 12, the faithful commemorate the day that the Virgin of Guadalupe, also the patron saint of Americas, appeared to a Mexican Indian peasant – now venerated as Saint Juan Diego – in



A procession is held through the streets of East Stroudsburg Dec. 1 as the Guadalupe Torch makes its way to Saint Matthew Parish in Monroe County. (Photo/Jose Flores)

1531 on the Tepeyac hill where the Basilica of Guadalupe was built.

“She came to give love, the

faith to believe everything is possible with faith in God,” Alma Lecama, parishioner of Saint

Matthew Parish, explained.

“Growing up, learning to love, learning that she loves us all and cares for us, it’s a very beautiful thing and I think it means a lot to everybody,” Sanchez added.

The faithful of Saint Matthew Parish hope to continue receiving the Guadalupe Torch each year. Following its brief visit in the Poconos, it traveled to parishes in neighboring New Jersey.

“We are really happy to receive one more year Our Lady of Guadalupe and I hope Our Lady brings a lot of blessings for all of us,” Carmita AVECILLAS, parishioner of Saint Matthew Parish, said.

“As a young adult, this activity embraces my faith in the Catholic community,” Stephanie Albuja added.

Grandes multitudes celebran la Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe

WILKES-BARRE - Se llevaron a cabo misas y procesiones especiales en toda la Diócesis de Scranton el 12 de diciembre para celebrar la Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

Más de 300 personas salieron a las calles de Wilkes-Barre para una procesión que comenzó en Old River Road y terminó en la parroquia de San Nicholas en South Washington Street. Durante toda la procesión, una estatua de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe fue elevada en lo alto en una plataforma cubierta de rosas mientras los fieles bailaban, cantaban y lanzaban pétalos de rosa en su honor.

Andrea Pérez, quien es originaria de México, llama a la procesión una tradición querida.

“La Virgen María es la madre de Jesús y por eso la amamos”, explicó. “Somos de México y ella apareció en México”.

La Fiesta anual de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe conmemora la aparición de la Virgen María a un campesino indio mexicano, ahora venerado como San Juan Diego, en diciembre de 1531 en Tepeyac, cerca de la actual Ciudad de México. La aparición de la Santísima Madre resultó en millones de conversiones al catolicismo, y su mensaje de esperanza continúa inspirando a los de ascendencia hispana.

“Para nosotros, este es uno de los eventos más importantes”, dijo Gilberto Vásquez, feligrés de



Un grupo de bailarines en procesión hacia la iglesia de San Nicolás recorre las calles de Wilkes-Barre. (Fotos / Mike Melisky)

la Iglesia de San Nicolás. “¡Ella es la madre de Jesús y nuestra madre también!”

La procesión contó con grupos de todas las edades. Yasmin Guzmán, una joven adulta, dice que ha estado participando desde que era pequeña.

“Hacemos todo esto juntos como una tradición familiar y ha estado sucediendo de generación en generación”, dijo Guzmán.

Al padre Fidel Ticona de la parroquia de San Nicolás no le sorprendió la gran multitud que acudió a la procesión ni a la misa de las 5 pm que siguió con el Reverendísimo Joseph C. Bambera, Obispo de Scranton.

“Nuestra Santísima Madre ocupa un lugar especial en nuestros corazones, especialmente entre la comunidad hispana. Ella es nuestra intercesora. Ella es nuestra amiga. Es nuestra madre que camina con

nosotros, que comprende nuestras alegrías y también nuestras necesidades y sufrimientos”, dijo.

Además de la misa en la parroquia de San Nicolás, el Obispo Bambera también celebró la misa en honor a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, que tuvo lugar el tercer domingo de Adviento, en la parroquia de San Juan Neumann en Scranton.

Mucho antes del amanecer, a partir de las 3 a.m., los feligreses de la parroquia de San Juan Neumann también realizaron una procesión desde la Catedral de San Pedro hasta la Parroquia de San Juan Neumann. El obispo se unió a los fieles para una misa a las 13:00 horas.

“Nos reunimos hoy con alegría y gratitud para celebrar muchas cosas: nuestras raíces culturales, nuestras tradiciones, pero más especialmente nuestra



El obispo Joseph C. Bambera bendice una corona que se colocará en una estatua de la Santísima Madre en la parroquia de Saint John Neumann en Scranton.

fe, una fe que nos recuerda a todos que con la fe en Dios, todo es posible”, señaló el obispo Bambera en su homilía.

Monseñor Bambera también compartió unas palabras del Papa Francisco, en las que dijo, “porque ella es la esclava del Señor, se convirtió en una sirvienta de sus hermanos”.

“Sería bueno para nosotros aprender de su ejemplo y reflexionar sobre nuestra relación con Jesús y los simples dones que él viene a traer: el don de la vida, el don de cada nuevo día, el don de la fe y la paz en nuestro centro y el don de la alegría, que nace de nuestro servicio a nuestros hermanos y hermanas”, dijo el obispo.

Además de las parroquias de San Juan Neumann y San Nicolás, las celebraciones a Nuestra Señora

de Guadalupe también se llevaron a cabo en la Parroquia de San Mateo en East Stroudsburg, Parroquia de la Anunciación en Hazleton, Parroquia del Santo Nombre de Jesús en West Hazleton, Parroquia de los Sagrados Corazones de Jesús y María en Jermyn, Parroquia de San Joaquín en Meshoppen y la Parroquia de San Bonifacio en Williamsport.



Antorcha Guadalupana Pasa Por La Diócesis De Scranton

STROUDSBURG ESTE - Durante más de una década, la Parroquia de San Mateo ha recibido la “Antorcha Guadalupana”, un símbolo ardiente de esperanza, en los días previos a la Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe el 12 de diciembre. Este año no es una excepción.

Docenas de personas se reunieron en el estacionamiento de la farmacia Rite Aid en East Stroudsburg el 1 de diciembre esperando la llegada local de la antorcha.

“Es nuestra fe, nuestra tradición”, explicó Carlos Albuja, feligrés de la parroquia de San Mateo.

“Todo esto se trata de nuestra fe. Es muy importante para

nosotros”, agregó Julio Sánchez, feligrés de la Parroquia San Mateo. “Somos una familia, una iglesia, una comunidad”.

La Antorcha Guadalupana proviene de la Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en la Ciudad de México y atraviesa parroquias en los Estados Unidos antes de terminar en la Ciudad de Nueva York el 12 de diciembre.

Después de su llegada al condado de Monroe, se llevó a cabo una procesión a la parroquia de San Mateo donde se celebró una misa en la iglesia.

“Es hermoso ver que la antorcha está pasando desde México, a lo largo de varios estados y ver a todas estas personas reunirse”, dijo Martín Sánchez,

feligrés de la parroquia de San Mateo.

El 12 de diciembre, los fieles conmemoran el día en que la Virgen de Guadalupe, también patrona de América, se apareció a un campesino indio mexicano, ahora venerado como San Juan Diego, en 1531 en el cerro del Tepeyac donde se construyó la Basílica de Guadalupe.

“Vino a dar amor, la fe para creer que todo es posible con fe en Dios”, explicó Alma Lezama, feligrés de la parroquia de San Mateo.

“Crecer, aprender a amar, aprender que ella nos ama a todos y se preocupa por nosotros, es algo muy hermoso y creo que significa mucho para todos”,

agregó Sánchez.

Los fieles de la Parroquia San Mateo esperan seguir recibiendo la Antorcha Guadalupana cada año. Luego de su breve visita a los Poconos, viajó a parroquias en el vecino estado de Nueva Jersey.

“Estamos muy felices de recibir un año más a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe y espero que Nuestra Señora traiga muchas bendiciones para todos nosotros”, dijo Carmita Avecillas, feligrés de la Parroquia San Mateo.

“Como adulto joven, esta actividad abraza mi fe en la comunidad católica”, agregó Stephanie Albuja.



La Antorcha Guadalupana llega a la Parroquia de San Mateo en East Stroudsburg el 1 de diciembre de 2021. (Foto / Jose Flores)



Eighty-five young adults and chaperones from the Diocese of Scranton participated in the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis Nov. 18-20, 2021

Diocese of Scranton pilgrims at NCYC told to 'keep the fire alive'

INDIANAPOLIS – While things may have looked different at this year's National Catholic Youth Conference, the spirit of the event was unchanged.

Eighty-five young adults and chaperones from the Diocese of Scranton participated in this year's event, traveling together by bus to the Indiana Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium for the Nov. 18-20 conference.

"It was fun that we all got to be together and get to meet new friends and hear all the speakers and go to Mass," Lucas Bower, 15, Saint Joseph the Worker Parish in Williamsport, said. "Adoration was really neat. Everyone was quiet. Inside the whole stadium you could hear a pin drop."

"Originally, I didn't really know what I was getting myself into," Olivia DeScipio, 15, Saint Eulalia Parish in Roaring Brook Township, said. "My older brother went and he said he had such an amazing experience. I was always on board with going once I got into high school but after this weekend, I really realize how big of an event this is and how amazing it was to be in such an accepting community of Catholics."

This year, nearly 11,000 young adults from across the country participated in NCYC. Organizers decided to limit registrations to only half of the normal 20,000 because of COVID-19 concerns.

"The number this year was almost more



Delegates from the Diocese of Scranton are seated inside Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis before the start of the opening session for NCYC 2021. (Photos/Eric Deabill)

impressive because of all the restrictions that are in place right now. It was crazy to see how many people were still willing to go through that," Luke Magnotta, 16, Saint Eulalia Parish in Roaring Brook Township, said. This year was Magnotta's second trip to NCYC.

In order to maintain a safe environment, all participants from the Diocese of Scranton

were required to show a negative COVID-19 test result within 72 hours of the event. Face masks were also required during indoor events.

Adoration leads teens to experience 'true love of God'

For many youths, group adoration on the second night of the conference is the part of the event they find most memorable.

As soon as the Eucharist was brought into Lucas Oil Stadium, all of the teens started kneeling, watching in silence as the monstrance was placed on the altar.

"There were 10,000 kids in that stadium, an echoing stadium, and there was no noise. Everyone was silent, praying to the same God," Jacob Chechel, 14, Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville, said.

"I feel like the 10,000 of us, all getting together for quiet Adoration was just very special. It's rare that you'll see something that big," Shaylee Kimmick, Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville, added.



One of the shirts that Diocese of Scranton delegates wore featured the names of all eight parishes who sent young adults: Epiphany Parish, Sayre; Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow; Saint Eulalia Parish, Roaring Brook Township; Saint Jude Parish, Mountain Top; Saint Joseph the Worker Parish, Williamsport; Saint Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg; Our Lady of the Snows Parish, Clarks Summit; and Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Brodheadsville.

Father Leo Patalinghug, a priest-member of a community of consecrated life called Voluntas Dei ("The Will of God") led the adoration service.

Father Leo urged the teens to see the beauty of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

"With Christ, all things are possible. You can be a saint – you are supposed to be a saint," he said.

"I have always heard that Adoration at big conferences is really powerful ... and it was very true for me," Deirdre Drinkall said. Drinkall is currently working at Saint Ignatius Loyola Parish in Kingston as one of three ECHO apprentices currently serving in the Diocese of Scranton. "It was a sense of deep peace ... there was just a palpable peace laying over us when Adoration came and it was really beautiful."

Continued on next page



Father Leo Patalinghug speaks to the nearly 11,000 participants at the National Catholic Youth Conference while kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament during adoration at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis Nov. 19, 2021. (CNS photo/Natalie Hoefer, *The Criterion*)



Young adults from Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville pack bags of rice and beans as part of a service project for Cross Catholic Outreach. The students packed enough bags to feed a total of 5,832 people.

Teens participate in projects that help others

When not attending breakout sessions or Masses, NCYC participants have the opportunity to meet other young adults from other dioceses across the country. The students trade hats, pins and other items, giving them an opportunity to meet one another.

"I met so many people," DeScipio said. "It was just so cool to be in a place where everybody has the same beliefs as you and you just felt more open, like you could discuss anything with them."

There is also a large expo room inside the Indiana Convention Center where the students can shop, learn about vocations and meet keynote speakers.

The NCYC participants from Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish spent time together packing bags of rice and beans as part of a service project for Cross Catholic Outreach.

"Seeing how people in third world countries live really opened my eyes to how blessed I am to have some of the things I have," Kimmick said.

In all, with just a small amount of work, the Pocono parish was able to pack enough bags to feed 5,832 people.

"It was so effortless. We were just talking and having a good time and I didn't realize how many people we were serving food to, that don't get the same things that we do. I take for granted everything I have and when I see that, it just puts me in the right mindset," Chechel added.

Closing Mass encouraged youths to 'keep the fire alive'

At the closing Mass of NCYC, Indianapolis Archbishop Charles C. Thompson encouraged all attendees to return home with the fire of the Holy Spirit.

"Let us go forth with that fire to more fully embrace the Lord's mission in bringing



The young adults and chaperones from Saint Eulalia Parish in Roaring Brook Township gather together prior to the start of the first full day of NCYC 2021. They were accompanied by their pastor, Rev. Jeffrey D. Tudgay, in Indianapolis.

about the kingdom of God, striving always to be Christ-centered in all that we are about," Archbishop Thompson said.

The closing Mass was one of the most memorable experiences of the trip for Olivia DeScipio.

"I really enjoyed the Mass on the last night. It was just so amazing to see so many kids my age, from all over the United States all here for one reason. It was just really amazing to see how big of a community we are really a part of," she said.

When asked how he planned to keep the 'fire' of his NCYC experience alive, Luke Magnotta was quickly able to respond.

"I have to go to Confession more. I went to Confession and the last time that I had gone to Confession was last NCYC so I definitely have to go in between more," he admitted. "The priest who was giving Confession to me explained that it's a beautiful thing that God gives us the opportunity to go to Confession so we need to take it. That is something that I need to do."

"If an experience like this did nothing more than to increase your desire to have a personal relationship with Christ, that will rub off on other people," Drinkall said. "If you are on fire, then the people around you will slowly start to feel that and be on fire as well."



Brendan Dincher, Lucas Bower, Carl Bower and Rev. Brian VanFossen pose inside Lucas Oil Stadium.



Indianapolis Archbishop Charles C. Thompson celebrates the closing Mass of the National Catholic Youth Conference in Lucas Oil Stadium Nov. 20, 2021. (CNS photo/Natalie Hoefer, *The Criterion*)



Colin Donahoe, Luke Kozar and Sean Rooney from Our Lady of the Snows Parish participate in a team building activity in the interactive village inside the Indiana Convention Center. (Photo/Sue Burke)

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On Dec. 6, Saint Nicholas visited **Saint Jude School in Mountain Top** and left a little treat for everyone.



Saint Nicholas made a special visit to the students at **Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre** on his feast day to share stories of how to prepare for Christmas. He also filled the students' shoes with treats.



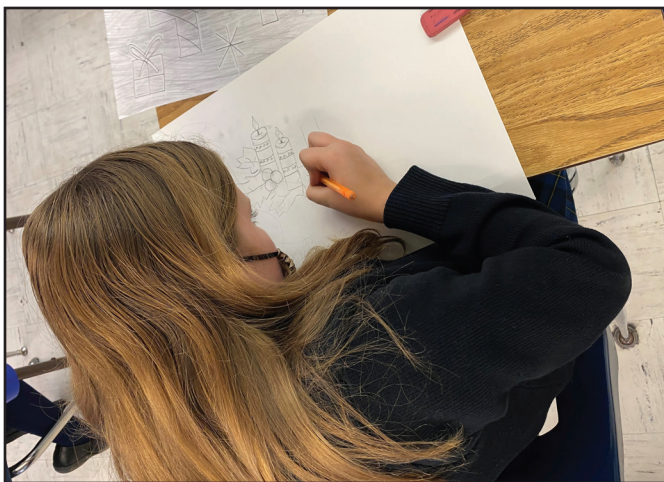
Madelyn Steele and Gavin Cendoma, third grade students at **Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport**, pose with the Advent wreath.



Students, faculty and staff at **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre**, cognizant of the food insecurity that many in our area face, hosted a Thanksgiving Food Drive to benefit the Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen in Wilkes-Barre.



The Student Council at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green** organized a Thanksgiving food drive and donated several hundred food items to Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen in Scranton.



Sixth grade students at **Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg** joyfully work on "Keep Christ in Christmas" posters while listening to inspirational music.



Ethan, a third grade student at **Holy Family Academy in Hazleton**, prepares his Native American Shelter as part of his STREAM lesson.



The eighth grade class of **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** performed the story of the Nativity which was filmed for the entire school community to enjoy during this holy season.



Pre-Kindergarten students at **All Saints Academy in Scranton** work together to measure, stir and bake banana bread to take home as part of their Thanksgiving meal.



Students in third through sixth grade at **Epiphany School in Sayre** work in teams to code a fleet of Sphero robots to dance to a Christmas song during the school's fifth Annual "Hour of Code" event. The students used green screens to record and share their dances with the rest of the school community.



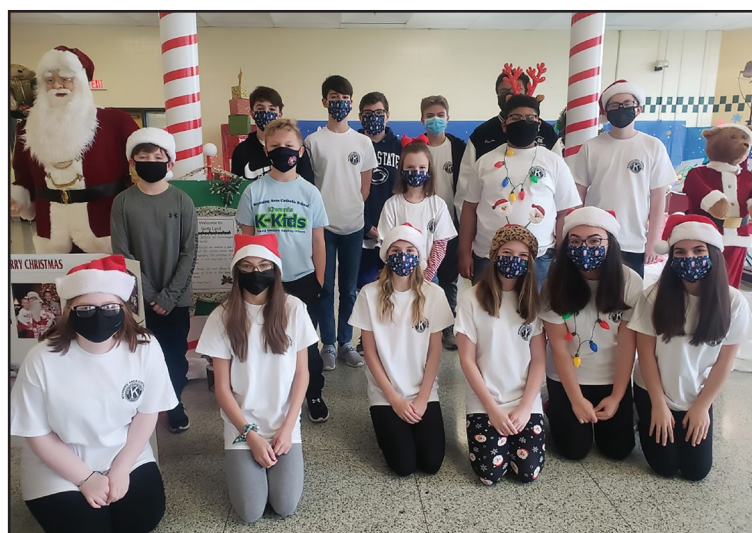
Holy Cross High School in Dunmore continues its tradition of Senior Deck the Halls. The class of 2022 gathered to trim the tree and decorate the school and then celebrated their efforts with a pizza party.



The Service Club at **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore** recently collected personal items and non-perishable food to benefit the organization, "Purposely Preparing Others," a part of Keystone Mission.



Student Council members from **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg** organize bags of food that fellow students and faculty brought in to be donated to the food pantry at Saint Matthew Parish.



The Builders Club at **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter** lent their time and talent at the recent Wyoming Area Kiwanis Breakfast with Santa. Students helped at the Letters to Santa station, snowman ornament station and more.




The students, faculty and staff at **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston** recently collected coats for their monthly Dash for Kindness Activity. The coats were donated to the Catholic Youth Center in Wilkes-Barre for distribution to those in need.



Fourth grade students at **La Salle Academy in Jessup** designed and built their own Mayflower ship for Thanksgiving.



Seventh graders **Makayla Flournoy-Brown** and **Justin Crosby** look on as **Maddy Fiorini**, a junior at **Saint John Neumann High School in Williamsport**, lights the second candle on the Advent wreath.



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Stroudsburg parish serving community meals

The Church of Saint Luke in Stroudsburg feels blessed to be able to once again serve meals to area individuals in need. Saint Luke parishioners have created a new Community Meal service to replace the parish's soup kitchen that provided meals for 33 years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Coordinator Diego Pelaez brought parish volunteers together to form teams, create menus and generate ideas to best serve the local community. On Dec. 5 the new service hosted its first guests, who were treated to a meal of roast beef & gravy, fresh mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls, and choice of apple or pumpkin pie for dessert. Each guest also received a blanket from the ongoing blanket drive and were able to choose a new or gently used coat collected the parish's recent coat drive. Meals will continue to be served on Sunday afternoons from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. at Saint Luke's, 818 Main St., Stroudsburg. Volunteers shown above are, from left: Kathy Pelaez, Janice Halterman, Saint Luke Deacon Phil Zimich, Cheryl Mortimer, Gene Halterman, Father Mike Quinnan, host pastor, and Diego Pelaez.



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Thanksgiving dinners provided in Milford



Members of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish in Milford took time out of their own Thanksgiving Day festivities and celebrations to prepare and serve 170 take-out holiday meals to members of the area community. Shown are some of the Saint Vincent parishioners making final preparations for the Thanksgiving dinner giveaway.



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Saint Mary's Cemetery in Luzerne County to be designated as Diocesan Cemetery



HANOVER TOWNSHIP — The new year will bring with it a new addition to the landscape of Catholic cemeteries covered by the umbrella of care offered by the Diocese of Scranton.

As of New Year's Day, Jan. 1, 2022, the historic Saint Mary's Cemetery in Hanover Township will be among those under the direction and management of the central office of Scranton Diocesan Cemeteries, which is supervised by Dominic Rinaldi.

Diocesan cemeteries are classified as such due to the number of their annual interments — and the full-time staff required to manage them — being deemed too great for a single parish to maintain.

According to Rinaldi, the transition of Saint Mary's from a parish to Diocesan cemetery was necessitated by last summer's linkage of the Wilkes-Barre parishes of Our Lady of Fatima and Saint Nicholas.

The city parish communities, which are in close proximity of each other, are now under the pastorate of Father Joseph Verespy, who assumed the pastorate of Our Lady of Fatima Parish, with its worship site of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church, as he continues to serve as pastor of Saint Nicholas Parish.

"Saint Mary's Cemetery has for decades been a place of prayer, loving remembrance and hope in the promise of resurrection and eternal life," Father Verespy commented, regarding the cemetery's new designation. "While the operation of the cemetery will be carried out under the direction of the Diocese of Scranton, faithful can be assured that Saint Mary's will continue to be tended to with the same care and reverence as always."

Rinaldi stated that his office was notified of the cemetery's transition in July, at which time it was determined that Saint Mary's would join the five other active Diocesan cemeteries of Cathedral in Scranton; Saint Catherine's in

Moscow; Holy Cross in Old Forge; Mount Olivet in Wyoming; and Calvary in Drums.

"Since then, an analysis was conducted with employees regarding policy, procedure, software and capital needs," Rinaldi said, further commenting that area funeral directors were apprised of the change in the cemetery's status on Nov. 1.

While there are still some operational and personnel issues that need to be resolved, the Diocese of Scranton is committed to making the transition as smooth as possible for the families, employees, parish communities and all other stakeholders.

The director of Diocesan cemeteries indicated that there are currently seven full-time employees at Saint Mary's Cemetery, which will increase the total number of full-time Diocesan cemetery staff members to 29.

"With the addition of Saint Mary's to the Diocesan cemeteries, it will bring the total of interments at these cemeteries to more than 2,000 annually," Rinaldi explained.

Established in 1881, Saint Mary's Cemetery is located on Main Street in Hanover Township on 110 acres of land, with its graves and other interment sites currently serving as the final resting place for approximately 90,000 deceased.

Second only to Cathedral Cemetery as the largest in the Scranton Diocese, Saint Mary's conducts some 500 interments annually.

Also noted is that Resurrection Cemetery in Montoursville, Lycoming County, transitioned from a Diocesan to parish cemetery on Sept. 1 and is currently under the direction of Father Glenn McCreary, V.E., pastor of Resurrection Parish in Muncy.

As Director of Diocesan Catholic Cemeteries, Dominic Rinaldi can be contacted at the Diocese of Scranton Chancery Administration Building, 300 Wyoming Ave., Scranton, PA 18503, or by phone at (570) 558-4310.

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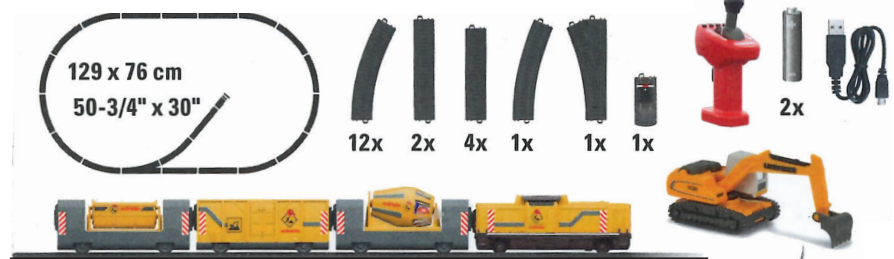


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My friends, for this month's column I want to share with you this news story on our Holy Father's reflection on consumerism and Christmas.

His words are far more poignant than any I can offer. This article is from *Catholic News Service*. Please know of my prayers as we celebrate this Holy Season.

VATICAN CITY — The Christmas tree and Nativity crèche should evoke the joy and the peace of God's love and not the selfish indulgence of consumerism and indifference, Pope Francis said.

Meeting Dec. 10 with delegations from Andalo in Italy's Trentino-South Tyrol region and from Peru's Huancavelica region — responsible, respectively, for the Christmas tree and the Nativity scene in St. Peter's Square — the pope said the traditional Christmas

symbols bring an atmosphere that is "rich in tenderness, sharing and family closeness."

"Let us not live a fake, commercial Christmas! Let us allow ourselves to be enveloped by God's closeness, by the Christmas atmosphere that art, music, songs and traditions bring to our heart," he said.

The delegations were at the Vatican for the evening ceremony to light the Vatican Christmas tree and unveil the Nativity scene. However, the Vatican announced earlier that due to less-than-favorable weather predictions for the evening, the traditional outdoor ceremony would be held inside the Paul VI hall.

Joining the two delegations was a group of young men and women from a parish in Padua who created the Nativity scene displayed in the audience hall.

The Nativity scene in St. Peter's Square featured 30 statues depicting Mary, Joseph, the Three Kings, shepherds and various flora and fauna from Huancavelica. The figures were dressed in the traditional bright, multicolored garments of the region's Indigenous Chopcca people.

Next to the Andean Nativity scene stood a 90-foot-tall Christmas tree. The spruce tree came from a sustainably managed forest in the Dolomite mountains in northern Italy's Trentino-

South Tyrol region. The round wooden ornaments were also from Trentino.

Expressing his gratitude to the delegations for their gifts, the pope said the traditional garments worn by the figures in the Nativity scene "represent the people of the Andes and symbolize the universal call to salvation."

"Jesus came to the world through the concreteness of a people to save every man and woman, of all cultures and nationalities. He made himself small so that we might welcome him and receive the gift of God's tenderness," he said.

He also said the spruce tree was a "sign of Christ" and a reminder of God's gift of uniting "himself with humankind forever."

As Christmas festivities draw near, Pope Francis said the crèche remains a symbol of hope that God "never tires of us" and that he chose to dwell among men and women "not as one who stands on high to dominate, but as the one who stoops low, small and poor, to serve."

"For it to be truly Christmas, let us not forget this," the pope said. "God comes to be with us and asks us to take care of our brothers and sisters, especially the poorest, the weakest and the most fragile, those whom the pandemic risks marginalizing even more."



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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 Respetto de Reportar el Abuso Sexual de Un Menor de Edad

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

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

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

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

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Mourning, prayer and a resolve to rebuild follow devastating tornadoes

MAYFIELD, Ky. (CNS) – Mourning, prayer and a resolve to rebuild shattered lives, homes and businesses in Mayfield followed one of the most powerful twisters in U.S. history that leveled the city of 10,000 in western Kentucky overnight Dec. 10.

The Bluegrass State was the worst hit as numerous devastating tornadoes traveled across it and its neighboring states of Illinois, Tennessee, Arkansas and Missouri, leveling entire communities.

As of Dec. 14, at least 74 people were confirmed dead in Kentucky, including a 2-month-old infant; 109 people remained unaccounted for.

At least 14 other people were killed in the other states: six in Illinois, four in Tennessee, and two each in Arkansas and Missouri.

As members of two of Mayfield’s faith congregations came together to pray Dec. 12 amid rubble – piles of brick, metal and glass – prayers for their city and all of those affected by the ferocious mid-December twisters came from far and wide, including from Pope Francis and the U.S. Catholic bishops, and from close to home – Bishop William F. Medley of Owensboro, whose diocese covers western Kentucky.

A papal telegram conveyed by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, said Pope Francis “was saddened to learn of the devastating impact of the tornadoes” in the Midwest and the South.

“He offers heartfelt prayers that almighty God will grant eternal peace to those who have died, comfort to those who mourn their loss, and strength to all those affected by this immense tragedy,” it said.

“With gratitude for the tireless efforts of the rescue workers and all engaged in caring for the injured, the grieving families and those left homeless, Pope Francis invokes upon all engaged in the massive work of relief and rebuilding the Lord’s gifts of strength and generous perseverance in the service of their brothers and sisters,” said the telegram, which Cardinal Parolin sent to Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio in the U.S.

Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, said the destruction and devastation was “heartbreaking” and called for prayer and assistance for all those who were in the path of the storms.

“During this Advent season where we await in joyful anticipation for the birth of our Lord, we pray for those who have been injured, for those who have lost their lives, and for their grieving families and communities,” said Archbishops Gomez and Coakley. “May those who have been impacted by these storms find peace, comfort and hope in our faith and in God’s endless love.




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The Diocese of Scranton

The Catholic Light

– 2022 PUBLICATION SCHEDULE –

January 13	February 17	March 17	April 14
May 19	June 16	July 14	August 18
September 15	October 13	November 17	December 15

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DECEMBER SCHEDULE

CTV LOCAL ORIGATION 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								
2:00 AM	ICONS SPOTLIGHT	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Encore)					
2:30 AM	THEY MIGHT BE SAINTS		EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	
3:00 AM	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	SPECIALS	ANGELUS FROM NAZARETH	LIFE ON THE ROCK	BATTLE READY	THE WILL OF GOD	
3:30AM		DEFENDING LIFE		PAPAL AUDIENCE(3:15)	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY (Call in thurs)		AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY	
4:00 AM	EWTN LIVE (Encore)	LIVING THE DIVINE MERCY	FIRST COMES LOVE	REFLECTIONS(4:15)	BOB AND PENNY LORD	WEB OF FAITH 2.0	SAVORING OUR FAITH	
4:30 AM		SUNDAY BEST WITH FR GROESCHEL	GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR A HAPPY LIFE	REAL LIFE CATHOLIC	THE PROMISE	LIFE IS WORTH LIVING	GK CHESTERTON	
5:00 AM	THE REFORMATION	EWTN BOOKMARK	THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL	DOMINICAN SISTERS	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY	EWTN SPECIALS	CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS	
5:30 AM	WHERE GOD WEEPS	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN	METANOIA	ADVENT REFLECTIONS			CATHOLICS COME HOME	
6:00 AM	ANGELUS WITH POPE FRANCIS	EWTN ORIGINAL PRODUCTIONS						
6:30 AM	JOURNEY THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES	G.K. CHESTERTON	CHURCH AND THE POOR	MATTHEW'S TESTIMONY TO JESUS	SAINTS VS SCOUNDRELS	THE CHOICES WE FACE	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	
7:00 AM	THE CHAPLET OF ST. MICHAEL					STATIONS OF THE CROSS	CHAPLET OF ST. MICHAEL	
7:30 AM	THE HOLY ROSARY	HOLY LAND ROSARY					THE HOLY ROSARY	
7:50 AM		LITANY OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY	LITANY OF THE HOLY NAME	LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH	LITANY OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD	LITANY OF SACRED HEART		
8:00 AM	SUNDAY MASS (Live)	DAILY MASS (Live)						
9:00 AM	(9:20AM) LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART	HOLY ROSARY WITH THE FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIES OF THE ETERNAL WORD						
9:30 AM	EWTN ROSARY FRANCISCANS	SUNDAY BEST WITH FR. GROESCHEL	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY	SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION (ENCORE)	EWTN LIVE (ENCORE)	THE WORLD OVER (Encore)	MY CATH. FAMILY	
10:00 AM	SUNDAY MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL	RELIGIOUS CATALOG		MOTHER ANGELICA LIVE	LIVE WITH PASSION	FOCUS	MOTHER ANGELICA LIVE CLASSICS	LUCY AND FRIENDS
10:30 AM		CHOICES WE FACE	ST ANN'S WEEKLY NOVENA					ADVENT SERVICE
11:00 AM	EWTN NEWS IN-DEPTH	OFOD OR ADVENT SERVICE		MAN AND WOMAN	MARRIAGE, FOR BETTER, FOREVER	MARRIAGE WORKS IN CHRIST	NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING	
11:30 AM		THE PROMISE						
12:00 PM	SUNDAY MASS (Encore)	THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, LIVE AT 12:10 p.m.						EWTN DAILY MASS (Encore)
12:30PM	(1:20PM) LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART	"DIOCESAN DATEBOOK" airs before and after Mass.						
1:00 PM	IN CONCERT	WOMEN OF GRACE					EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	
1:30 PM		AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	PRO LIFE WEEKLY	AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	ADVENT SERVICE / OFOD	WOMEN OF GRACE HOUR LONG	EWTN BOOKMARK	
2:00 PM		CALLED TO COMMUNION	SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION	FR. SPITZER'S UNIVERSE	THE JOURNEY HOME	LIFE ON THE ROCK	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	ADVENT REFLECTIONS	THE HOLY ROSARY DIOCESAN DATEBOOK					SUNDAY VIGIL MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL	
4:30 PM	SAVORING OUR FAITH	MASSTERPIECE DONUT	THE FRIAR	TRUTH IN THE HEART	CAT CHAT	BUG TIME ADVENTURES		
5:00 PM	SUNDAY PASSIONIST MASS	EWTN BOOKMARK	THE CHOICES WE FACE	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	POLISH CATHOLIC	THEY MIGHT BE SAINTS	GRAB YOUR CATECHISM	
5:30 PM	SUNDAY MASS FROM ST. PETERS CATHEDRAL	SPECIALS					FIRST COMES LOVE	
6:00 PM	ADVENT SERVICE LIVE FROM ST. PETERS CATHEDRAL(6:15)	EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Live)					METANOIA	
6:30 PM	SUNDAY MASS	CATHOLICS COME HOME	REAL LIFE CATHOLICS	CHURCH UNIVERSAL	VATICANO	WHAT IS GOD'S WILL?	ADVENT SPECIALS	
7:00 PM		THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, (Encore)						DAILY MASS
7:30PM		THE HOLY ROSARY DIOCESAN DATEBOOK						
8:00 PM		(8:20) LITANY OF SACRED HEART	THE JOURNEY HOME (Live)	OFOD OR SPECIALS (CAN BE 90 MINUTES) MUSIC AND SPOKEN WORD	EWTN LIVE	THE WORLD OVER (Live)	EWTN NEWS IN DEPTH	EWTN CINEMA
8:30 PM	CATHOLICS COME HOME							
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	ADVENT SERVICE	LIVE WITH PASSION	WEEKLY NOVENA TO ST. ANN		
10:00PM	EWTN SPECIALS	THE WORLD OVER LIVE (ENCORE)	SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION (ENCORE)	FR. SPITZER'S UNIVERSE	PRO-LIFE WEEKLY	LIFE ON THE ROCK	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY	
10:30 PM					DEFENDING LIFE	ICONS SPOTLIGHT		
11:00PM	CATHOLIC BEGINNINGS	BATTLE READY	LONG RIDE HOME	CROSSING THE GOAL	REAL LIFE CATHOLIC	WOMEN OF GRACE HOUR LONG	WEB OF FAITH 2.0	
11:30PM	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN	WOMEN OF GRACE					EWTN BOOKMARK	

Irish American Association kitchen donation



Members of the Irish American Association of Lackawanna County have made a \$1,000 donation to support the ministry and mission of Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen in downtown Scranton. The charitable gift was made possible through the proceeds from the organization’s recent golf tournament. Shown during the check presentation at Saint Francis Kitchen are, from left: John Monaghan, tournament director; Rob Williams, Saint Francis executive director; Atty. Tim Kelly, Irish American Association president; Bill Egan; Jerry Gerrity; and Dennis Gavin, past association president.

Sacred Heart Men mark milestone



The Men of the Sacred Heart of the Diocese of Scranton commemorated ten years of prayerful First Friday devotions in Wilkes-Barre when they gathered for their First Friday Mass, Holy Hour and Rosary on Dec. 3 at Saint André Bessette Parish in the city. The monthly gatherings honoring the Sacred Heart of Jesus are in accord with the apparitions of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, whose revelations spread First Friday devotion to the Lord through his Most Divine Heart. All Catholic men are welcome to join the Sacred Heart apostolate, which hosts the 6:30 p.m. Mass celebrated each First Friday at Saint André Bessette Church. Pictured for the December First Friday devotion are, front row from left: Father Ken Seegar, host pastor; Ted Hendry and Richard Conway. Back row: Alex Partika, Brian Clark and Christopher Calore.

Prayer Requests for Priests

The Daily Prayer Request for Priests schedule is as follows:
December 16, Father Gerard McGlone; December 17, Monsignor Stephen McGough; December 18, Father John McHale; December 19, Father Connell McHugh; December 20, Jesuit Father Bernard McIlhenny; December 21, Father Leo McKernan; December 22, Jesuit Father Ronald McKinney; December 23, Father Patrick McLaughlin; December 24, Father Edward Michelini; December 25, Father Kevin Miller; December 26, Jesuit Father J. Patrick Mohr; December 27, Father Joseph Mosley; December 28, Father Joseph Motsay; December 29, Father Thomas Muldowney; December 30, Father Kevin Mulhern; December 31, Father Paul Mullen; January 1, Pope Francis; January 2, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI; January 3, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; January 4, Father James Nash; January 5, Jesuit Father Eugene Nolan; January 6, Father Theodore Obaza; January 7, Saint Peter Priestly Fraternity Father Joseph Orlowski; January 8, Holy Cross Father Thomas O’Hara; January 9, Father Peter O’Rourke; January 10, Passionist Father Sibi Padinjaredath; January 11, Father James Paisley; January 12, Father Francis Pauselli; January 13, Father Jaime Perez Restrepo; January 14, Father Carmen Perry; January 15, Jesuit Father Thomas Pesci; January 16, Father Thomas Petro; January 17, Father William Petruska; January 18, Father Michael Piccola.

IHM Sisters to 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, Jan. 12.

The ongoing series of prayer devotions celebrates a specific theme each month relating to IHM history and the religious community’s charism.

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 January 2022 prayer service will be offered for the special intention of “Immigrants Crossing our Southern Border.”

For more information, contact the IHM Sisters in Scranton at (570) 346-5404 or communications@sistersofihm.org.

Marian Devotion Rosary prayer services listed

Marian Devotion Ministries in the Diocese of Scranton, dedicated to promoting prayerful devotion to Jesus and Mary through recitation of the Rosary, continues its “Fatima Journey for 2021.”

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

Upcoming Marian Devotion events are scheduled as follows:

Christmas Rosary with Carols and Fatima Prayers — Dec. 17, hosted at the Basilica of

Saint Ann in West Scranton; held from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m., followed by celebration of Mass.

— Dec. 20, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., hosted at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, Route 315, Laffin (Pittston).

Third Monday of the Month Rosary — Jan. 17, from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, Route 315, Laffin. Service includes litany and Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

To host an event or for more information, contact Ernie Pappa at (570) 241-8171 or email: singtomary@aol.com.

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 **Jan. 7** at Saint Joseph’s Oblate Chapel, 1880 Highway 315, Laffin (Pittston).

Devotions begin Friday evening at 8 p.m. with recitation 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 and exposition



of the Blessed Sacrament 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.

Music for the First Friday devotion is provided by Marian Devotion Ministries, led by Ernie Pappa.

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Catholic Happenings

Weekly Eucharistic Adoration — **DEC. 16**, hosted at St. Anthony/St. George Maronite Catholic Church, 311 Park Ave. (corner of Dana Street), Wilkes-Barre; all-day exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament held every Thursday. Devotion concludes with sacramental confessions at 6 p.m., followed by Rosary recitation and closing benediction, with individual blessing with the monstrance of the Eucharistic Lord. Celebration of Mass concludes the day of adoration on the first Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. All faithful are welcome.

Advent Eucharistic Adoration — **DEC. 16 & 23**, hosted at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Swoyersville; adoration of the Blessed Sacrament offered on the Thursdays of Advent from 6 to 8 p.m. at the parish worship site of Holy Trinity Church, 116 Hughes St., Swoyersville. All are welcome for private visitation and prayerful meditation before the Eucharistic Lord. For more information, call (570) 287-6624.

Weekly/Monthly Pro-Life Rosary Gatherings — **DEC. 16/ JAN. 7**, offered for the special intentions of ending abortion and closure of the Planned Parenthood location in Wilkes-Barre; Rosary is prayed every Thursday and First Friday of the month at 10 a.m. in front of the offices of Planned Parenthood, 101 N. Main St., Wilkes-Barre (across from King's College). All faithful are welcome to participate.

"And A Little Child Shall Lead": A Ceremony of Lessons & Carols — **DEC. 17**, hosted by St. Gregory Parish in Clarks Green; program begins at 7 p.m. in the Church of St. Gregory. Featuring the combined choirs of St. Gregory's and Our Lady of the Snows Parish in Clarks Summit; accompanied by the World Drumming Ensemble, Tone Chime Choir, and the String Project from the parish's "Music in the Green" program. All are welcome to attend.

Weekend Pierogi & Soup Sales — **DEC. 18 & 19**, sponsored by SS. Peter & Paul Parish, 1309

West Locust St., West Scranton; pierogi and variety of soups are sold prior to and following the weekend Masses on Saturday at 4 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m. Soups include clam chowder, chicken noodle, piggy, and Italian wedding. Cost per order: pierogi, \$8/dozen; clam chowder, \$8/quart.

Advent Lessons & Carols — **DEC. 19**, hosted by Immaculate Conception of the BVM Parish in Bastress (Williamsport); program begins at 4 p.m. in Immaculate Conception Church, 5973 Jacks Hollow Road. Advent program is a liturgical celebration of Scripture readings and carols focusing on the mysteries of the Incarnation and Nativity of the Lord. For more information, call (570) 745-3301.

Living Nativity — **DEC. 19**, hosted at Holy Cross Parish in Olyphant; live dramatization of the Birth of Christ will be presented by the parish religious education students at 6 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

Advent Lessons & Carols — **DEC. 19**, hosted by St. Monica Parish in West Wyoming; evening program of music and Christmas meditations begins at 7 p.m. in the parish church. All are welcome.

Living Nativity — **DEC. 19**, presented by the religious education students and parish choir of the Basilica of St. Ann in West Scranton; live event begins at 2 p.m. in St. Ann Basilica Church. All are invited to attend.

Parish Christmas Raffle Drawing — **DEC. 19**, sponsored by Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Lake Silkworth; drawing will be held following the 11 a.m. Sunday Mass. Featuring cash prizes of \$10,000 and \$5,000. Tickets cost \$100 each; only 300 chances will be sold. Tickets available by calling the parish office (570) 477-5040; Diane Grimes (570) 262-4382; or Mike Loftus (570) 592-5438.

Continued on next page

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Catholic Happenings

**“Cookie Extravaganza”
Homemade Christmas Cookie
Sale — DEC. 19**, hosted by Queen
of Angels Parish in Jessup; sale
held from 9 a.m. until sold out in the
parish Pastoral Center on Church
Street. Patrons are requested to use
side ramp entrance.

**Monthly Parish Breakfast
— DEC. 19**, hosted by St. Eulalia
Parish, 214 Blue Shutters Road,
Roaring Brook Township; serving
from 8:30 to noon in the parish hall.
Menu includes pancakes, eggs,
breakfast potatoes, sausage links,
ham, rolls, toast, coffee, tea, juice
and water; take-outs available.
Cost: adults, \$10; students, (ages
six to 12), \$7; and children (ages
five & younger), \$5. Christmas
Boutique will be open, featuring
handmade and unique gift items.
For more information, call (570)
842-7656.

**Deanery Penance Service
— DEC. 20**, hosted by St. John
the Evangelist Parish in Pittston;
Sacrament of Reconciliation
(confessions) will be available
beginning at 7 p.m. in St. John the
Evangelist Church, William St.,
Pittston. All are welcome.

Weekly Bingo — DEC. 20, hosted by Visitation of the
Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in
Dickson City; bingo games held
every Monday evening in St.
Mary’s Visitation parish center,
625 Dundaff St., Dickson City,
with doors opening at 5 p.m. Early
bird games begin at 6:20 p.m.;
regular games follow. Admission
package includes weekly jackpot
and 17 regular games. Center is
handicapped accessible at the
Scott Road entrance; variety of
foods and beverages available
for purchase. Shuttle service
provided from Carbondale and
Scranton; facial masks required for

anyone not vaccinated. For more
information, call the parish office
(570) 489-2091.

**Advent Series Conclusion
— DEC. 22**, sponsored by Our
Lady Queen of Peace Parish in
Brodheadsville; final Wednesday
evening presentation begins at 6
p.m. in the parish church. Program
features a series of talks, entitled
“Raise Your Heads, Lift Up Your
Hearts,” by Father Robert Simon,
pastor, on the celebration of the
Mass. All are welcome. For more
information, contact the parish
office at (610) 681-6137.

**Virtual Christmas Eve
Concert: “A Christmas Cantata”
— DEC. 24**, presented by the St.
Paul Parish Adult Choir and the
student chorus of St. Clare/St. Paul
School in Green Ridge, Scranton;
virtual event will premiere live on
Facebook and YouTube at 3 p.m.
Presentation will be recorded for
future viewing.

**Christmas Eve Living
Nativity Christmas Pageant —
DEC. 24**, hosted at St. Patrick
Parish in Milford; parish children
will present a live re-enactment
of the Christmas story at 6 p.m.
Event will include the singing of
seasonal carols, followed by the
celebration of the Christmas Vigil
Mass in St. Patrick Church. All are
welcome.

**12 Days of Christmas Cash
Raffle — DEC. 25-JAN. 5**,
sponsored by Exaltation of the
Holy Cross Parish in Hanover
Township; cash prizes will be
drawn daily on Facebook from
Christmas Day through Jan. 5.
Raffle tickets cost \$20 each;
winning prizes up to \$10,000. For
more information or to purchase
tickets, call (570) 706-6951 or visit
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ANTHEM OF THE SEAS
January 31- February 11, 2022
Departing from: Cape Liberty (Bayonne), New Jersey
Ports of Call: San Juan, Puerto Rico •Philipsburg, St.
Maarten •St. John's, Antigua •Castries, St. Lucia
•Basseterre, St. Kitts From \$1150.00 per person

9 NT BEST OF WESTERN EUROPE CRUISE VOYAGER OF THE SEAS

April 14-24, 2022
Departing from: Barcelona, Spain
Ports of Call: Cartagena, Spain •Gibraltar (U.K.) • Lisbon,
Portugal •Amsterdam, Netherlands •Copenhagen, Denmark
From \$2195.00 per person*air included!

ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES WITH THREE NIGHTS LONDON

Edinburgh City Tour • London City Tour • Buckingham Palace •
Cardiff, Wales • Edinburgh Castle • Scotch Whiskey Tour &
Tasting • York & York Minster • Stratford-Upon-Avon •
Salisbury Cathedral • Stonehenge
May 8-17, 2022
\$3495.00 per person

ITALY NORTH & SOUTH DELUXE TOUR

June 4-15, 2022
Visit Milan, Florence, Rome, Amalfi Coast, Capri, Venice
& the Beautiful Lake Como!
\$3895.00 per person

COLORADO ROCKIES TOUR

JUNE 7-16, 2022
Ride the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad Visit
Rocky Mountain, Arches, Canyonlands, & Mesa Verde National
Parks Colorado National Monument Pike’s Peak and Manitou
Springs \$2895.00 per person

7 NIGHT SCANDINAVIAN & RUSSIA CRUISE

VOYAGER OF THE SEAS* Pre Night in Stockholm
JULY 8-17, 2022
Departing from: Stockholm, Sweden Ports of Call: St.
Petersburg, Russian Federation •Helsinki, Finland Tallinn,
Estonia •Visby, Gotland, Sweden From \$1999.00*air included.

SIGNATURE NATIONAL PARKS TOUR VISIT 7 OF AMERICA’S NATIONAL PARKS July 12-22, 2022

Grand Canyon, Lake Powell, Bryce Canyon, Zion, Grand Teton,
Yellowstone & Mt Rushmore all on one tour!
Only \$3299.00 per person

ALASKA CRUISE TOUR WITH ALASKAN GOLD RAIL SERVICE!

July 26-August 8, 2022
7 night cruise, Alaskan Gold Rail Service, Denali Park,
Fairbanks, Anchorage & Seattle!
From \$3695.00*air included!

CANADIAN ROCKIES ON THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEER TRAIN!

August 5-13, 2022
Journey through the Clouds on the Rocky Mountaineer
Vancouver -Kamloops- Jasper Lake Louise - Banff -
Calgary
\$3895.00 per person

9 NIGHT ITALY, GREECE & FRANCE CRUISE WITH PRE NIGHT IN ATHENS!

JEWEL OF THE SEAS
September 26-October 6, 2022
Departing from: Piraeus (Athens), Greece
Ports of Call: Santorini (Thira), Greece •
Katakolon (Olympia), Greece • Catania, Sicily,
Italy • Salerno (Naples), Italy • Ajaccio, Corsica,
France • Palma De Mallorca, Balearic Islands •
Valencia, Spain • Ibiza, Balearic Islands •
Tarragona, Spain
From \$2895.00 *air include

PUNTA CANA ALL INCLUSIVE!

At the Riu Palace Bavaro

JANUARY 24-31, 2022
\$1295.00 per person based on 2 to a room
February 21-28, 2022
\$1495.00 per person based on 2 to a room.
Included Features:
Transportation to the airport.
Roundtrip flights from Philadelphia to Punta Cana
7 Night’s Accommodations in a Junior Suite



Apostleship of Prayer

Papal Intention for January 2022

For True Human Fraternity —

We pray for all those suffering from
religious discrimination and persecution; may their
own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate
from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

Parishioners honored for church service



At the recent Christmas party of the Saint John Catholic Men's Club, members of Most Holy Trinity Parish in Susquehanna County were recognized for their many years of dedicated volunteer service for their churches. Most Holy Trinity Parish includes the churches of Saint John the Evangelist in Susquehanna, Saint Lawrence in Great Bend, and Saint Martin of Tours in Jackson. Ed Chianese, club president, presented the plaques to the recipients. Pictured are, from left: Sharon O'Connor; Carol Jackson, accepting on behalf of Kathy Matis; Jeff Keyes; Mary Snyder; Gay Keyes, accepting on behalf of Christine Sezer; and Ed Chianese.

AROUND THE WORLD TRAVEL

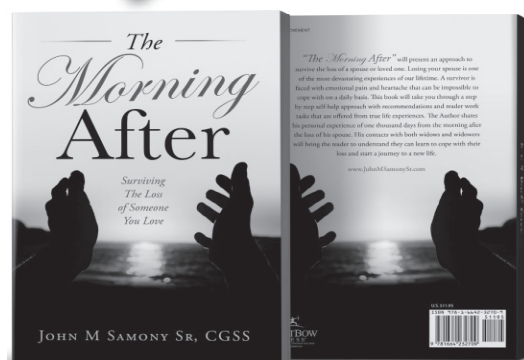
BROADWAY IN SYRACUSE:
★ HAMILTON ★

March 26th: price includes bus and show **\$200 pp**

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Medals, Uniforms, Helmets, Hats, Armbands, Flags,
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Please leave a message if I'm unavailable.

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