



# **The Catholic Light**

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

**Weekly E-Newsletter**

**December 23, 2021**

## **Bishop Joseph C. Bambera's 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.

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,

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

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*We invite you home for Christmas!*

For a full schedule of Mass times for all parishes in the  
**DIOCESE OF SCRANTON**  
visit: [dioceseofscranton.org](http://dioceseofscranton.org)

If you are looking for a Christmas Mass near you, the Diocese of Scranton Communications Office has compiled a list of Mass times for parishes across the Diocese of Scranton. Parishes are listed by county.

The list also includes information on parish livestreams that are available.

[Find a Christmas Mass Time at a Parish Near You](#)

## **Bishop Bambera's Video Reflection for Christmas 2021**



## **CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton Christmas broadcast schedule**



CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will provide live coverage of the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve Vigil Mass from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist.

CTV will also provide a live broadcast of the 10 a.m. Mass on Christmas morning from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. Monsignor Dale R. Rupert, Cathedral Pastor, will be the principal celebrant.

CTV will also provide a live broadcast of the 10 a.m. Mass on Sunday, December 26, the Feast of the Holy Family from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

CTV will also provide a number of other live broadcasts for the celebration of Christmas from the Vatican and Washington, D.C.

[For a Full Listing of CTV: Catholic Television Broadcasts for Christmas](#)

## Jesus' Humble Birth A Reminder Of God's Love For Humanity, Pope Says



The birth of the son of God in a humble stable, in the presence of both lowly shepherds and majestic Magi, is a “universal event that concerns all of humanity,” Pope Francis said.

During his weekly general audience Dec. 22, the pope said that only through humility can one truly understand God and oneself because it “opens us up to the experience of truth, of authentic joy, of knowing what matters.”

“The Magi may have even been great according to the world’s logic, but they made themselves lowly, humble, and precisely because of this they succeeded in finding Jesus and recognizing him. They accepted the humility of seeking, of setting out on a journey, of asking, of taking a risk, of making a mistake,” he said.

[Read the Full Story from Catholic News Service](#)

**Father Jeffrey J. Walsh, Diocese Of Scranton  
Priest, Named Bishop Of Diocese Of Gaylord,  
Michigan**

**POPE FRANCIS APPOINTS**



**REVEREND  
JEFFREY J. WALSH**



*Bishop of Gaylord, Michigan*

Pope Francis has named Father Jeffrey J. Walsh, a priest of the Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania, as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord, Michigan.

He succeeds Bishop Steven J. Raica, who was Gaylord's bishop from 2014 until 2020 when he was installed to head the Diocese of Birmingham, Alabama. Since June 2020, Bishop Walter A. Hurley, the retired bishop of Grand Rapids, Michigan, has served as apostolic administrator of the Gaylord Diocese.

Bishop-designate Walsh currently serves as pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, which are both in Carbondale, Pennsylvania.

His appointment was announced Dec. 21 by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, in Washington.

[Read the Full Story from The Catholic Light](#)

## September 2022 Date Set For Beatification Of John Paul I



Pope Francis will beatify Pope John Paul I Sept. 4, 2022, at the Vatican, according to Stefania Falasca, a journalist and vice postulator of the late pope's sainthood cause.

In October, Pope Francis had signed a decree recognizing a miracle attributed to the intercession of Pope John Paul I, clearing the way for his beatification. At the time, a date for the ceremony was not announced.

Writing Dec. 23 in *Avvenire*, the daily newspaper owned by the Italian bishops' conference, Falasca said the date had been set.

[Read the Full Story from The Catholic Light](#)



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