



# ***The Catholic Light***

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

## **Weekly E-Newsletter**

**December 30, 2021**

**Begin a new year by bringing about the family of God**



New Year's celebrations can be a mixed experience.

On one hand, the holidays have brought us opportunities to be renewed in our relationships with family and friends. On the other hand, secular

media can present this sort of "new year, new you" approach that may not really jive with our actual experiences.

As we head into 2022, Sister Josephine Garrett, Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth, and a licensed counselor, offers a reflection for those who are carrying large individual or communal burdens into the new year.

[Read Sister Josephine's Reflection for New Year 2022](#)

## **Bishop Bambera celebrates Christmas Masses at Cathedral of Saint Peter**



Hundreds of people filled the pews of the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

With many of the faithful wearing masks because of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, people were happy to once again gather together in person for the celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord.

Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, celebrated the 4 p.m. Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve as well as Midnight Mass at the Cathedral.

"God's light does indeed shine brightly this day. And it will pour into our hearts if we are humble enough to admit our need for a Savior and, in turn, generous enough to follow the pattern of Jesus' life in love and service of our sisters and brothers. In so doing, we will discover just how blessed we are and the true gifts of this great Feast," the bishop said during his homily.

[Read Bishop Bambera's Full Homily from Christmas 2021](#)

## **Pope At Christmas: 'God Comes Into The World In Littleness'**



The celebration of Christmas serves as a reminder that God did not reveal his greatness in a grand spectacle, but rather in the "littleness" of a poor, vulnerable child born in a stable in Bethlehem, Pope Francis said.

"Let us be amazed by this scandalous truth," the pope said in his homily Dec. 24 as he celebrated the nighttime liturgy.

"The one who embraces the universe needs to be held in another's arms. The one who created the sun needs to be warmed. Tenderness incarnate



needs to be cuddled. Infinite love has a tiny heart that beats softly,” he said.

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

## Children's Pageant Depicts Nativity Story



Students in the Children's Faith Formation Program at Saint Patrick Parish in Milford participated in a colorful pageant retelling the Nativity Story, from Jesus' birth to the Visitation of the Magi.

The event took place on Christmas Eve at the Pike County parish.

Directed by Laurie Barcia, who is also a fifth grade catechist in the Children's Faith Formation Program, the pageant featured Rachel Swinton and Angelica Barcia as narrators.

[For More Information from The Catholic Light](#)

## Even The Holy Family Felt Stress, Pope Tells Families



The COVID-19 pandemic has been tough on families, but with extra patience and faith, bonds can grow stronger, Pope Francis wrote in a letter released on the feast of the Holy Family.

“Marriage, as a vocation, calls you to steer a tiny boat — wave-tossed yet sturdy, thanks to the reality of the sacrament — across a sometimes stormy sea,” he told couples in the letter published Dec. 26.

Like the disciples who were foundering on the Sea of Galilee, couples must keep their eyes fixed on Jesus, he said. “Only in this way, will you find peace, overcome conflicts and discover solutions to many of your problems. Those problems, of course, will not disappear, but you will be able to see them from a different perspective.”

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

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## Immediate, Long-Term Relief: Catholic Agencies’ Response To 2021 Disasters



Right up through December, extreme weather events and natural disasters of 2021 continued to upend local communities and set agendas for domestic and overseas emergency response efforts at major Catholic aid organizations.

“We had about 85 disasters,” in the United States this past year, said Kim Burgo, vice president for disaster operations for Catholic Charities USA.

“Charities agencies don’t just respond to a disaster because it was declared so by the Federal Emergency Management Agency,” she said, noting that its agencies also respond to local events, like floods, which impact local communities.

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





## **Support your Parish or the Diocesan Annual Appeal directly from your IRA**

If you are 70½ or older and have a traditional individual retirement account, you can use all or part of your required minimum distribution to support your parish or the Diocesan Annual Appeal without having to count the transfers as income for federal tax purposes.

Distributions must be sent directly to your parish or the Diocese by the plan administrator of your IRA.

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