



# ***The Catholic Light***

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

## **Weekly E-Newsletter**

**March 17, 2022**

*Happy Saint Patrick's Day*

### **Diocese unites in prayer and faith for peace in Ukraine**



As the situation facing our suffering brothers and sisters in Ukraine becomes more dire by the hour, parishioners across the Diocese of Scranton lifted their voices and hearts to God to pray for peace this week.

At the request of the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, churches in all 11 counties of the Diocese of Scranton held special Holy Hours for Peace and other prayer opportunities.

The bishop led a Holy Hour for Peace on Tuesday, March 15, at 5 p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

“No war ever makes sense, no war and this war in which we find ourselves – not a military action but a war – makes no sense. It is borne out of greed, envy and a lack of understanding and appreciation and respect for the lives that God has given to our world,” Bishop Bambera said during his homily.

Since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, an estimated 3 million refugees have fled the country. Billions of dollars in damage has been done to infrastructure, which includes maternity hospitals, schools, churches and apartment buildings.

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

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**Pope to consecrate Russia, Ukraine to Mary**



Pope Francis will consecrate Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary during a penitential prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica March 25, the Vatican said.

On the same day, the Vatican said, Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, the papal almoner, will carry out a similar consecration at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal.

According to the Vatican's translation of the messages of Fatima, when Mary appeared to the three shepherd children in Fatima in 1917, she told them, "God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved, and there will be peace."

Warning of "war, famine, and persecutions of the church and of the Holy Father," Mary told the children, "to prevent this, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart."

The Eastern- and Latin-rite Catholic bishops of Ukraine had been asking Pope Francis for the consecration.

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## **War hits home for Ukrainian Orphan Ministry in the Poconos**



“War is hell!” is the oft-repeated refrain of those who know first-hand about the brutality of international conflict.

Some say it is even worse than hell, since war also claims innocent victims along the way. None are more innocent than children, especially those already suffering from severe disabilities.

As war continues to rage in Ukraine, Sandie Flannery has been a much-sought after voice greatly valued by news media outlets throughout our region, given her closeness to the ever-devolving crisis.

Seven years ago, Flannery established the Ukrainian Orphan Outreach Ministry at her parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace in Brodheadsville. Since



that time the ministry has provided much-needed aid to destitute Ukrainian orphan children and young adults — many greatly challenged physically and emotionally, and, under normal circumstances, subject to deplorable conditions.

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## Rite of Election celebrates newcomers to the faith



At the age of only 17, Deborah McDonald of Stroudsburg found herself in need of God's love and assistance last September.

With her mother in the hospital, she turned to prayer and it opened her eyes to the beauty of the Catholic faith.

"Before that it was not something I thought about very often," McDonald said.

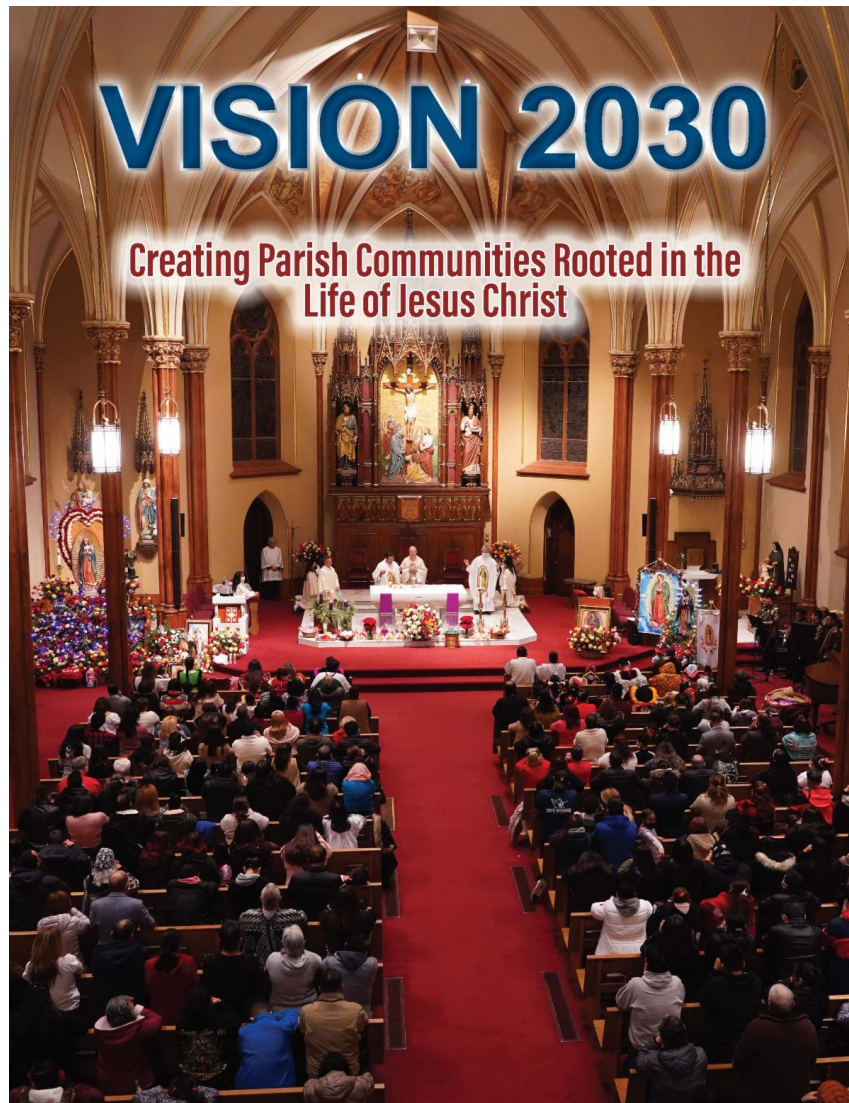
McDonald is one of several dozen people who came to the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton to take part in the Rite of Election on Sunday, March 6, 2022.

The Rite of Election is a prayer service in which those who are enrolled in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) take an important step on their journey toward becoming full members of the Catholic Church. The individuals, who have never been baptized, publicly state their desire to receive the sacraments of initiation – baptism, Eucharist, and confirmation – at the Vigil Mass of Easter in April.

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## **Vision 2030 confronts changing realities in the Diocese of Scranton**



A Greek philosopher once said that change is the only constant in life. As local communities, schools and businesses are all forced to change, the Diocese of Scranton must adapt as well.

In 2019, well before the approaching COVID-19 pandemic, the Diocese of Scranton began a long-range pastoral planning process with clergy and parish leaders. The Vision 2030 Blueprint 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.

The goal of Vision 2030 is to create vibrant parish communities rooted in the life of Jesus Christ.



“As we strive to be a mission-driven church, we must all work together in a way that we best live out our baptismal calling in both a world – and local environment – that continues to change,” Bishop Joseph C. Bambera said. “Our Church faces significant challenges, among which are a fewer number of parishioners, financial sustainability questions, facility infrastructure needs and a diminishing number of ordained priests.”

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## **Rectory, Set, Cook! highlights priests' culinary talents**



The competition in the kitchen is heating up!

Less than two weeks after the launch of ‘Rectory, Set, Cook!’ – a culinary clash featuring 30 “pastor chefs” from the Diocese of Scranton – more than \$100,000 has already been raised.



Each participating priest has a video featuring himself preparing a treasured family recipe or something he swiped off the internet. All of the videos are available to the public – and anyone can vote for their favorite recipe or pastor.

Each vote costs \$10, with \$5 going to the parish of the pastor chef and the other \$5 going to anti-hunger initiatives sponsored by Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton.

[View Everything Our "Pastor Chefs" Are Cooking](#)

## **Lackawanna County parish enters Lent with '40 Faith Filled Days Celebration'**



As parishioners of Saint John Vianney Parish entered the Season of Lent this year, they were invited to go deeper in their faith by attending a “40 Faith Filled Days Celebration.”

Dozens of families turned out on March 6 to witness the parish’s seventh and eighth grade students present the Stations of the Cross, present a food donation to Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen as well as enjoy a family craft activity with an act of fasting, prayer, and giving for each day of Lent.

The “40 Faith Filled Days Celebration” is just one in a series of family-oriented events the parish has hosted since its faith formation program resumed in-person classes last year.

“It’s all about gathering God’s children together, in love and in faith and in trust,” Kristin Travis, Director of Faith Formation at Saint John Vianney Parish, explained. “It’s just so important to get our families involved in the faith journey of their children.”

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