WILKES-BARRE – Four students from Holy Redeemer High School received recognition April 7 for their quick thinking and bravery after coming to the aid of their bus driver who had a medical emergency last month.

Kaden Ayre, Lainey Conway, Max Filchak and Ryan Martinelli each received keys to the city of Wilkes-Barre, along with proclamations from the Pennsylvania Senate.

“We gather today to celebrate you and to publically acknowledge our pride in your actions,” Holy Redeemer principal Doreen Dougherty said in welcoming everyone to the ceremony. “Not only did you chart a course on March 21 during the bus incident but you blazed a trail, recognizing an issue existing, you acted decisively, definitively, cooperatively in the midst of a hazardous situation.”

On March 21, a total of 13 high school and elementary school students from Holy Redeemer and Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School were on a Rinehimer bus, headed from Wilkes-Barre to Mountain Top, when the driver began experiencing a medical emergency on Blackman Street in Wilkes-Barre Township. That is when the four Catholic school students jumped into action.

“I loosened his jacket, took off his seat belt to see if he could get some air because it looked like he was having trouble breathing and then apply pressure to the brake to stop us from rolling backwards because we had hit the car behind us at that point,” said Martinelli. Martinelli is a member of the United States Navy Sea Cadet Corps. Prior to the incident, he had received training on responding to car accidents that was held by both active and retired police officers.

“I felt calm during the event,” he added.

“I didn’t really think at all, I was just on my toes,” Filchak explained.

Family members of each student, along with classmates, lawmakers and the media attended the recognition ceremony.

“Buses don’t have park on them, it’s only a foot brake. We didn’t know that until we had the bus driver out of the seat,” Ayre said. While the incident lasted only about a minute, the teen added, “I think God was with us that day.”

While Ayre and Martinelli were attending to the driver, Filchak got the other students off the bus and out of danger.

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Donohue continued, “Your teamwork and confidence is truly remarkable. We are incredibly proud of each of you.”

Scott Henry of Rinehimer Bus Lines also attended the recognition ceremony. He said the bus driver is recovering thanks to the valiant efforts of the students.

“My brother and I were raised Catholic. We’re thanking Saint Christopher for putting you guys on the bus that day,” Henry said.

While each of the students say they appreciate the attention and recognition they’re getting, they don’t believe their actions were “heroic” in nature.

“We just did what we had to do,” Conway said.

“I don’t know if I deserve it. I just did what I thought was right. I reacted to the situation how I knew how to,” Martinelli added. “I’m confident that many of my peers would do a similar thing if they were in that situation.”

The Diocese of Scranton is committed to educating our students in an environment that is academically excellent and facilitates the development of moral judgment and Christian decision-making. We are proud to share the following successes of our students in the classroom and in their service to others. Each day, our schools are fulfilling their mission of preparing today’s youth and young adults to become tomorrow’s faith-filled leaders.

Sixth graders at All Saints Academy in Scranton spend time learning how to properly work their new microscopes.

The Instructional Aides at Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston were honored at a recent liturgy for their support of the children and programs of the school.

Students and staff at Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore dressed in pink and blue in support of the Jude Zayac Foundation, which raises awareness and funds for SIDS research.

Holy Redeemer students honored

Students at Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton proudly show off their ribbons after competing in the Forensics Spring Tournament.

Students at Holy Family Academy in Hazleton were awed and amazed as they watched “The Magic of Science” assembly.
The sixth grade class from **Saint Agnes School in Towanda** presented “The Emerald Heist,” a mystery dinner theatre, for their families.

Fifth and sixth grade students from **Epiphany School in Sayre** “travelled” to Italy to attend a book tasting at Miss Ciotti’s Ristorante. They sampled books from different genres while enjoying some yummy snacks.

Fourth and fifth graders from **Our Lady of Peace in Clarks Green** work in small groups during their Lenten retreat.

Students from **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** recently participated in the National History Day Competition at The University of Scranton. Students received first place in group performance, first place in group exhibit, and third place in individual exhibit.

Kindergarten students at **Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport** look under their “Leprechaun Trap” to see if they caught anything on Saint Patrick’s Day.

Students at **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** present their notes of prayer and support for Ukraine as they watched the livestream Mass of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

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Alivia Sweet and Elizabeth Bilbow, students at Saint Jude School in Mountain Top, celebrate their Diocesan Forensics Finals win with their coach, Sister Chiara Stempfle.

Sixth graders at Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg participated in a science lesson golf tournament using Spheros to navigate the course.

In communion with Pope Francis, students and staff at La Salle Academy in Jessup prayed the Rosary for the conversion of Russia and peace in Ukraine.

Conner Pribula, a seventh grader at Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter, attended the 2022 National History Day Competition held at The University of Scranton and earned second place in the individual exhibit category.

The Varsity and Junior Varsity Forensics teams from Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre celebrate their recent victories.