

The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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Grow in Faith – and be filled with awe – this Lent

2023 Lenten Message

BISHOP JOSEPH C. BAMBERA



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Every year on Ash Wednesday, the prophet Joel sets the stage for the sacred season of Lent. “Even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning. Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God. For gracious and merciful is he, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment” (*Joel 2:12-13*)

The prophet challenges us to reflect upon the essence of our lives as Christians and as authentic disciples of Jesus. He reminds us that pious actions and rituals, from the ancient practice of rending garments to express sorrow for sin, to the imposition of ashes on our foreheads, provide little support for our lives of faith unless they are rooted in – and flow from – the depths of our hearts where God is found.

Rather, the humble acknowledgement of our need for God – the courage to set aside our own sense of righteousness in order to trust more deeply in God’s merciful presence – and the willingness to be used by God in building the Church and in caring for the suffering, broken world in which we live reflect the movements of our hearts that lead to true conversion.

Ash Wednesday and Lent, by their very nature, provide experiences for prayer and reflection to support us in the noble endeavor of conversion. This year’s celebration is no exception, as the Church provides us with two blessed opportunities that have the power to fortify us in our resolve to become one with Christ and to participate in the proclamation of his message of salvation.

This past year on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ – Corpus Christ Sunday – the Church in the United States initiated a three-year period of Eucharistic Revival. Its purpose is to both restore and refresh our understanding of this great mystery of our faith in which Jesus, our Savior and Lord, is truly present in the Sacrament of the Eucharist – his very Body and Blood. In announcing this time of revival, the Bishops of our land envisioned that it would lead to “a movement of Catholics across the United States, healed, converted, formed and unified by an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist – and sent out in mission ‘for the life of the world.’”

In so many ways, the vision of this Eucharistic Revival reflects the heart of the season of Lent. I would encourage you, then, to take advantage of the times that have been set aside in your parish communities for Eucharistic adoration. Like no other experience, prayer in the presence of our Eucharistic Lord has the power to



Faithful from the Diocese of Scranton participate in Ash Wednesday Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on March 2, 2022. This year, Ash Wednesday is on Feb 22, 2023. Ash Wednesday Masses at the Cathedral of Saint Peter this year will be held at 6:30 a.m., 8 a.m., 12:10 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.



For a complete Ash Wednesday schedule for all parishes in the

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visit www.dioceseofscranton.org

change our lives and to fill us with the peace that only God can give. In gratitude for the singular gift of the Eucharist in the life of the Church, I will celebrate a Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament in each of our twelve deaneries throughout the weeks of Lent. I look forward to praying with many of you as we seek God’s healing grace.

The second opportunity that the Church provides for our Lenten journey builds upon the first and our encounter with Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Several years ago, Pope Francis announced that a Synod of Bishops would convene at the Vatican in October 2023, the theme of which will be *For a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission*.

Bishop Bambera’s Lenten Message continues on Page 2



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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Regulations for Lent 2023

Lent is a 40 day season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at sundown on Holy Thursday. It is a period of preparation to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection at Easter.

The following fasting and abstinence regulations are observed:

• **FASTING** is to be observed on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 22, 2023) and Good Friday (April 7, 2023) by all Catholics over 18 years of age to the beginning of their 60th year. On days of fasting, one full meal is allowed. Two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to one's needs, but together should not equal another full meal, unless dispensed or excused.

• **ABSTINENCE** from meat is to be observed by all Catholics who are 14 years of age or older. Ash Wednesday, all of the Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday are days of abstinence.

During Lent, we seek the Lord in prayer by reading Sacred Scripture; we serve by giving alms; and we practice self-control through fasting. We are called not only to abstain from luxuries during Lent, but to a true inner conversion of heart as we seek to follow Christ's will more faithfully. We recall the waters of baptism in which we were also baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil, and began new life in Christ.

Lent is a penitential season. It is a time to seek forgiveness, to look inward, and to admit our shortcomings and failures. All faithful of the Diocese of Scranton are reminded of Diocesan Statute No. 41, which addresses the penitential aspect of Lent:

"The season of Lent is penitential in nature and during Lent penance should be not only internal and individual, but also external and social (Sacrosanctum Concilium, No. 5, 109). Pastors are obliged to avoid scheduling activities in the parishes which in any way could possibly detract from the external and social penance required by Lent."

How can you spend your time during Lent?

- By **"giving up"** things you hunger after, such as sweets or alcohol; or activities you desire, such as vacations, concerts or movies.
- By **"doing"** things to help others, such as offering an extra donation to the poor or helping those in need by providing food or clothing.
- By **"adding"** to our normal routine, such as going to daily Mass, praying the Stations of the Cross and going to confession.

One of the greatest opportunities given by the Church to assist us in our response to the Lord's invitation to conversion is found in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Once again, the Diocese of Scranton is participating in "The Light Is ON for You." Beginning on the first Monday of Lent, Feb. 27, and continuing through Monday of the last full week of Lent, March 27, confessions will be heard in every parish from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., unless a parish already has a different established weeknight tradition.

Bishop Bambera's 2023 Lenten Message

Continued from Page 1

In focusing upon the notion of synodality, the Holy Father reminds us that by virtue of our Baptism into Christ, all of us are called to be active participants in the life of the Church through discernment, participation and co-responsibility.

During the last year, thousands of you responded to the call of Pope Francis by sharing your hopes, concerns and dreams for the Catholic Church in preparation for the 2023 General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops. Yet, far from being a temporary or one-time experience in calling the Church to participate in the Synod process, the Holy Father has asserted repeatedly that the very mission of the Church requires the entire People of God – you and me – to be on a journey together, with each member playing his or her crucial role in building up the Body of Christ, united with each other. Nothing captures the spirit of our Lenten sojourn more than this!

Brothers and sisters, the season of Lent provides us with many grace-filled opportunities to grow in our faith. May we use these days well as we walk together with our brothers and sisters preparing for Baptism and full initiation into the Church. Like them, may we renew our commitment to change our hearts, through the healing gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. May we be filled with awe and comforted by Jesus' presence in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist – strengthened for mission – and ready to assume our responsibility in proclaiming the mercy and love of Christ for our world. In so doing, we will surely find our way to life and peace.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+ Joseph C. Bambera

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



Remember that you are dust

And to dust you shall return

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

LENTEN HOLY HOUR

with Bishop Bambera



NATIONAL
Eucharistic
Revival

DATES AND LOCATIONS

Thursday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m.

Saint Rose of Lima Parish, Carbondale

Tuesday, Feb. 28, 7 p.m.

Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco

Wednesday, March 8, 7 p.m.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Montoursville

Thursday, March 9, 7 p.m.

SS. Peter & Paul Parish, Towanda

Monday, March 13, 7 p.m.

St. Robert Bellarmine Parish, Wilkes-Barre

Tuesday, March 14, 7 p.m.

Mary, Mother of God Parish, Scranton

Monday, March 20, 7 p.m.

St. Gregory Parish, Clarks Green

Wednesday, March 22, 7 p.m.

Corpus Christi Parish, West Pittston

Thursday, March 23, 7 p.m.

SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish, Hazleton

Monday, March 27, 7 p.m.

Queen of Peace Parish, Hawley

Tuesday, March 28, 7 p.m.

SS. Anthony and Rocco Parish, Dunmore

Wednesday, March 29, 7 p.m.

St. John the Baptist Parish, Larksville

This Lent, join Bishop Bambera for a Holy Hour in your community

SCRANTON - All of the faithful in the Diocese of Scranton are invited to a Lenten Holy Hour with the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, to commemorate the diocesan phase of the National Eucharistic Revival.

These gatherings will take place in each of the twelve deaneries of the Diocese of Scranton so there is a Holy Hour in your community in which you can join the bishop in praying for a renewal of our devotion to Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist!

The goal of the National Eucharistic Revival is to renew the Church by enkindling a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

What is a Holy Hour?

A Holy Hour is a period of time (usually around an hour) spent in prayer before our Lord Jesus Christ present to us sacramentally in the Eucharist. This involves silent personal prayer, meditation, readings from Sacred Scripture, hymns, spoken prayers and litanies, and can even involve popular devotions such as recitation of the Rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet. As Catholic Christians, there are many different ways to pray, and a Holy Hour is a great time to be in the very presence of Jesus and to pray in whatever manner is most fruitful for our spirituality.

What is Eucharistic Adoration and Exposition?

Eucharistic adoration is praying before the Lord Jesus who is truly present to us in the Eucharist. This usually takes place during a period of Eucharistic exposition when a consecrated host, the Blessed Sacrament, is placed in a monstrance (from the Latin word meaning “to show”). This tradition in the Catholic Church began in the Middle Ages when the faithful did not feel worthy enough to consume Holy Communion at Mass. Instead, they would faithfully gaze upon the consecrated host as the great mystery of God’s love revealed to us in Christ and offer their prayers. While the frequent reception of Holy Communion at Mass is encouraged today, the Church still considers this tradition of Eucharistic Adoration an indispensable part of Catholic faith and spirituality.

What will happen during each Holy Hour?

This Lenten Holy Hour with Bishop Bambera commemorates the diocesan phase of the National Eucharistic Revival in which the bishops of the United States hope to rekindle in Catholics a living relationship with the Lord Jesus in the sacrament of the Eucharist. The evening begins with Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by a period of silent, personal prayer and contemplation. Vespers, or Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours, will then be offered with hymns, psalms and readings pertaining to the Eucharist. Bishop Bambera will give a homily on the Eucharist during Vespers, and the Holy Hour concludes with Benediction, or the Blessing of the Faithful with the Eucharist.

Why should I go to this Holy Hour?

The word “Eucharist” comes from the Greek word meaning “to give thanks” and this season of Lent is the perfect time for each of us to recognize our own brokenness and to express our gratitude for God’s grace manifested in the death and resurrection of Jesus. We are not alone on this Lenten journey: we join our prayers during these Holy Hours with the faithful all over the Diocese of Scranton, united with our Bishop, the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, as well as Catholic all over the United States in praying for a renewal in our devotion to the Holy Eucharist.

The Light is ON for You.

Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation



The Light is ON for You!

The Church encourages us to make confession a regular part of our spiritual life, especially during the holy season of Lent, as we reflect on our baptism and repentance.

Parishes in the Diocese of Scranton will once again participate in “**The Light is ON for You**” initiative. Every Monday evening during the Lenten season, beginning Feb. 27 and continuing through the Monday of the last full week of Lent, March 27, confessions will be heard in every parish from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. so that Catholics can come to (or return to) this incredible source of God’s grace, mercy and healing.



¡La Luz está ENCENDIDA para ti!

Celebra el Sacramento de la Reconciliación

New translation tweaks to sacrament of penance take effect this Lent

(OSV News) – The experience of the sacrament of penance in the Roman rite will be slightly different this Lent, thanks to approved changes in the English translation set to take effect in a few weeks.

Starting Ash Wednesday – which takes place this year on Feb. 22 – the prayer of absolution will include three modifications, so that the revised version will read as follows:

“God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and poured out [formerly “sent”] the Holy Spirit for [previously “Holy Spirit among us for”] the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God grant [instead of “give”] you pardon and peace

And I absolve you from your sins in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

The new text was adopted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops during its Spring 2021 meeting, with the Vatican’s Dicastery (then-Congregation) for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments approving the text in April 2022. As of April 16, 2023, the Second Sunday of Easter known also as Divine Mercy Sunday, the revised formula for absolution is mandatory.

“The essential part of the absolution formula has not changed,” said Father Andrew Menke, executive director of the USCCB’s Secretariat for Divine Worship, during an Oct. 25, 2022, webinar co-sponsored by his office and the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions.

During his presentation, Father Menke admitted the bishops had debated whether the minor changes were worth undertaking.

However, he said the consensus favored striving for a more accurate translation from the Latin.

Father Menke noted penitents “who can be a little scrupulous” might panic if priests – many of whom “have said this prayer literally thousands of times” – inadvertently use the old form of absolution.

“They might be concerned (that absolution) doesn’t count,” he said. Yet he stressed that “the heart of the sacrament” remains intact, and the absolution is still valid.

While not a major alteration, the update to the text nonetheless offers “a wonderful opportunity to reiterate and teach the importance of the sacrament of penance as a staple for living the Christian life,” Father Dennis Gill, director of the Office for Divine Worship at the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, told OSV News ahead of a Jan. 31 webinar he plans to give on

the topic. “It’s also a wonderful opportunity to catechize about the sacrament itself.”

Father Menke noted in his October 2022 webinar that the updates are part of a broader effort by the Vatican to ensure accuracy in the translation of liturgical texts.

“It’s not due to anything against the Latin texts,” he said. “It’s based on the fact that the Holy See instructed the bishops

of the world at the beginning of the 21st century that our translations needed to be more accurate.”

Liturgical texts have been revised throughout church history under papal direction: St. Pius V modified both the breviary and the missal in response to the Council of Trent, while St. Pius X, Pope Pius XII and St. John XXIII, who convened the Second Vatican Council,

all significantly furthered such efforts.

The updates do not imply that “the (older versions) are heretical,” Father Menke told OSV News Jan. 30. “It’s just that church authorities have determined we might do better.”

The translation process is a rigorous one, with plenty of opportunities for bishops to review and reconsider the proposed updates, he added.



THE ORDER FOR RECONCILING INDIVIDUAL PENITENTS



THE RECEPTION OF THE PENITENT

The Priest welcomes the penitent. Together, they make the Sign of the Cross.

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Priest invites the penitent to have trust in God, in these or similar words:

Priest: May God, who has shone his light in our hearts grant that you may truly know your sins and his mercy.

Penitent: Amen.

THE READING OF THE WORD OF GOD (Optional)

THE CONFESSION OF SINS AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF SATISFACTION

The penitent confesses sins. The Priest may offer suitable counsel. The Priest proposes a work of penance and the penitent accepts it to make satisfaction for sin and amend his(her) life.

THE PRAYER OF THE PENITENT

The Priest then invites the penitent to express his (her) contrition, using the prayer below or other options. One’s own words may also be used.

Penitent: O my God,
I am sorry and repent with all my heart
for all the wrong I have done
and for the good I have failed to do,
because by sinning I have offended you,
who are all good and worthy to be loved above all things.
I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace,
to do penance,
to sin no more,
and to avoid the occasions of sin.
Through the merits of the Passion of our Savior Jesus Christ,
Lord, have mercy.

ABSOLUTION

Then the Priest, extending his hand(s) over the penitent’s head, says:

Priest: God, the Father of mercies, through the Death and Resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and poured out the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God grant you pardon and peace.
AND I ABSOLVE YOU FROM YOUR SINS, IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, ✠ AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Penitent: Amen.

THE PROCLAMATION OF PRAISE OF GOD

Priest: Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

Penitent: For his mercy endures for ever.

DISMISSAL OF THE PENITENT

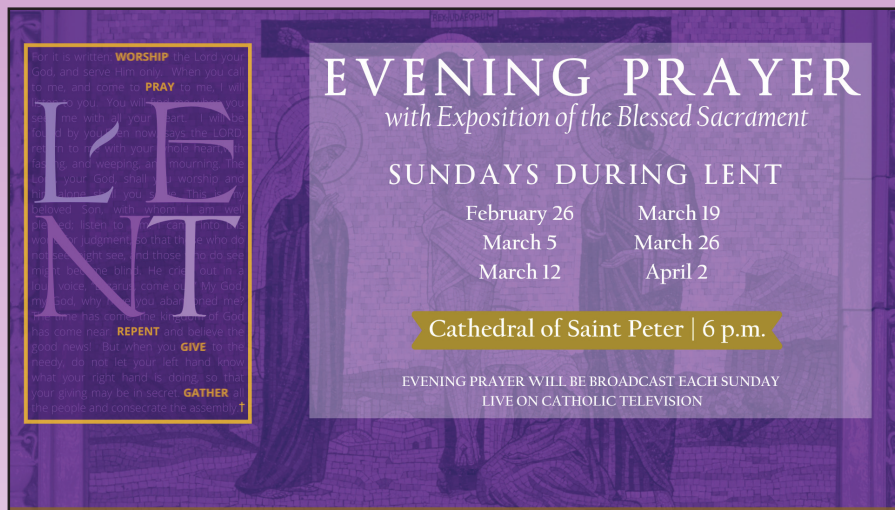
Priest: The Lord has forgiven your sins.
Go in peace.



The English translation of *The Order of Penance* © 2019 International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation (ICEL). All rights reserved.
This guide offers the order of the celebration of the sacrament with an individual penitent. *The Order of Penance* offers a rich variety of alternate prayers and dialogues.

Provided by the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, Washington, DC.
www.fdlc.org 202-635-6990

Catholic Television to broadcast Cathedral devotions during Lent



SCRANTON - During Lent, the Cathedral of Saint Peter offers several ways in which the faithful can deepen their relationship with Jesus and come to know Him in a more intimate way.

CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will make many of these opportunities available to the faithful through television broadcasts and livestream opportunities.

Every Sunday during Lent, the Cathedral will be hosting Lenten Evening Prayer at 6 p.m.

Evening Prayer is part of the Liturgy

of the Hours, also known as the Divine Office. In the Liturgy of the Hours, the Church fulfills Jesus' command to "pray always." Through this prayer, the people of God sanctify the day by continual praise of God and prayers of intercession for the needs of the world.

During Lent, CTV plans to broadcast both the Sunday 5 p.m. Mass live as well as the Sunday Evening Prayer that will begin directly thereafter.

The first broadcast of the Sunday 5 p.m. Mass and Evening Prayer will take place on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2023.

Stations of the Cross



Every Friday during Lent, the Stations of the Cross are prayed following the 12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral. Catholic Television will broadcast the Stations of the Cross each week live with rebroadcasts following the rebroadcast of the Daily Mass at 3:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Accompany our Lord to Calvary and meditate on His suffering.

Rite of Election



The Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion is when candidates and catechumens participating in RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) publicly declare their intention to fully enter the Church.

CTV: Catholic Television will broadcast the celebration live on the First Sunday of Lent, Feb. 26, at 2:30 p.m.

Pittston Deanery parishes to host 'Road to Resurrection' offerings

PITTSTON — The Pittston Deanery in Luzerne County announces its five-week "Road to Resurrection 2023" Lenten series, which will be held at Greater Pittston area parish churches on the Wednesdays of March.

This year's theme for the weekly Lenten series of liturgical gatherings to be hosted throughout the Deanery will focus on the National Eucharistic Revival movement.

The Pittston Road to Resurrection spiritual offerings will include Bishop Joseph C. Bambera's visit to the Deanery as part of his Diocesan-wide celebration of Lenten Holy Hours during the holy season

During the fourth week of the series, the Pittston Deanery will host Bishop Bambera as guest homilist for a Holy Hour and Eucharistic Adoration on Wednesday, March 22, at 7 p.m. at Corpus Christi Parish in West Pittston. Confessions will be available at 6:15 p.m.

Road to Resurrection celebrations, including guest priest homilies, begin each

Wednesday evening during March at 7 p.m., preceded by the offering of the Sacrament of Reconciliation for 45 minutes.

The remainder of the weekly schedule is as follows:

March 1 — The Gathering Rite, hosted by Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, North Pittston; guest homilist: Father Joseph Evanko, V.E., pastor of Saint Jude Parish, Mountain Top, and Episcopal Vicar of the Southern Region of the Diocese.

March 8 — Liturgy of the Word, hosted by Saint Maria Goretti Parish, Laflin; guest homilist: Father Alex Roche, parish pastor.

March 15 — Liturgy of the Eucharist, hosted by Saint Monica Parish, West Wyoming; guest homilist: Father Peter Tomczak, parish pastor.

March 29 — The Sending Forth, hosted by Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Duryea; guest homilist: Father Michael Bryant, parish pastor.

Scranton Deanery parishes announce 'Road to Resurrection' offerings

SCRANTON — The Scranton Deanery in Lackawanna County announces its six-week "Road to Resurrection 2023" Lenten series, which will be held at various parish churches on Thursdays during Lent.

The faithful are invited to immerse themselves in scripture from the Gospels as they are guided through the events surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection.

All of the faithful are welcome to participate in the following schedule:

February 23 — Saint Ann's Basilica, 1233 Saint Ann Street, Scranton

March 2 — Saint Paul of the Cross Parish, 1217 Prospect Avenue, Scranton

March 9 — Saint Patrick Parish, 1403 Jackson Street, Scranton

March 16 — Prince of Peace Parish, 123 West Grace Street, Old Forge

March 23 — Immaculate Conception Parish, 801 Taylor Avenue, Scranton

March 30 — Divine Mercy Parish, 312 Davis Street, Scranton

CRS Rice Bowl is the Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services, the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. Through CRS Rice Bowl, faith communities in every diocese throughout the United States put their faith into action through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Catholic Relief Services alleviates suffering and provides assistance to people in need in nearly 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality.



Scranton Cathedral to host Saint Patrick's Parade Day Mass March 11

SCRANTON – The annual Saint Patrick's Parade Day Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 11, 2023, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. All are welcome to attend.

The liturgy is traditionally held in conjunction with the city of Scranton's annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade. Following the Mass, the Saint Patrick's Parade is expected to take to the streets of the Electric City beginning at 11:45 a.m.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will be the principal celebrant for the Mass.

The Mass will be broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton through the generosity and sponsorship of the Society of Irish Women. A livestream of the Parade Day Mass will also be available on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel and across all Diocesan social media platforms.



Parade participants leave the Cathedral of Saint Peter on March 19, 2022, awaiting the start of last year's parade.

Bishop Bambera grants dispensation for Saint Patrick's Day

SCRANTON – Even though Saint Patrick's Day falls on a Friday in Lent this year, the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton can keep corned beef on the menu, thanks to a special dispensation granted by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

Given the importance of this feast in the life of the Diocese of Scranton and in the lives of many Catholics, Bishop Bambera is granting a dispensation from the Friday Lenten abstinence on Friday, March 17, 2023, to those who wish to take advantage of this opportunity.

In the U.S., Catholics aged 14 and over are required to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and each Friday during Lent, and those who are 18 to 59 are also required to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. However, because these are disciplines, or practices, rather than doctrines of the Church, as the head authority in his diocese, a bishop can grant a dispensation from these rules.

Code of Canon Law No. 87 states, "A diocesan bishop, whenever he judges that it

contributes to their spiritual good, is able to dispense the faithful from universal and particular disciplinary laws issued for his territory or his subjects by the supreme authority of the Church."

Bishop Bambera acknowledges that celebrations honoring the Apostle of Ireland contribute to the spiritual good of the faithful in the Diocese of Scranton. His dispensation applies to celebrations in parishes, fraternal organizations and families. It is not required that anyone make use of this dispensation.

The dispensation does not apply to any other celebrations of Saint Patrick that might take place on any other Fridays in Lent.

All the faithful who take advantage of this dispensation are encouraged to abstain from meat on some other day as part of their penitential practices during Lent and/or perform an act of service, prayer or sacrifice in keeping with the character of the Lenten season.

Bishop Bambera previously lifted the obligation to abstain from meat when Saint Patrick's Day fell on a Friday in 2017.

From inclusion to belonging, Church must welcome people with disabilities

SCRANTON – With big smiles on their faces, three men from the community programs of Saint Joseph's Center eagerly handed out programs as people arrived at the Cathedral of Saint Peter for the Diocese of Scranton's annual Mass for Persons with Disabilities Feb. 12, 2023.

The trio of hospitality ministers – Joe, John and Matt – jumped at the chance to be involved in the special Mass that recognizes and celebrates the gifts that every person contributes to the life of the Church.

"They're here. They want to be here. They are so excited about getting out and experiencing this with the Church," Sister Sandy Grieco, I.H.M., Pastoral Care Coordinator with Saint Joseph's Center, said.

For the last several years, many residents of Saint Joseph's Center have been unable to attend the Mass for Persons with Disabilities in-person because of health concerns.

"They pray together and want to be together. They have a spirit that nobody else has," Sister Sandy added. "They have a goodness in their heart. They may not understand every word but they know the spirit. There is an unconditional love amongst them all."

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant and homilist for the Mass that was attended by more than 200 people. During his homily, the bishop reflected on his trip last year to Ghana, emphasizing how those with disabilities were warmly included in huge outdoor community celebrations of faith.

"Far from being a burden to those who brought them, the presence of those with disabilities was welcomed and their participation was quite obviously a blessing, not just for them but particularly to all who gathered with them," Bishop Bambera said. "The respect, love and acceptance that was



Joe, John and Matt from Saint Joseph's Center served as Ministers of Hospitality and Gift Bearers during the Mass for Persons with Disabilities Feb. 12, 2023. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

extended to these cherished brothers and sisters was palpable. They were one with everyone else!"

Bishop Bambera also reflected on recent words of Pope Francis during a gathering in Rome for the International Day for Persons with Disabilities. The bishop said while Pope Francis indicated that making churches accessible with things like wheelchair ramps is important – the Church must also concentrate on making sure people's needs for "belonging" are also met so they can experience the fullness and blessing of the Lord.

In addition to Saint Joseph's Center, individuals from The Arc of Northeastern Pennsylvania and the Order of Alhambra also participated in the Mass.

"We encourage people with intellectual disabilities and support them and let them know they are not forgotten in our culture and society," Ada Magni, scribe of the exchequer and deputy supreme director of The Order of Alhambra, local caravan Alhambra #4, stated.

The local Order of Alhambra does many things including providing scholarships to students studying special education, helping financially challenged special needs children attend summer camps and supporting the Special Olympics.

"We bring cheer to them but they bring cheer to us," Magni explained.

Oblates to return administration of Annunciation Parish to Diocese June 30

HAZLETON – After serving the Annunciation Parish community in Hazleton for nearly 14 years, the Oblates of St. Joseph have announced their intention to return the administration of the parish back to the Diocese of Scranton on June 30, 2023.

The announcement was shared with parishioners of Annunciation Parish during all Masses on the weekend of Jan. 28 & 29, 2023, in a letter from Fr. Matthew Spencer, O.S.J., Provincial, Oblates of St. Joseph (Holy Spouses Province).

“It is never easy for us as Oblates to make such a significant decision. When we agree to work at a parish, we do so knowing that we will invariably form friendships with the faithful and become part of the parish family itself,” Fr. Spencer wrote in his letter. “I wish we had more vocations and more active priests to assign, in order to maintain all of our ministries in our Province, but instead we find ourselves having to accept what Divine Providence allows us to do with the limited personnel we have.”

There are currently two Oblate priests – Fr. Mariusz Beczek and Fr. Victor Leon – serving Annunciation Parish. After the transition on June 30, they will assume Oblate assignments elsewhere.

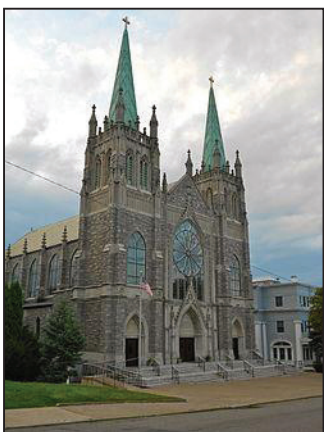
In a separate letter accompanying the Oblates announcement, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, thanked the Oblates for the leadership of the Annunciation Parish community over the last 14 years. Bishop Bambera said the Oblates announcement means a new pastor will be named for Annunciation Parish this summer.

“Be assured that parish life and all the ministries of your parish serving both the Anglo and Hispanic communities will continue,” Bishop Bambera explained. “The Diocese will follow its normal protocol for pastoral vacancies to find and announce a new pastor of Annunciation Parish once the standard discernment process takes place.”

While the Oblates will be leaving Annunciation Parish in Hazleton, their service to the Diocese of Scranton will continue and be centered at their religious house in Pittston. The change will allow the Oblates to better live out a unique element of their vocation – which involves living together in a community (of at least three confreres) in order to support each other, challenge each other and give witness to the gospel by their way of life.

“The world needs good examples of families in our day, and our commitment as Oblates today is not only to preach this from the pulpit, but above all to witness to this in our daily life as Oblates in community,” Fr. Spencer added.

In ending his letter to the faithful of Annunciation Parish, Bishop Bambera said change is never easy but pointed to the words of Saint Joseph Marelli, founder of the Congregation of the Oblates of St. Joseph, as a reason for hope. He said, “He who is worried and full of anxiety in his work does an offense to God and does not say the Our Father from the heart. Let us accept purely and simply whatever God sends us, without being concerned or sad.”





VISION 2030

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BISHOP BAMBERA'S SCHEDULE

- February 19** - Mass at Saint Luke Church
Stroudsburg, 10:30 a.m.
- February 22** - Ash Wednesday Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.
- February 23** - School Mass for Saint Clare/Saint Paul School
Saint Paul Church, Scranton, 9:00 a.m.
- February 23** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Carbondale Deanery
Saint Rose of Lima Church, Carbondale, 7:00 p.m.
- February 26** - Mass at Carmelite Monastery
South Abington Township, 9:30 a.m.
- February 26** - Rite of Election
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 2:30 p.m.
- February 28** - School Mass for All Saints Academy
Saint Patrick Church, Scranton, 9:00 a.m.
- February 28** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Stroudsburg Deanery
Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco, 7:00 p.m.
- March 1** - School Mass for Our Lady of Peace School
Saint Gregory Church, Clarks Green, 9:00 a.m.
- March 2-4** - “The Way Forward: Pope Francis, Vatican II & Synodality”
Conference, Boston College, Boston
- March 7** - Lenten Day of Reflection for Priests
Diocesan Pastoral Center, Scranton
- March 7** - Bishop’s Youth Awards
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 6:00 p.m.
- March 8** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Williamsport Deanery
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Montoursville, 7:00 p.m.
- March 9** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Sayre Deanery
SS. Peter & Paul Church, Towanda, 7:00 p.m.
- March 11** - Saint Patrick’s Parade Day Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 10:00 a.m.
- March 12** - Masses at Worship Sites of Saint Thomas More Parish, Lake Ariel
8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
- March 13** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Wilkes-Barre Deanery
Saint Robert Bellarmine Parish, Wilkes-Barre, 7:00 p.m.
- March 14** - Lenten Holy Hour for the Scranton Deanery
Mary, Mother of God Parish, Scranton, 7:00 p.m.
- March 15** - Bishop’s Youth Awards
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 6:00 p.m.
- March 16-17** - USCCB Bishops’ Committee for Ecumenical & Interreligious
Affairs Meeting, Chicago

Prayer Service highlights importance of working for Christian unity

SCRANTON – The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, presided over an Ecumenical Celebration of the Word of God on Jan. 19, 2023, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

Dozens of people from varying Christian denominations participated in the annual event that highlights the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in the Diocese of Scranton.

“As we gather in prayer during this Week of Christian Unity, we are reminded always of the Prayer of Jesus and we realize that Prayer is far from being fulfilled,” Bishop Bambera said near the conclusion of the Prayer Service. “May we see this time of Prayer as a reminder to us of what ‘can be’ as all that God calls us to be in Jesus Christ.”

Referencing this year’s theme, “Do Good; Seek Justice,” taken from the first chapter of Isaiah, the bishop alluded to divisions between Christian churches not being the way God intended for us to operate.

“May we resolve not only to pray, one with another, but may we resolve to work, to build up the Christian community through our acts of service and love for one another and the world in which we live.”

Proto Deacon Sergei Kapral, from Holy Resurrection Orthodox Cathedral in Wilkes-Barre, gave the sermon during the Prayer Service.

“Our prayer here today is what we believe. What we believe is how we pray,” he said.

The choir from Holy Rosary School in Duryea provided beautiful music for the Prayer Service. The young students enthusiastically took part in the program.

“We’ve been practicing for a couple weeks now. We practiced on the bus ride here. It was really exciting,” eighth grader Lauren Marranca said.

“I wasn’t expecting that many people. I thought it would just be the bishop and a few other people,” seventh grader Emma DeSanto added.

During the ‘Call to Gather,’ Monsignor Vincent J. Grimalia, Diocesan Coordinator for Ecumenism and Interfaith Relations, reminded everyone in attendance that by the waters of baptism we become members of the Body of Christ.

“We need God’s grace to overcome our divisions and to address systems and structures that have contributed to the fracturing of our communities.



The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, presided over an Ecumenical Celebration of the Word of God Jan. 19, 2023, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton as part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Presenters at the Prayer Service included, from left: Reverend Rebecca Tanner, Presbyterian Church, USA; Reverend Rebecca Barnes, Pastor, Saint Luke’s Episcopal Church, Scranton, and President, Scranton Area Ministerium; Bishop Bambera; Most Reverend Anthony Mikovsky, Prime Bishop, Polish National Catholic Church, Scranton; Proto Deacon Sergei Kapral, Holy Resurrection Orthodox Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre; Pastor Dave Twiss, Assemblies of God Lead Pastor, Green Ridge Assembly of God Church, Scranton, Presbyter, North East Section of the Pennsylvania Delaware Ministry Network of the Assemblies of God; and Reverend Carmen Bolock, Ecumenical Officer for the Central Diocese of the Polish National Catholic Church. Also presenting, but not pictured, is Monsignor Vincent J. Grimalia, Coordinator for Ecumenism and Interfaith Relations, Diocese of Scranton and Coordinator of the Ecumenical Celebration.

We gather to pray to reinforce the unity that we have as Christians,” he stated.

While meeting in the Vatican with an ecumenical delegation from Finland Jan. 19, Pope Francis

also spoke about the importance of fully living the common call, shared by all Christians baptized in Christ.

“By proclaiming (the Gospel) together we rediscover ourselves

as brothers and sisters” and bear witness to “the beauty of unity,” the pope told the delegation.

The sacrament of baptism, shared by Christians, reconciles an individual with God, he said, and in the same way, “we are called to be more and more reconciled with one another and to be agents of reconciliation in the world.”



The choir from Holy Rosary School in Duryea provided the liturgical music for the Ecumenical Prayer Service.



Those attending the Ecumenical Celebration of the Word of God participate in the Prayers of Intercession.



Father John Melnick, who served in the Scranton Diocese, dies in Kansas City

KANSAS CITY — Most Reverend Joseph F. Naumann, Archbishop of Kansas City, Kansas, celebrated a Pontifical Mass of Christian Burial for Father John E. Melnick on Jan. 25 at Saint Mary-Saint Anthony Church in Kansas City.

Father Melnick, who previously ministered in the Diocese of Scranton and was incardinated here 22 years ago,

died Jan. 15 while serving in the Kansas City Archdiocese.

A native of Glace Bay in Nova Scotia, Canada, where he was born Feb. 28, 1960, Father Melnick was the son of the late Edward Melnick and Beverly Anne Mackenzie Melnick.

He attended Saint Augustine Seminary in Toronto, Canada, and was ordained to the priesthood for the Order of Saint Augustine on June 14, 1986.



Father John Melnick

Father Melnick began his

priestly ministry in the Scranton Diocese in 1996 and was incardinated for the Diocese on Jan. 2, 2001. From June 1999 to July 2000, he served as pastor of Saint Michael Parish in Scranton.

He subsequently was an assistant pastor for two years at Saint Gabriel Parish, Hazleton, until his appointment as pastor of the churches of Saint Ann, Saint Anthony, Saint Casimir

and Saint John Nepomucene, Freeland, where he served from August 2002 until July 2009.

Upon his departure from the Scranton See in 2009, Father Melnick served on the faculty at Donnelly College in Kansas while discerning incardination into the Augustinian religious order in the Archdiocese of Kansas City.

"Never tire of fostering unity"

-Pope Francis



Bishop Bambera and priests of the Diocese of Scranton hosted a dinner meeting for Polish National Catholic Church clergy on Jan. 18, 2023. Front row, from left: Msgr. Vincent Grimalia, Bishop Bambera, Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky, Very Rev. Thaddeus Dymkowski. Second row: Msgr. Patrick Pratico, Rev. Carmen Bolock, Rev. Lucian Urbaniak. Third row: Rev. Boguslaw Janiec, Rev. Robert Simon, Rev. Thomas Looney, CSC. Fourth row: Rev. Jeffrey Tudgay, Rev. Gerald Shantillo, Rev. John Polednak, Msgr. Dale Rupert.



Attending a dinner hosted by Bishop Bambera for members of the local Orthodox, Eastern Catholic and Latin Rite clergy were, front row, from left: Msgr. Vincent Grimalia, Bishop Bambera, Very Rev. John Kowalczyk. Second row: Proto Deacon Sergei Kapral. Third row: Rev. Thomas Looney, CSC, Rev. Gregory White. Fourth row: Rev. Eduard Shestak, Rev. Robert Simon. Fifth row: Rev. John Cigan. Sixth row: Rev. Jeffrey Tudgay, Msgr. Dale Rupert. Seventh row: Rev. John Polednak. Eighth row: Rev. Myron Myronyuk.

“Be fearless in defense of the unborn and mothers in need”

SCRANTON – On the eve of the 2023 March for Life in Washington, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, urged people to be “fearless” in defense of the unborn and mothers in need.

“We engage this noble cause not for political reasons. We engage it because of who we are as Christians, because of our belief in Jesus Christ and the Gospel that he proclaimed,” Bishop Bambera said.

During his homily at the Diocese of Scranton’s annual Mass for Life on Jan. 19, 2023, the bishop said in addition to the unborn, the faithful must also be fearless in defending those who are elderly, sick, poor, disabled or imprisoned.

“We can never shrink from confronting life issues in our prayer, in what we teach as a church and in the pastoral care that we offer. We must also never shrink from confronting life issues when we vote. We must never shrink from confronting life issues in the initiatives and public policies that we are able to influence in our volunteer efforts, in the daily activities of our lives and in all that we do that sometimes can even unwittingly exploit the most defenseless among us,” he continued.

More than 125 people attended the Mass at the Cathedral of Saint



The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, offers the collect during the Mass for Life. The collect is the prayer that concludes the opening rites of the Mass.



More than a dozen parishioners from Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Peckville, led by their pastor, Father Andy Kurovsky, filled the front rows of the Cathedral of Saint Peter during the Mass for Life on Jan. 19, 2023. (Photos/Mike Melisky)

Peter while hundreds of others watched online and on television.

More than a dozen parishioners from Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Peckville, led by their pastor, Father Andy Kurovsky, filled the first few pews of the Cathedral during Mass.

“It is important for us to stand for life, to support our bishop and our diocese and pray for a culture that respects life from conception to natural death and every moment in between,” Ann O’Brien, pastoral minister for outreach at Sacred

Heart of Jesus Parish, said.

O’Brien appreciates that the Diocese of Scranton offers an opportunity to pray for pro-life efforts, especially for people that are unable to travel to the March for Life itself.

“Right now, I have a sprained ankle so there are people who cannot make it and make the march but having something local is very doable,” she added.

Sacred Heart parishioners Pam Gregorowicz and her daughter Grace, 16, attended the

Mass for Life and traveled to Washington the following day.

“We have to continue to show a stance for life. This is a big hurdle but our work has really just begun because now we have to take that to the state level and we have to be a voice for those who don’t have a voice,” Pam explained.

“The more people praying together and fighting, the more powerful an impact it has,” Grace added.

With the Supreme Court this past June overturning *Roe v. Wade*,

the 1973 ruling that asserted that abortion was a constitutional right, Bishop Bambera also echoed the theme of the March for Life itself, “*Next Steps: Marching in a Post-Roe America*,” as he spoke to the faithful.

“For as encouraging as this past year has been, the task that we have engaged to build a culture of life and to create a vision of the world in which the beauty of the human person is treasured and respected, still remains unfinished,” Bishop Bambera said.



People attending the Mass for Life were encouraged to bring a new package of diapers, which were collected and distributed to Saint Joseph’s Center Baby & Children’s Pantry as well as Shepherd’s Maternity House in East Stroudsburg which is operated by Catholic Social Services.



"We are not yet done"

Locals reflect on 50th March for Life

WASHINGTON – Tens of thousands of pro-life advocates descended upon the nation's capital for the 50th March for Life Jan. 20 – the first national march since the overturning of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that initially prompted the annual demonstration.

Many of those in the crowd for the historic moment were from parishes, schools and community groups in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.

"I always find the march very impactful and whenever I hear the speakers and the information they give, like the number of babies killed or the number that we saved, it always gives me goosebumps," Dominico Cordo, 16, said.

The Brodheadsville native, who is a member of the youth group at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, said this is the tenth year he has attended the March for Life overall. Currently a sophomore in high school, Cordo makes it a priority to attend because it provides a powerful witness to the world about the importance of valuing life.

"In my generation, I know there are a lot of young kids who are pro-choice.

Whenever I go to the March for Life, it shows me that a lot of kids still believe that life is sacred and special," he explained.

Cordo was one of 15 young adults and several chaperones from Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville and Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg who took a bus down to Washington. Students from Marywood University as well as other pro-life advocates joined them.

"I saw people who came from New York, Ohio, Louisiana, Idaho and even Wyoming," Marco Morocho, 17, of Saint Matthew Parish, said.

While many of the young adults have attended the march before, this year was the first time Katie Smith made the trip.

"I thought it was a pretty amazing experience," the 15 year old said. "Every person counts and every person can make a difference."

Smith said the speech of Sister Mary Casey O'Connor, who has a twin sister with Down syndrome, really touched her heart.

"I just found her words and her love to be very empowering," the teen explained. "Not many people my age talk about things like this. I feel like a lot of young people

are too afraid to have an opinion or they just don't understand."

The national March for Life first took place in Washington in 1974 in response to the Roe decision legalizing abortion nationwide the previous year. The march has taken place in Washington each year since, with a smaller-in-scale event during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

The 2023 event was the first national March for Life since the high court's June 2022 ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization that overturned Roe and returned the matter of regulating or restricting abortion to state legislatures.

At the pre-march rally, the Christian band "We Are Messengers" performed, followed by a number of speakers, including Jonathan Roumie, known for his role as "Jesus" in the television series "The Chosen," former Indianapolis Colts Head Coach Tony Dungy, and Gianna Emanuela Molla, the daughter of Saint Gianna Beretta Molla. Canonized in 2004, St. Gianna gave her life for Gianna Emanuela, choosing to move forward with her fourth pregnancy even after doctors discovered a tumor in her uterus.

"The energy was definitely the same. It was high energy. Everyone is still passionate and committed to the pro-life cause," Dori Hurley, Youth Ministry Coordinator for Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, said. "They talked a lot about the 'next steps,' taking care of mothers and being able to provide for them so they can bring life into the world. Coach Dungy and Jonathan Roumie also spoke about how important prayer is especially at this time. It is as critical as ever to pray because God hears our prayers and he has heard them thus far and overturned Roe v. Wade and he will hear them in the future as we push towards the states to eradicate this genocide."

Sean Robbins, Director of Youth and College Ministry at Saint Matthew Parish, said the atmosphere at this year's march



Young adults from Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville participate in the March for Life in Washington on Jan. 20, 2023.

was more "joyful," whereas in the past it was "hopefulness" that Roe would one day be overturned.

"You could feel it in the air that Roe v. Wade was finally overturned and now we can move forward and really get close to making the thought of abortion not only illegal but unthinkable," Robbins said.

As he works with teenagers in the Poconos, he sees young people wanting to get involved in standing up for life.

"They could have a classmate this year who has an unexpected pregnancy out of nowhere and want to know how to help this classmate or how to talk to them about the beauty of their child and other options," he added. "Rather than just saying 'abortion is wrong,' they want to meet her where she's at, and get her to see the baby as something that is not a burden but a blessing."

Standing on the event stage at the National Mall, with the U.S. Capitol visible in the background, Jeanne Mancini, March for Life president, told attendees the annual March for Life would continue until abortion is "unthinkable."

"While the March began as a response to Roe, we don't end as a response to Roe being overturned," Mancini said. "Why? Because we are not yet done."



Parishioners from Saint Matthew Parish and Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish who attended the 2023 March for Life in Washington pose for a group photo near the Washington Monument.



"GOD HAS NOT FORGOTTEN US, BUT MANY OF US HAVE FORGOTTEN HIM"

*-A Priesthood Perspective by Fr. John Terry -
Pastor, Our Lady of Hope Parish, Wilkes-Barre*



Most Rev. Thomas C. O'Reilly, Bishop of Scranton, leads the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress on May 10, 1932, at Holy Family Church in Sugar Notch. (The Catholic Light archives)

When I received my first appointment as pastor, I was assigned three parishes in Sugar Notch. Sugar Notch is one of those little gems in Luzerne County. When coal was king, it was a thriving community. It had a rich history and its churches were, in those early days, an oasis of peace, strength and hope. There, the Holy Eucharist supplied them with grace to live their Christian faith.

As I was rummaging through the attic of Holy Family rectory at the time, I came across three large metal containers. Inside were reels of film. I sent them to Lehigh University for possible restoration. Two of them had disintegrated over the many years. However, one of them was beautifully restored to its pristine state. We discovered a treasure of our Diocese's history. It was about a Eucharistic Congress held in Sugar Notch back in 1932. It looked like it was filmed yesterday. I gave a copy to Father Charles Connor, Diocesan Historian; Bishop Timlin; and Catholic Television. It should be in the archives of CTV, then hosted by Dan Gallagher in "Our Community."

I would like to share with you some of the main parts of that day. It seems back in the 30's and 40's, Bishop Thomas O'Reilly requested that each region of the Diocese conduct a Eucharistic Congress of its own. Conferences were held in each of the three churches daily. On the final day, there was to be a procession of all involved. The procession was spectacular. It stretched over a mile from Ashley to Sugar Notch. A huge altar was built next to Holy Family Church. The tabernacle was ten feet high. The altar was adorned with towering candlesticks and enormous bouquets of flowers. The procession featured children carrying arches of flowers. There were dignitaries from the societies and local

environs. Hundreds of religious and priests followed. Then came the Bishop carrying the Blessed Sacrament under an elaborate canopy. The combined church choirs chanted Eucharistic hymns in Latin. There were easily a couple thousand who gathered, many of whom peered out of cable cars. It was quite an extravaganza! All to honor the Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

The booming voice of Bishop O'Reilly presented a sermon extoling the gift of the Holy Eucharist. The one statement he made was relevant to those times but even more so today. He said; "***We are here to remember that God has not forgotten us, but that many of us have forgotten Him.***" That really impressed me and touched my heart. It should do the same for many of us today.

They say that 70 percent of Catholics don't understand the meaning of the Real Presence of Christ today. What a problem! It's not just a bland symbol. NO! Bishop Robert Barron, a Bishop in Minnesota, refers to a vignette about the great writer, Flannery O'Connor. She was challenged by an atheist about the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Flannery O'Connor, herself, a professional who uses metaphors and symbols, responded, "If that's all that it is, a symbol, then to 'Hell with It.'" But He is really present.

Pope Francis was quoted as saying, "The Eucharist is essential for us; it is

Christ who wishes to enter our lives and fill us with His grace." What better way can He do this than in receiving the Holy Eucharist?

I can remember in my 48 years of priesthood many whom I would visit with Holy Communion on First Fridays. You could sense their hunger for the Lord. There was one woman in particular. She was nearly 100 years old and very devoted to the faith, in particular, as she waited for that once a month visit. When I entered her home, she would say, "Here is my sunshine." I felt humbled yet proud of myself. What a welcoming! She, of course, didn't mean that I was that sunshine. She meant that the Real Presence of the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament was her sunshine. How beautiful. I'm sure many of our priests, deacons, and extraordinary ministers have had that experience.

When the reception of Holy Communion was allowed for the first time in one's hands, there was an elderly woman at Immaculate Conception in Wilkes-Barre who remarked, "It was like holding the Lord Jesus in my arms." What a profound thought and what a deep understanding and appreciation for the Real Presence.

Throughout my many years of ministry, I have learned and appreciated more about that Real Presence from my experience than from my studies about it in the seminary.

I mentioned about those older members, whom I brought Holy Communion, but the experience of children also teaches me so much. In particular when they received that Real Presence for their First Holy Communion. It's a shame we lose that innocence and childlike excitement as we grow old. I suggest, spend some time in prayerful adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and ponder how God humbled Himself to be with us in the Holy Eucharist. We may not experience that "grand procession" and celebration of the Real Presence, but may you truly become what we have received when we process up to the altar to receive Him, the Bread of Life.

Before I became a Roman Catholic Priest, I was a Byzantine Catholic. I would like to conclude with a prayer before the reception of the Real Presence of Christ from the Byzantine Rite:

"O Lord, I believe and profess that you are truly Christ.

The Son of the living God, who came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the first.

Accept me today as a partaker of your mystical supper; O Son of God, for I will not reveal your mystery to your enemies, nor will I give you a kiss as did Judas,

But like the thief I profess to you:

Remember me, O Lord, when you come in your kingdom.

Remember me, O Master, when you come in your kingdom.

Remember me, O Holy One, when you come in your kingdom.

May the partaking of your Holy mysteries, O Lord, be not for my judgment or condemnation, but for the healing of my soul and body.

O Lord, I also believe and profess, that this, which I am about to receive, is truly your most precious Body, and your life-giving Blood, which, I pray, make me worthy to receive for the remission of all my sins and for life everlasting. Amen."

Amid fun of Catholic Schools Week, importance of faith and religion play significant role

MOUNTAIN TOP – While students at Saint Jude School enjoyed motivational speakers and dress-down days as part of Catholic Schools Week 2023, they also focused on the importance of faith and religion.

The entire student body of more than 250 kids gathered for a special Mass on Wednesday, Feb. 1, at neighboring Saint Jude Parish. While the students regularly gather for Mass each week, many say the Catholic Schools Week liturgy is among their favorite.

“This school gives students an opportunity to learn not just academics but also faith and the understanding of what is real and what is truth in life,” eighth grader Connor Hillard said.

The church came alive during the Mass as the children recited prayers and sang several hymns including, ‘Here I Am, Lord.’

“Growing up in a community that is based on faith and going to Mass has really taught me on the weekends how to behave in Mass and has brought all the moral beliefs of religion into my life,”



Students from Saint Jude School celebrate Mass for Catholic Schools Week on Feb. 1, 2023, at Saint Jude Parish in Mountain Top. (Photos/ Eric Deabill)

seventh grader Clare Grandzol said.

On the right side of the church, the oldest students from Saint Jude School sat with some of their youngest peers.

“The seventh and eighth grade classes take the kindergarteners to Mass on Wednesdays in the afternoon. I think it’s a great

opportunity,” seventh grader Rhea Mascarenhas said.

“We teach them all the things we learned over the years,” eighth grader Izzy Wasley added.

Saint Jude School prides itself on its environment of faith and prayer and helping all students to hear God’s call and be able to respond and spread the



During Catholic Schools Week, Saint Jude School decorates its entire building with the help of student artwork. This year the school celebrated the fact that “Saint Jude School is Cool.”

Good News of Jesus through love, service and justice.

“We just did an Epiphany program in January. We do a Living Stations program and we do a Nativity program,” eighth grader Steven Rowlands explained.

Rowlands said he loves Saint Jude School for its “family

environment” and was happy to point out that Catholic Schools Week is “the best week of the year.”

Many other students expressed the same feelings.

“It is a break from hardcore learning ... Catholic Schools Week is our time for the students to shine and express themselves,” Wasley added.



The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, celebrated Mass with students, faculty, and the community of Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore. As part of his homily, he reminded them that Jesus is present every day, even though we can’t see Him. “He is with us when we read His words in the Bible, when we receive Him in the Eucharist, and we experience Jesus in the lives of one another.”



To mark the beginning of Catholic Schools Week, students and their families from Saint Agnes School in Towanda participate in a family Mass at SS. Peter & Paul Church.

Diocese of Scranton

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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.



As part of their Catholic Schools Week fun, students from **Epiphany School in Sayre** had a visit from the Kopernik Observatory and Science Center's mobile planetarium and solar system lightshow.



The Parent Teacher Organization of **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** treated students to a visit from PT Reptiles PA, a hands-on approach to learning about reptiles.

Rhea Mascarenhas, a student at **Saint Jude School in Mountain Top**, gives it a whirl at a special Catholic Schools Week assembly with motivational speaker Jim "Basketball" Jones.



Students and faculty at **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** ended Catholic Schools Week by celebrating Mass as a school community and receiving the Blessing of Throats on the Feast of St. Blaise.



Brothers Noah and Connor Troy, students at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green**, enjoy some hot chocolate during the "Winter Wonderland" relays sponsored by the Student Council during Catholic Schools Week.



Monsignor John J. Sempa and Deacon Jim Meizanis greet seventh grader Ryleigh Santee, eighth grader Logan Ostrowski, and fifth grader Lola Ostrowski, students at **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter**, after they spoke at Mass about why they love their school. The students extended an invitation for interested families to attend the school's open house.



First graders at **Notre Dame Elementary School** in East Stroudsburg enjoy an ice cream social on crazy hat day during Catholic Schools Week.



Mrs. Kara Ware, principal of **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School** in Scranton, poses with players from the basketball team at the school's activity night at the McDonald's Northside location.



The eighth grade class at **All Saints Academy** in Scranton participate in a basketball game vs. the Learning Campus during Catholic Schools Week.



Students at **Holy Cross High School** in Dunmore celebrated Catholic Schools Week with fun dress-down days and the Mindstorm game show. Students also had the opportunity to buy raffle tickets to win a chance to throw a pie in a teacher's face. All proceeds went to support the Children's Advocacy Center.



Students from **Saint John Neumann Elementary School** in Williamsport spend a day with their Big Knight Buddy during Catholic Schools Week. Students participated in science, math, gym and history classes.



Sixth graders at **Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School** in Williamsport present their handmade blanket that will be donated to the local Gatehouse, a short-term inpatient Hospice unit for the management of pain and other symptoms relating to a life-threatening illness.



Taylor Pansy and Malcolm Naughton, seniors at **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School** in East Stroudsburg, dress alike on "Twin Day," part of the school's Catholic Schools Week festivities.

Independent audit finds Diocese of Scranton in full compliance with child protection guidelines for twentieth straight year

SCRANTON — For twenty consecutive years, independent audits have found the Diocese of Scranton to be in full compliance with U.S. bishops' policies to prevent sexual abuse of children by clergy and other church personnel.

The Diocese recently received its 2022 compliance certification from StoneBridge Business Partners, a private auditing firm based in New York, which has been contracted to conduct compliance audits of the nation's 195 dioceses.

The Diocese of Scranton has passed audits of its child protection procedures, policies and records every year since the policy was adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in 2002.

The USCCB spells out the policies that dioceses must follow in its "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People." The Charter is a comprehensive action plan for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. It also includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of future acts of abuse.

The findings are a result of a review of data collected for the 2021/2022 Charter audit period. The annual audit evaluates each diocese's efforts to ensure the protection of children, including criminal background checks and educational awareness programs on recognizing and preventing abuse.

Among the information reported to the auditors in this most recent period: 8,639 students currently enrolled in Catholic schools in the Diocese or in parish religious

education programs have received Safe Environment training.

A total of 230 priests who are in active ministry, along with 79 permanent deacons and 18 seminarians and candidates for the Diaconate have also received that training.

More than 559 educators and administrators in Diocesan schools, more than 869 employees of the Diocese of its parishes across 11 counties and 2,670 volunteers at schools, parishes and Diocesan facilities have also received valuable information to keep children safe. Many more individuals have also completed training on Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse in Pennsylvania.

In receiving the latest compliance audit results, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, stated, "Our 20 year compliance record with child protection audits highlights the commitment that the Diocese of Scranton, along with its parishes and schools, has in ensuring the protection of children. While many steps have been taken to address clergy sexual abuse, we must continue to listen, care for and walk with survivors. Every one of us must remain committed to safeguarding and strengthening our policies against the sexual abuse of minors."

The Diocese of Scranton's Safe Environment Office ensures that Charter standards are continually met.

For more information on the Diocese of Scranton's Safe Environment Program, or for a full overview of all policies and protocols, visit dioceseofscranton.org.



'Chosen' Retreat participants say experience was "invaluable"



Rev. Brian F. Van Fossen, V.F., pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saint Faustina Kowalska Parishes, celebrates Mass during the 'Chosen' retreat Jan. 28, 2023.

NANTICOKE — As a young mother and wife, Beth Powers had been asking God to bring new women into her life. The Holy Spirit answered her call during a retreat she attended in late January.

"I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know how many people were going to be involved and I didn't know any other women coming into this. I knew that I wanted to strengthen relationships with the women I already had and feel that I could rest in the Lord and that is exactly what I got out of this retreat," she explained.

Powers was one of nearly two dozen women between the ages of 21 and 40 who participated in the 'Chosen' retreat for young Catholic women Jan. 27-29 at Holy Family Center in Nanticoke.

As a parishioner of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Swoyersville, Powers believes the gifts she received from the retreat were "invaluable."

"These are exactly the relationships that I have been asking God to bring into my life," she added. "I have been beyond blessed with so many gifts from just a few days."

During the retreat, the young women listened to inspiring talks, participated in small group sharing, attended Mass, Adoration and had the opportunity for Reconciliation.

"For a couple of years now, I have been really interested in seeking community with other young adults who are Catholic and when I found out there was this retreat specifically for young women, I decided to give it a try," Megan Kinney, a parishioner of Saint Boniface Parish in Williamsport, said.

Kinney said she saw God work through the speakers and really enjoyed meeting all of the other women who participated.

"I am definitely taking away that I am a 'chosen' daughter of the Lord and He gives me my identity and I can share that with others and build community and hopefully try to proclaim His glory and His name to other young adults," she added.

The Diocesan Office for Parish Life put the 'Chosen' retreat together with assistance from Kylie Ballinger, who is an ECHO apprentice currently serving at Saint Jude Parish in Mountain Top.

Ballinger has participated in retreats like 'Chosen' previously and wanted to empower other young adult women in their faith.

"I wanted to give them a chance to see that the Lord is active and working in other women's lives around them and they can come together and be united in Christ," Ballinger stated.

YOUNG ADULT RETREAT

MASTER, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?

JOHN 6:68

HOW TO KNOW THE LORD AND BE ROOTED IN HIS PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

MARCH 3-4
HOLY FAMILY
RETREAT CENTER
NANTICOKE

RETREAT LEADER:
FATHER JOE EVANKO
ST. JUDE PARISH,
MOUNTAINTOP

REGISTRATION FEE: \$ 20

Register at dioceseofscranton.org

U.S. Catholics urged to aid, pray for quake victims in Turkey, Syria

WASHINGTON (OSV News) – Reacting to “heartbreaking scenes” of death and destruction in Turkey and Syria, the chairman of the U.S. bishops’ international policy committee urged U.S. Catholics and all people of goodwill to pray for the victims of the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that rocked the two countries Feb. 6 and to give generously to those in need.

According to The Associated Press Feb. 14, the death toll had risen to more than 36,000 and about 75,000 others were injured.

“I join with our Holy Father Pope Francis in praying for the souls of the departed as we mourn

the loss of so many lives,” Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on International Justice and Peace, said in a Feb. 8 statement.

“We pray for those injured and the many others suffering, and we also pray for the safety and protection of emergency personnel working to save lives and tending to those in need in the wake of this disaster,” he said.

The bishop urged U.S. Catholics “to give generously” to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) to support



Rescuers carry an earthquake victim on the rubble in Jandaris, Syria, Feb. 7, 2023. A powerful 7.8 magnitude earthquake rocked areas of Turkey and Syria early Feb. 6, toppling hundreds of buildings and killing thousands. (OSV News photo/Khalil Ashawi, Reuters)

their efforts to provide conjunction with Catholic emergency humanitarian aid organizations to deliver effective assistance to those

“I also call upon most in need,” he said. For information on how to provide assistance, visit dioceseofscranton.org.

Will Rectory, Set, Cook! II break last year’s anti-hunger fundraising threshold?

SCRANTON – With just five days left in the anti-hunger cook-off and fundraising marathon known as Rectory, Set, Cook! the 2023 fundraising total was hovering around \$150,000 at press time, with the goal of surpassing last year’s total raised – \$171,000 – well within reach.

This year’s all-digital event showcases 24 teams consisting of at least one – but up to five – collared chefs from across the Diocese cooking (or attempting to cook) a specially selected dish or dishes on video. Each \$10 donation for a video represents one vote for the participating pastor chef or chefs.

Each pastor chef has been working hard to get

out the votes primarily for the purpose of fighting local hunger, given all sponsorship dollars and 50 percent of voting dollars raised will benefit Catholic Social Services’ anti-hunger efforts. The other half of voting dollars raised will stay with the pastor chef’s or chefs’ parish and can be designated toward a priority project or a charitable cause of the pastor chef’s choice.

Event director Sandra Snyder of the Diocese of Scranton’s Development Office is thrilled with the results so far and notes that there has not been a day without donations since the event launched on Jan. 10. Donations have come in at all hours of the day, every day, with the vast majority

of gifts from in state but also – so far – representing 27 states. The most out-of-state donations have come from New York, New Jersey, Florida and Texas, Snyder said. Gifts have come from as far away as Anchorage, Alaska, Snyder said, noting the geographic reach really speaks to the generosity of the universal church.

Snyder also said the competition at the top of the leaderboard has been especially intense, with Fr. Jim Paisley, of St. Therese/St. Frances Cabrini Church in Shavertown, last year’s winner, leading the pack at press time, having raised about \$16,000 singlehandedly. In second place were Team Bradford – Fr. Jose Kuriappilly, Fr.

Dan Toomey and Fr. Shinu Vazhakkootathil. Following in a very close third place were the retired priests of Villa St. Joseph, whose team consists of Msgr. Jack Bendik, Msgr. Vincent Grimalia and Fr. Charles Cummings.

“This year’s competition has been especially invigorating,” Fr. Paisley said. “As part of the top five, I am in great company with my brother priests who rose to the occasion and succeeded in raising the funds needed to take a bite out of hunger. Those who will benefit by the fruits (meats and vegetables) of our labors are the true winners of the 2023 ‘Rectory, Set, Cook’ campaign.”

Members of the top five teams will receive Master Pastor Chef hats

VOTE BY FAT TUESDAY!

All donors who cast at least one \$10 vote by noon on Tuesday Feb. 21 will be placed into a Fat Tuesday raffle for fun prizes that will be given away on Facebook Live! The more you vote, the more chances you'll have to win! All prizes awarded by random number generator.

for 2023, which are more about bragging rights and fun than priests competing for valuable prizes, Snyder said, adding that she expects a few come-from-behind surprises. Last year, the 10th-place finisher entered the leaderboard at 11:59 p.m. on the final day, she said, so anything can happen.

Continued on Page 23

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JMJ Catholic Radio move on FM dial increases listener base

LAFLIN — MJM Radio, the only Catholic radio station serving northeastern Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Scranton, has begun 2023 facing new challenges and opportunities to reach more faithful, as it moves up the FM dial from 98.9 to 104.5.

The recent development coincides with MJM's 15th anniversary of broadcasting the "Good News," which it will celebrate on March 19 — the Feast of Saint Joseph.

According to station owners Ed Niewinski, who also serves as president, and his wife, Carol Ann, MJM had been broadcasting



Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul McDonnell, rector, is pictured with MJM Radio owners Ed and Carol Ann Niewinski in the Chapel of the Oblates of Saint Joseph in Laflin.

Through the gracious support and hospitality of the Oblates of Saint Joseph religious congregation, led by their local rector, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul McDonnell, the station's studio is comfortably housed at the OSJ Seminary building on Route 315 in Laflin.

As a member of the MJM board, Father McDonnell is joined by fellow Oblate priest and seminary resident Father Joseph Sibilano and Father Brian Van Fossen, pastor of the Diocesan parish communities of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Hunlock Creek, and Saint Faustina Kowalska, Nanticoke.

From their seminary home, which they share with the Saint Joseph Oblates Chapel, MJM provides a live audio broadcast of the chapel's daily noon Mass. The Catholic radio station also airs the weekly Saint Ann Novena from the Basilica of Saint Ann in West Scranton on Monday at 10:30 a.m., and the Mass in Spanish celebrated every Saturday at 7 p.m. at Annunciation Parish, Hazleton.

"We were totally shocked and disappointed by this news," Ed said. "Without a translator, our coverage area would be extremely limited. We also would not want to be tied into a lease again if possible."

As far as Ed and Carol Ann are concerned, the whole ordeal was a blessing in disguise. "With God's help," they indicated, a purchase agreement was entered into with a new translator that now allows MJM Catholic Radio to broadcast on a much more powerful station — 104.5 FM — which began Feb. 2.

The new station has the capability to reach more than 320,000 listeners spanning the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre market, the Southern Tier of New York state, and well into the Scranton Diocese, including the Poconos and Hazleton areas.

"All of this comes with a huge price tag," Ed and Carol Ann noted, "but our board of directors gave its unanimous approval to purchase this translator to ensure the long-term future of MJM Catholic Radio."

"MJM Radio is an affiliate of EWTN (Eternal Word Television Network), offering the very best in Catholic programs, and also airs a number of locally produced shows," Ed remarked.

The MJM owner also emphasized there is an urgent need — more than ever — for prayerful and financial support to keep Catholic radio on the air in the Diocese of Scranton.

MJM Radio is a 501(c) Pennsylvania corporation, and tax-deductible donations may be sent to: MJM Radio, P.O. Box 851, Pittston, PA 18640.

MJM also broadcasts from their stations in Hazleton, Dushore, Laceyville, Altoona and State College. The radio station can be contacted at (570) 287-4670 or www.jmj750.com, which livestreams their programming 24 hours a day.

YOU Can Feed and Clothe People In Need!

More than 250 men, women and children rely on Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen for a daily meal, food for their household, and clothing to keep warm.

These services include the daily midday meal and three evening suppers at the Kitchen in Scranton as well as weekly meals in Carbondale and Olyphant at parish locations and high-rise housing buildings. The Kitchen also operates a Client-Choice Food Pantry and a Free Clothing Store. In 2023 the Kitchen will launch a free mobile clothing trailer to bring clothing items to those in need in surrounding communities. Also, the weekly meal service will expand to Elmhurst.

All of this is only possible through the dedicated service of our staff and volunteers, and your generous financial support for the annual Host-for-a-Day campaign. For a donation of \$100 or more, an individual, a family, a business, a community organization or faith-based group can help sponsor a day's meal at the Kitchen and be recognized as a "host" of that meal.



Now more than ever, our brothers and sisters in need are relying on us for help. Thanks to the generosity of individuals and organizations in our community, Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen continues to serve the most needy among us with hot, nutritious meals and other services each day. All past contributors to the campaign are receiving an appeal directly from the Kitchen through the mail. Donations can also be made by:

Calling the Kitchen at 570-342-5556, online at
stfranciskitchen.org

or sending a check to: Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen,
500 Penn Avenue, Scranton, PA 18509.

Thank You For Your Support!

The culmination of the campaign will return to an in-person celebration at Fiorelli's in Peckville on Wednesday, May 3, at 6 p.m. RSVPs are required by April 3. Those who would like to sponsor the reception are asked to call the Kitchen at 570-342-5556.



Man's need for a kidney sheds light on 'noble, charitable' act of organ donation

CARBONDALE — Morgan Tregoe thought it was just strep throat.

However, for the 56-year-old Carbondale Catholic, a visit to the doctor last November and subsequent lab work revealed he had stage four kidney disease and was in renal failure.

Since receiving the life-changing diagnosis, Tregoe, who battles diabetes, has been receiving four-hour dialysis treatments three times a week.

"Over time, my kidney disease has gotten worse causing my kidneys not to work well enough to keep me alive," Tregoe shared. "I am now faced with a lifetime of dialysis or a kidney transplant that would offer me more freedom and ability to live a longer, healthier and more normal life."

Realizing that a kidney from a living donor is much more beneficial than that from a deceased person, Tregoe and his wife Linda are now wading through the rigorous process of landing his name on a donor list.

With regard to living donations of the organ Tregoe so desperately seeks, he is quick to point out the following:

Only one kidney is needed to live a long, healthy life, and most donor surgery is non-invasive and done laparoscopically. The recuperation period for the donor is usually short-term, generally two weeks, and donor evaluation and surgery is covered by the recipient's health insurance.

Tregoe also noted that a separate team of healthcare professionals evaluates a potential living donor.

His story conveniently coincides with National Organ Donor Day that, fittingly, is celebrated each year on Valentine's Day, as a nod to one of the greatest gestures of love. The observance encourages people to donate their organs and save lives, and stresses blood, platelet and tissue donors also are life-saving practices.



Morgan and Linda Tregoe

Not surprisingly, such acts of selfless generosity have the blessing of the Catholic Church, which applauds and encourages organ donation as morally good and commendable.

As the Church's Catechism states, "Organ transplants are in conformity with the moral law if the physical and psychological dangers and risks to the donor are proportionate to the good sought for the recipient."

In his papal encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* ("The Gospel of Life"), Saint John Paul II spoke of organ donation as a noble and meritorious act that is to be encouraged as an expression of generous solidarity.

The late Pontiff vigorously affirmed that a beautiful act expressing the culture of life "is the donation of organs, performed in an ethically acceptable manner, with a view to offering a chance of health and even of life itself to the sick who sometimes have no other hope."

Based on the principle that "body parts are ordered for the good of the whole," the Ethical and Religious Directive for Catholic Health Care Services also affirms that organ donations are noble and charitable acts.

"At the very least I want to bring awareness to kidney disease and living donation and encourage others to consider helping the many people on the wait list," Tregoe remarked.

For more information, contact the National Kidney Foundation at www.kidney.org/livingdonation or call (855) 653-2273.

Be a Friendly Face Get compensated for helping older adults for a few hours a week

Friendly Faces members provide light care services and receive compensation for the time they spend helping older adults in Lackawanna County lead the lives they choose.



A Program of Telespond in Cooperation with the Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging

If you'd like to learn more about participating in the Friendly Faces program, even if you are already taking care of a loved one, call Telespond at 570-346-7860 and ask for the Friendly Faces program coordinator.

Why Water? Understanding the Importance of Providing Safe Water to Haiti's Poorest Families

Few of us think much about water. We want some, and we turn a tap. We drink it, and we expect to feel refreshed. Water isn't something we worry about, and with good reason. We are blessed to have safe, clean water at our fingertips.

Unfortunately, millions of families in the developing countries of the world — Haiti among them — are far less fortunate. For them, water must be found, it is rarely clean, and it can pose serious dangers if they don't take precautions before drinking it. This is because poor families often rely on collected rain or murky streams — water sources that are almost inevitably contaminated with parasites that cause disease.

"That is why Father Glenn Meaux has made providing safe water to the people of Kobonal, Haiti, a priority," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, one of the largest Catholic charities serving in Haiti. For years, Cavnar's ministry has partnered with Kobonal missionary Fr. Meaux to address the plight of the poor in Haiti by funding feeding programs, housing projects, educational outreaches, water projects and more.

"It may surprise some American Catholics, but providing safe water can literally be a lifesaving measure in a remote community. In fact, one of the first projects we did with Fr. Meaux involved capping a spring to bring clean water to a town that had lost a tragic number of children to illnesses caused by contaminated water," Cavnar said. "Fr. Meaux had seen them carrying a child's coffin down the hillside and was shocked to learn local families were losing babies and toddlers to unsafe water every month. He contacted us to see whether something could be done, and we rallied support

from American Catholics to fund the water project he needed. This gift to the community has probably saved dozens of lives since then."

The impact of unsafe water goes further, affecting older children and adults too, according to Cavnar.

"When an older child becomes ill, he or she often misses school, and sick adults can find it difficult to work steadily and secure a stable income. These may not seem like serious problems, but as sick days mount, the impact can be devastating. Children fall behind in their classwork or drop out of school entirely, losing the opportunities for advancement that an education can bring. Their parents struggle to make ends meet, sometimes even finding it impossible to provide food each day. Once that downward spiral begins, it can lead to families falling into despair — and a real sense of hopelessness."

Fortunately, modern technology can provide a solution if funding is available. Well-digging rigs can be secured to reach safe water sources underground, and hand or solar pumps can be used to make water stations effective even when electricity isn't available.

"We have had a lot of experience solving water scarcity problems and developing water delivery systems in remote areas," Cavnar said. "The technology and skills are available if we can get the funding for the project work involved. That is why we are seeking support from American Catholics to help Fr. Meaux with his latest project — installing two new freshwater wells and repairing several other wells in his area." (See story on opposite page.)

As Cavnar has said, managing major water projects is one of Cross Catholic Outreach's areas of expertise, and he remains confident



In Haiti's rural communities, water is often collected from murky ponds or other contaminated sources. It can be tainted with animal waste or teeming with bacteria and harmful parasites. For the poor, who must rely on this water, one drink can lead to serious illnesses, and infants and very young children are at the greatest risk.

Fr. Meaux's wells will be built, benefiting the communities he serves.

"I believe we'll succeed because Catholics in America often rally to accomplish missions of mercy like this," he said. "They are eager to help others, particularly those with an urgent need. What matters to them is that their donations are used wisely and will produce an important, tangible benefit for the poor. They support water projects such as this one because they understand the value of safe water. They would want that for their own families, and their hearts go out to poor parents who must give their sons and daughters contaminated water to drink. I believe they will want to end

that suffering and support a committed Catholic leader like Fr. Meaux."

Readers interested in supporting Cross Catholic Outreach water programs and other outreaches to the poor can contribute through the ministry brochure inserted in this issue or send tax-deductible gifts to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC02432, PO Box 97168, Washington, DC 20090-7168. The ministry has a special need for partners willing to make gifts on a monthly basis. Use the inserted brochure to become a Mission Partner or write "Monthly Mission Partner" on mailed checks to be contacted about setting up those arrangements.

Legacy Giving Provides Catholics With Unique Opportunity to Bless Others

If you are like many Catholics born in the 1950s or before, you have probably begun to think about the spiritual legacy your life and actions represent. What did we care about? What did we value? These are some of the things we hope will be remembered.

"For a growing number of Catholics, this introspection has led to the exploration of 'legacy giving' — the use of one's will, trust, life insurance or retirement policies to leave behind an echo of one's beliefs, deeds and values — a blessing of others that will

reverberate beyond our own lifetime, hopefully influencing our family and others we cherish," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, an official Catholic relief and development charity with a staff dedicated to such estate planning.

According to Cavnar, Cross Catholic Outreach has helped many Catholics establish these "legacy gifts" and expects them to play a significant role in future ministry missions.

"A will or trust can also reflect a person's special heart for a country or for an area of need.

It can be used to build houses for poor families or to build classrooms to educate children, for example," Cavnar said. "Others simply want to help the poorest of the poor and make their legacy gift for that purpose. It's their way of saying, 'As a Catholic, I value life and support works of mercy. I want my family to understand that calling and believe in it too.' And because legacy gifts can be quite large, they often achieve incredible things. A single one might build an entire school or fund the construction of hundreds of homes. It's producing an amazing impact and

serves as an incredible testament to the faith of the giver."

In addition to this service, Cross Catholic Outreach's staff can support donors seeking to establish a charitable gift annuity, charitable remainder trust or special endowment. Financial planners can also obtain information to help those who seek professional counsel or have donor-advised funds.

To learn more about these services, the charity recommends readers visit its special online portal at CrossCatholicLegacy.org.

American Catholics Rally to Provide Poor Families With Safe Water Through Fr. Meaux's Kobonal Haiti Mission

When Father Glenn Meaux and his missionary team arrived in Kobonal, Haiti, in 1989, he was deeply disturbed by the magnitude of poverty he saw there. Hardly anyone in the village owned the land their fragile huts occupied. No one grew gardens or raised animals. Very few employment opportunities existed for the unskilled, uneducated population, so very few families were able to earn money to buy food.

During the rainy season, the women and children would gather water from the plentiful streams and rivers — but the water was obviously tainted. During the dry season, people resorted to digging holes in the sand in order to find water.

In addition to suffering hunger and thirst, the people were also starving for spiritual guidance. Entrenched in superstition and occult practices, few had ever heard the name of Christ.

“There was no agriculture, there was no irrigation system— there was literally no hope at the time,” Fr. Meaux recalled.

This is the challenging ground on which the Kobonal Haiti Mission took root, and in the three ensuing decades, the mission has worked marvels, helping hundreds of families improve their lives. Still, Fr. Meaux's heart breaks every time he sees a mother or child living in a dilapidated shack or gathering water from a murky stream.

“Fr. Meaux has already given the best years of his life to the people of Haiti (see story on opposite page), but he always has his eyes forward, looking for the next thing he can do to help relieve the people's suffering and increase their opportunities in life,” explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, a leading Catholic relief and development ministry that has partnered with Fr. Meaux for more than a decade and a half. “Many people are aware of the wonderful things he's done to address the people's urgent needs, but his ultimate goal is to break the cycle of poverty in this part of Haiti and forever change the fate of the families he serves.”

Fr. Meaux stated his objectives even more simply.

“As Catholics, we must extend our hands to help our brothers and sisters in need,” he said.

Currently, one of the mission's primary project goals is to bring clean water to the people of Kobonal, ending the need for families to collect unsafe water from remote sources.

“Women and children are often tasked with finding and collecting water, and the



ABOVE: In Haiti's rural communities, poor families are often forced to collect drinking water from unsafe sources, and they can suffer serious illnesses from waterborne parasites and diseases as a result. LEFT: Fr. Meaux has a plan to provide safe water, and American Catholics can support his efforts through contributions to Cross Catholic Outreach.



in these villages will use the water not only for drinking and cooking but also to sustain important gardens they depend on for food and income.”

According to Cavnar, the wells will make use of freestanding hand pumps, and the families in each community will choose a leader to oversee and perform maintenance on the equipment. Each well will have a cement wall around it for security and be available daily during specific hours of operation. The water will be free, but the benefiting families will be encouraged to contribute a token amount to a community fund that can be

tapped if repairs are ever needed on the wells. Contributing in this way will give villagers a sense of ownership and pride in their community.

“Anticipation is mounting for this project, and volunteers have already stepped forward to offer their help with the construction of the wells. Now, all that's needed are the funds for drilling, purchasing pumps, constructing a pump house to store supplies and training community members to handle maintenance of the new facilities,” Cavnar said. “Our goal now is to make American Catholics aware of the project and gain their support.”

murky streams they draw from aren't fit for animals, much less people,” Cavnar said. “At Cross Catholic Outreach, we work on many projects like this, obtaining donations from U.S. Catholics to pay for the equipment and organize the construction efforts involved. Our current goal is to help Fr. Meaux put in three clean-water wells, build a community distribution point and repair five existing wells. If we can accomplish this, it will positively impact 211 adults and 567 children who currently face the greatest challenges to their health and well-being. The people

How to Help

To fund Cross Catholic Outreach's effort to help the poor worldwide, use the postage-paid brochure inserted in this newspaper or mail your gift to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC02432, PO Box 97168, Washington, DC 20090-7168. The brochure also includes instructions for becoming a Mission Partner and making a regular monthly donation to this cause.

If you identify an aid project, 100% of the donation will be restricted to be used for that specific project. However, if more is raised for the project than needed, funds will be redirected to other urgent needs in the ministry.



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Go Forth

Pope, church leaders draw attention to victims of violence

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis' visit to Congo and his ecumenical pilgrimage to South Sudan put a face — actually, thousands of faces — on the horror of war.

But he also seemed energized by the enthusiasm of the crowds in Kinshasa, Congo, Jan. 31-Feb. 3 and buoyed by traveling to Juba, South Sudan, Feb. 3-5 with Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury and the Rev. Iain Greenshields, moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Archbishop Welby, joining the pope and Rev. Greenshields for a news conference on the flight back to Rome, used the word "miracle" to describe the three churches pulling off a retreat for South Sudan's squabbling leaders at the Vatican in 2019.

But none of the three seemed certain this time that their words and gestures changed anything for South Sudanese President Salva



Pope Francis caresses the cheek of a woman whose hand was amputated in the violence that continues in parts of Congo. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

Kiir, a former warrior and still an imposing and commanding figure at age 71, or for the five vice presidents who are supposed to be sharing governance with him.

However, Kiir did announce during the trip that his government would return to the negotiating table with five groups that did not sign a 2018 peace agreement. Kiir had withdrawn from the talks in November.

In the absence of peace and with little possibility of returning to their homes, some 2,000 internally displaced people living in camps that dot South Sudan had their own meeting with the three church leaders Feb. 4. They were able to share their stories and their dreams and to do so in the presence of an international press corps.

On the return flight to Rome Feb. 5, Archbishop Welby said with the COVID-19 pandemic there was "a loss of momentum in the peace process," although the trip showed clearly that the people are desperate for peace after almost 10 years of violent conflicts.

"What we now need is a serious change of heart from the leadership. They have to agree to a process that will lead to a peaceful transition of power. They've been told this publicly. We've said it to them," the archbishop said. "There

Editor Note: Fr. Brian J.T. Clarke's column will return next month. In its place, we are providing an analysis of Pope Francis' visit to Congo & South Sudan.

has to be an end to corruption and gun smuggling and the amassing of huge quantities of weapons."

Pope Francis agreed, saying that the weapons trade "is the biggest plague in the world," provoking violent confrontations among people so that businesses can go in and exploit their land and their resources.

Meeting South Sudan's political leaders at the presidential palace in Juba Feb. 3, Pope Francis got right to the point: "Many things are needed here, but surely not more instruments of death!"

While the moderator and the archbishop did not join Pope Francis for the Congo portion of the trip, they and their churches know the challenges facing the Congolese, the destruction and corruption that accompany the extraction of its mineral wealth and the grotesque violence that continues in the country's eastern region.

In the most emotional part of his journey, Pope Francis came face to face with the results of that violence, blessing a young woman and the twins that were conceived when she repeatedly was raped as a hostage of militias and gently cradling the stump of an arm of another woman whose hands had been cut off.

In the presence of the Congolese victims, Pope Francis said, "I pray that women, every woman, may be respected, protected and esteemed. Violence against women and mothers is violence against God himself, who from a woman, from a mother, took on our human condition."

The majority of the population in both Congo and South Sudan are under the age of 30 and, with the violence and poverty, getting an education and decent job are out of reach for many of them. But for girls and women, it is even more difficult.

Continued from Page 17

Also in the top five as of press time was Msgr. David Tressler of St. Ignatius Parish in Kingston and Holy Family Parish in Luzerne. He baked two pies this year under the watchful eye of his young niece Julia.

"Rectory, Set, Cook! is a great way to help those in need in our communities and diocese," he said. "It allows our people to see the priests in a more relaxed mode."

The event also has helped parishes to bond as a family, Fr. Kuriappilly, who cooked several versions of his Indian meal to feed



Will Father John Polednak's lemon meringue pie be enough to bring victory to Team Cathedral? Your votes in Rectory, Set, Cook! II will determine the winner.

his parish school's students and teachers, noted.

"Our parish is so happy to be

watching videos and tasting new foods and voting for a great cause, to help the hungry and needy," he said. "This has united us in a very special way and generated much enthusiasm among everyone, especially for our school kids."

The official winners will be those with the most dollars raised by midnight on Fat Tuesday, Feb. 21. Votes can be cast on www.dioceseofscranton.org or by scanning the QR code on the graphic on Page 17.



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Notice Regarding Reporting Sexual Abuse of a Minor

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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<p>ADVERTISE IN <i>The Catholic Light</i> 570-207-2229 Eileen-Manley@ DioceseofScranton.org</p>	<p>CEMETERY PLOT FOR SALE Fairview Memorial Park Cemetery in Elm- hurst. In Veteran's Garden, Lot 937, Space 2 & 3 w/1 Burial Vault. Will sell for \$2,000 + 2 transfer fees at \$129 ea. 570-346-6952.</p>	<p>WANTED TO BUY Old books, postcards, cigarette lighters, mining & railroad items, match box toys, all antiques & anything old. 570-430-2370.</p>

Oblates of Saint Joseph to host annual Novena to Patron of Universal Church

LAFLIN — The annual Novena to Saint Joseph — Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Patron Saint of the Universal Church — will be held at the Chapel of the Oblates of Saint Joseph religious community, Route 315, Laffin, beginning on Sunday, March 11, with Masses and devotional prayers offered each day at noon and 7 p.m.

This year's Novena preacher will be Passionist Father Mark Ward of Saint Ann's Monastery in West Scranton.

A native of Buffalo, N.Y., Father Ward was ordained to the priesthood for service in the Congregation of the Passion in 1976. He previously ministered with Passionist communities in New York, Massachusetts, West



Father Mark Ward, CP

Virginia and Pittsburgh.

Since being assigned in 2018 to serve in Scranton at the Passionist monastery and the Basilica of the National Shrine of Saint Ann, Father Ward also offers pastoral assistance at churches in the Scranton Diocese and serves as

spiritual director of the Passionist Associates of Saint Ann.

Prior to all Masses during the Novena, sacramental confessions will be heard and the Rosary will be prayed by those in attendance.

Following the Novena devotions, a blessing will be offered with a first-class relic of Saint Joseph Marello, founder of the Congregation of the Oblates of Saint Joseph.

All noon Masses will be broadcast live on JMJ Catholic Radio 104.5 FM and on the Oblates Facebook page, <http://www.osjseminary.com>.

The Saint Joseph Novena will conclude with the celebration of the Solemnity of Saint Joseph on Monday, March 20, at a noon Mass with Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, serving as principal celebrant. The liturgy will be concelebrated by Oblate and diocesan priests.

For further information, contact the OSJ administrative office at (570) 654-7542.



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Slovak Lenten program March 26 in Kingston

KINGSTON — The Slovak Heritage Society of NEPA will host the celebration of a Lenten Slovak Hymn Sing & Traditional Slovak Stations of the Cross on Sunday, March 26, at Saint Ignatius Loyola Church, 339 North Maple Ave., Kingston.

All faithful are welcome to join in the congregational singing of Slovak Lenten hymns that will open the program at 2 p.m., followed by prayerful meditation of the sorrowful Stations of the Cross in the Slovak language.

The words and translations of the rich hymnology, along with program booklets for the Stations prayers, will be provided to those in attendance.

Benediction will conclude the service, to be followed by refreshments. A free-will offering will be accepted.

Saint Ignatius Church is wheelchair accessible via elevator.

For more information, contact Anna Hudock at (570) 822-1926.

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Apostleship of Prayer

Papal Intention for February 2023

For Parishes —

We pray that parishes, placing communion at the center, may increasingly become communities of faith, fraternity and welcome toward those most in need.

Lenten Scripture series at Drums parish

DRUMS — Good Shepherd Parish will continue a 15-year tradition during the upcoming season of Lent when it once again will offer a Lenten Scripture series beginning on Wednesday, March 1, and continuing for five consecutive weeks.

Father Connell McHugh, former pastor of Good Shepherd, will serve as the series presenter for the Wednesday morning gatherings that begin at 9 a.m. in Good Shepherd Church Hall.

His topics of discussion for the weekly Scripture sessions are as follows:

March 1 — The Letter to the Hebrews; **March 8** — Apocryphal Writings; **March 15** — Lost or False Gospels: The Formation of the New Testament Canon; **March 22** — New Testament Apocalyptic; and **March 29** — Mary in the New Testament.

Notes will be provided for the series, and topics will be highlighted in the parish bulletin the weekend prior to each presentation.

All sessions are open to the public free of charge.

Reservations are encouraged and may be made by calling the parish office at (570) 788-3141.

Plains parish women plan Lenten Retreat

PLAINS — The Women's Society of Saints Peter & Paul Parish will sponsor a Lenten Season Retreat for all women of the Scranton Diocese on Saturday, March 4, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the parish dining hall in Plains.

Serving as retreat moderator will be Holy Cross Father Brogan Ryan of King's College in Wilkes-Barre.

Ordained to the priesthood

in 2019, Father Ryan serves as director of campus ministry and college chaplain at King's.

Cost to attend the Lenten Retreat is \$30 and includes morning coffee/pastries and lunch. Payment is required to secure reservations; retreat is limited to 40 persons.

For more information and reservations, contact Irene Martin at (570) 574-4519 or imartin9647@gmail.com.

Prayer Requests for Priests

The Daily Prayer Request for Priests schedule is as follows:

February 16, Father Michael Kirwin; February 17, Father Michael Kloton; February 18, Holy Cross Father Charles Kociolek; February 19, Father Bert Kozen; February 20, Father Jonathan Kuhar; February 21, Father James Alco; February 22, Father José Kuriappilly; February 23, Father Andrew Kurovsky; February 24, Father Joseph Kutch; February 25, Father Arun Lakra; February 26, Father John Lambert; February 27, Passionist Father Francis Landry; February 28, Father William Langan; March 1, Pope Francis; March 2, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; March 3, Father John Lapera; March 4, Saint Peter Priestly Fraternity Father William Lawrence; March 5, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Victor Leon; March 6, Jesuit Father John Levko; March 7, Father Michael Litcheck; March 8, Holy Cross Father Thomas Looney; March 9, Holy Cross Father Robert Lozinski; March 10, Father Edward Lyman; March 11, Monsignor Peter Madus; March 12, Saint Peter Priestly Fraternity Father Christopher Mahowald; March 13, Father Thomas Major; March 14, Father Thomas Maloney; March 15, Father Joseph Manarchuck; March 16, Capuchin Franciscan Father Pio Mandato; March 17, Father Michael Marchetti; March 18, Jesuit Father Joseph Marina; March 19, Jesuit Father Leonard Martin; March 20, Bishop Emeritus Joseph F. Martino; March 21, Father Paschal Mbagwu; March 22, Passionist Father Thomas McCann.



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Lady Hibernians celebrate Mass honoring Saint Brigid



The women of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians of Lackawanna County celebrated Mass on Feb. 1 at Saint Patrick Parish in West Scranton for the Feast of Saint Brigid of Ireland.

Father Richard E. Fox, pastor, celebrated Mass for the order, whose motto is, "Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity." Dorothea Crowley currently serves as the Lackawanna County Board president of the LAOH.

Pictured, front row, left to right: Nancy Earyes, Kristin Krowiak, Mary Kate Warner, Chris Lavelle, Elaine Bruno, Fran Kingsley, Nori Connor, Alice McDermott, Dorothea Crowley, Father Richard Fox, Maureen Wallace, Nancy McAndrew Yavoroski, Kate Schneider, Teresa Pelligrino, Karen Savage and Doreen Gilbride.

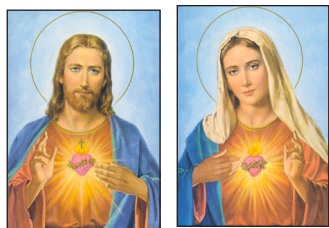
Back row, left to right: Mary Kay Sears, Patty Jones, Mary Ann Abdo, Kathleen Connor, Mary Fran Smith, Tammy Jackson, Carolynn Wahl, Michele McDade, Mary Anne McAndrew and Lori Wagner.

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 **March 3** at Saint Joseph's Oblate Chapel, 1880 Highway 315, Laflin (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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Who makes house calls?

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Based on my practice, which consists of estate planning and administration along with elder law, I find that clients are more comfortable discussing such matters in familiar surroundings. While I know this may seem unconventional to some, I believe I will be able to serve clients much better in this fashion.

If anyone is uncomfortable with home visits, I have a few locations where I can meet in an office setting. I look forward to meeting with my existing clients and especially meeting new clients that are looking for any assistance in estate or elder law matters.



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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Lenten Friday Adoration & Stations of the Cross — FEB. 17, hosted at St. Lucy Church, 949 Scranton St., West Scranton; offered every Friday during Lent (except Good Friday). Exposition

and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament follows the 8 a.m. Mass; Stations of the Cross are celebrated at noon. All faithful are welcome.



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Lenten Friday Pierogi Sales — **FEB. 17**, sponsored by Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Tunkhannock; packages of frozen potato & cheese pierogi will be sold every Friday during Lent from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Father Nallin Hall, located behind Nativity BVM Church, 99 E. Tioga St., Tunkhannock. Cost: \$8 per dozen. For more information, call (570) 836-3275.

56th Annual "German Nite" Dinner & Social — **FEB. 18**, sponsored by the Holy Name Society of St. Nicholas Parish, Wilkes-Barre; doors open at 6 p.m. at St. Nicholas School Auditorium, 240 S. Washington St., Wilkes-Barre. German-style dinner served at 6:15 p.m., featuring pork & sauerkraut, chicken francaise, bratwurst, mashed potatoes, haluski & green beans, beer and soda. Dance music provided from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. by "GTO" (George Tarasek Orchestra). Cost: \$30 (adults only). Reserved seating for groups of eight or more. For more information and tickets, call the parish office (570) 823-7736.

Pre-Lenten Mardi Gras Bake Sale — **FEB. 18 & 19**, sponsored by the Altar & Rosary Society of St. Lucy Parish, 949 Scranton St., West Scranton; bake sale held before and after both weekend Masses on Saturday at 4 p.m. and Sunday at 9 a.m. Sale features homemade Italian baked goods, including breads, cakes, cookies and pastries; raffle drawing for "Magnifico Italiano" basket filled with Italian foods, liquors and gift certificates.

Continued on Page 29

Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Weekend Soup Sales — FEB. 18 & 19, sponsored by SS. Peter & Paul Parish, 1309 West Locust St., West Scranton; variety of soups are sold following Masses every weekend on Saturday at 4 p.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m. Soups include Italian Wedding, clam chowder, chicken vegetable gnocchi, and cream of chicken. Cost: \$8 per quart.

Ash Wednesday Pizza Fritta Sale — FEB. 22, sponsored by SS. Anthony & Rocco Parish in Dunmore; packages of three pizza fritta (with or without sugar) will be sold for \$5 each at St. Rocco Church Hall, 122 Kurtz St., Dunmore. Pick-up times: noon to 2 p.m. and 3:30 to 5 p.m. Pre-order deadline is Tuesday, Feb. 21; for advance orders, call the parish office (570) 344-1209. Walk-ins are welcome. For more information, contact Julie Luongo at office@saintsanthonysandrocco.com.

Ash Wednesday & Lenten Friday Fish Bakes — FEB. 22, MARCH 10 & 31, sponsored by St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Williamsport; take-out fish dinners sold each day from noon to 5:30 p.m. (or until sold out) in the parish's Fleming Center, 720 West Fourth St., Williamsport. Dinners include baked fish, macaroni & cheese, green beans, stewed tomatoes, cole slaw/bread and dessert cake. Cost: \$12 per dinner.

"40 Days for Life" Pro-Life Rosary Gatherings — FEB. 22-MARCH 31, offered for the special intentions of an end to abortion and closure of the Planned Parenthood location in Wilkes-Barre; Rosary is prayed each weekday, Monday thru Friday, at 10 a.m. in front of the offices of Planned Parenthood, 101 North Main St., Wilkes-Barre.

The pro-life campaign draws attention to the evil of abortion through prayer & fasting, constant vigil, and community outreach. For more information, visit: www.40daysforlife.com.

Lenten Sundays Program: "Eucharist" — FEB. 26, March 5, 12, 19 & 26, hosted at St. Monica Parish in West Wyoming; spiritual study is offered each Sunday during Lent at 6:30 p.m. in the church hall. Deacon Bill Jenkins hosts Bishop Robert Barron's DVD-based program, "Eucharist: Sacred Meal, Sacrifice & Real

Presence." All are welcome to participate free of charge.

Parish Book Club Gatherings — MARCH 1, hosted by Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Dickson City; book club meets weekly on Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in the parish center on Dundaff St. Featured book: *This is Happiness* by Niall Williams; book is available on Amazon or at the first book club meeting. Weekly gatherings also include soup servings. For more information, call (570) 489-2091.

Continued on Page 31

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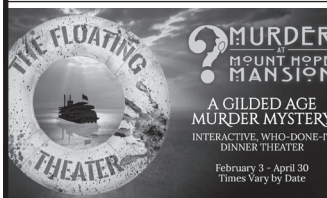
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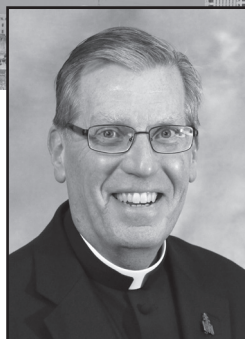
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April 18: Wind Creek Bethlehem, \$65 by Feb. 28 with \$25 free slots.
May 29: Gettysburg Battlefield Tour, Museums, 2 meals: \$199
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Marian Devotion Rosary prayer service

Fostering prayerful devotion to Jesus and Mary through recitation of the Rosary, Marian Devotion Ministries in the Diocese of Scranton continues to lead its Fatima Rosary Journey.

An upcoming Marian Devotion event is scheduled as follows: **Third Monday Marian Devotion** — Feb. 20, from 6 to 7 p.m., at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, Route 315, Laflin.

IN MEMORIAM

Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister M. Francis Xavier Grieb

Entered Life:
June 16, 1931

Entered Eternal Life:
January 10, 2023



Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister M. Elsa Eckenrode

Entered Life:
January 27, 1924

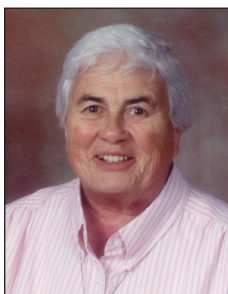
Entered Eternal Life:
January 17, 2023



Sister of Christian Charity Edmund Joseph Reif

Entered Life:
October 19, 1931

Entered Eternal Life:
February 3, 2023



Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Vincentia Dorsey

Entered Life:
May 9, 1935

Entered Eternal Life:
February 7, 2023

CTV: CATHOLIC TELEVISION								330 Wyoming Ave. Scranton, PA 18503 (570) 207-2219		
FEBRUARY SCHEDULE										
	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	LIVING DIVINE MERCY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Encore)							
2:00 AM										
2:30 AM			EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY	EWTN GALLERY		
3:00 AM	SPECIALS	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOG	SPECIALS	GOSPEL GLIMPSES	LIFE ON THE ROCK	PHILOSOPHER'S BENCH	SETTING CAPTIVES FREE			
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)	CHURCH UNIVERSAL	THE CREED	REFLECTIONS (4:15)	BOB AND PENNY LORD	WEB OF FAITH 2.0	SAVORING OUR FAITH			
4:30 AM		SUNDAY BEST WITH FR GROESCHEL	THEY MIGHT BE SAINTS	THE HERESIES	STONES AND PEARLS	BATTLE READY	ICONS			
5:00 AM	THE REFORMATION	EWTN BOOKMARK	THE PHILOSOPHER'S BENCH	DOMINICAN SISTERS	LIVING RIGHT WITH DR. RAY	EWTN SPECIALS	FROM THE HEART WITH MOTHER ANGELICA			
5:30 AM	AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN	LIFE IS WORTH LIVING	BEHOLD THE MAN			CATHOLICS COME HOME			
6:00 AM	ANGELUS WITH POPE FRANCIS	EWTN ORIGINAL PRODUCTIONS								
6:30 AM	THE HERESIES	G.K. CHESTERTON	CHURCH AND THE POOR	THE MIRACLE HUNTER	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 LAND 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	LITANY OF DIVINE CHILD			
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)	ADV. CATECHISM LUKAS			
10:00 AM	SUNDAY MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL	RELIGIOUS CATALOG	MOTHER ANGELICA LIVE	LIVE WITH PASSION	FOCUS	CATHOLIC CLASSICS	THE FRIAR			
10:30 AM		CHOICES WE FACE		ST ANN'S WEEKLY NOVENA	MUSIC AND THE SPOKEN WORD	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY	AT HOME WITH JIM AND JOY			
11:00 AM	EWTN NEWS IN-DEPTH	OFOD/LIVE WITH PASSION/SPECIALS	KNOWING MARY THROUGH THE BIBLE	GOSPEL OF JOHN	EVENING PRAYER ENCORE	LUKE: MEEK SCRIBE OF CHRIST	BOB & PENNY LORD PRESENT			
11:30 AM		EVENING PRAYER ENCORE								
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		"DIOCESAN DATEBOOK" airs before and after Mass.								
1:00 PM	(1:20PM) LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART	WOMEN OF GRACE				STATIONS OF CROSS LIVE	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE			
1:30 PM	IN CONCERT	AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	PRO LIFE WEEKLY	AT HOME WITH JIM & JOY	CHOICES WE FACE/OFOD	MARRIAGE...FOR BETTER FOREVER	DOMINICAN SISTERS OF MERCY			
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	LENTEN REFLECTIONS	THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, (Encore)						ROSARY FROM LOURDES		
4:00 PM	VATICANO	THE HOLY ROSARY					STATIONS OF CROSS ENCORE	SUNDAY VIGIL MASS ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL		
4:30 PM	SAVORING OUR FAITH	LUCY & FRIENDS	ADVENTURE CATECHISM/ LUKAS STORYTELLER	TRUTH IN THE HEART	CAT CHAT	THE ROAMIN' CATHOLIC				
5:00 PM	(DURING LENT)SUNDAY MASS AND EVENING PRAYER LIVE FROM ST PETER'S CATHEDRAL	EWTN BOOKMARK	THE CHOICES WE FACE	EWTN RELIGIOUS CATALOGUE	WEB OF FAITH 2.0	THEY MIGHT BE SAINTS	GRAB YOUR CATECHISM			
5:30 PM		SPECIALS							THE CREED	
6:00 PM		EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Live)							THE MIRACLE HUNTER	
6:30 PM	SUNDAY PASSIONIST MASS	LIFE IS WORTH LIVING	THE HERESIES	LIVING DIVINE MERCY	VATICANO	SETTING CAPTIVES FREE	WALSINGHAM STORIES			
7:00 PM	DAILY MASS ENCORE (EWTN)	THE DAILY MASS FROM ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, (Encore)						DAILY MASS		
7:30PM		THE HOLY ROSARY					STATIONS OF CROSS ENCORE			
8:00 PM	(8:20) LITANY OF SACRED HEART	THE JOURNEY HOME (Live)	OFOD OR EVENING PRAYER	EWTN LIVE	THE WORLD OVER (Live)	EWTN NEWS IN DEPTH	EWTN CINEMA			
8:30 PM	CATHOLICS COME HOME		MUSIC AND THE SPOKEN WORD							
9:00 PM	LIFE ON THE ROCK	EWTN NEWS NIGHTLY (Encore)								
9:30 PM	HOLY ROSARY W MOTHER ANGELICA	WEEKLY NOVENA TO ST. ANN	CHOICES WE FACE	FOCUS	LIVE WITH PASSION	WEEKLY NOVENA TO ST. ANN	HOLY ROSARY WITH MOTHER ANGELICA			
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					CATHOLIC SPHERE	ICONS SPOTLIGHT				
11:00PM	THE PHILOSOPHER'S BENCH	WOMEN OF GRACE						DEFENDING LIFE		
11:30PM	CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN	BATTLE READY	BEHOLD THE MAN	CROSSING THE GOAL	REAL LIFE CATHOLIC	CARPENTER'S SHOP	EWTN BOOKMARK			

Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Lenten Friday Event: "True Presence Night" — **MARCH 10**, hosted by St. John Vianney Parish at Corpus Christi Church, 704 Montdale Road, Scott Township; event begins with a Lent-friendly dinner served in the parish center from 5 to 6 p.m. Lenten program follows at 6:30 p.m. with live music, dynamic speakers and Eucharistic adoration. All are welcome. For more information, contact the parish office at (570) 254-9502.

Gift Card Raffle Fundraiser — **MARCH 17-APRIL 9**, sponsored by the Youth/Young Adult Ministry of Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, 420 Main Road, Hanover Township; numbered

tickets on raffle calendar matching the PA Lottery Evening drawing win \$75 or \$25 in gift cards. Raffle tickets cost \$20 each; all tickets are eligible to win special live Facebook drawing prizes. Easter Sunday grand prize drawing includes \$950 in gift cards. Raffle drawing chances may be ordered online at www.exhc.org or by calling (570) 328-4004.

Pysanky Egg Workshop — **MARCH 18 & 19**, sponsored by the Ladies of Mary Society at Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, 420 Main Road, Hanover Township; workshop offered on Saturday at noon and Sunday at 2 p.m. Cost: \$30, includes step-by-step instructions, all supplies and

Mercy Sisters' McGlynn Center seeks volunteers

WILKES-BARRE — Sponsored by the Religious Sisters of Mercy, the McGlynn Center is seeking volunteers for a year-round program that provides educational, recreational and social outreach services to children residing in Boulevard Townhomes and Mineral Springs Village in Wilkes-Barre.

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The Center is supported by grants and donations. For more information on opportunities to volunteer or donate, call (570) 824-8891 or email: info@mcglynncenter.org.

K of C Eucharistic Day March 25 in Avoca

AVOCA — The Cardinal John O'Connor Council 12967, Knights of Columbus, will sponsor a Eucharistic Day of Revival on Saturday, March 25, at Queen of the Apostles Parish in Avoca.

Serving as guest retreat director for the Eucharistic day will be Vincentian Father Sy Peterka.

The daylong spirituality program begins with a 9 a.m. continental breakfast welcome reception, followed by an opening talk on "Eucharistic Presence" by Father Peterka.

At 11:15 a.m., retreatants will proceed to the parish's Saint Mary Church, 715 Hawthorne

St., for a Eucharistic Holy Hour with exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. During this time, the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confessions) will be offered along with the opportunity for quiet reflection.

Lunch will be served at noon, followed by a witness talk at 1 p.m. by Arthur Philipp.

The day will conclude with a closing Holy Hour and benediction, including recitation of the Rosary by the Knights, from 2 to 3 p.m.

For registration information, contact Grand Knight Phil Rodney (570) 862-8776, or the parish rectory office (570) 457-3412.

soda & water beverages. Baked goods and light refreshments may be purchased. Take-out kits available for \$20 each. For more information & reservations, contact Nichole Lasecki-Scalia at (570) 574-4453 or nicholelasecki6@gmail.com.

Designer Purse Bingo — **MARCH 25**, sponsored by St. Maria Goretti Parish in Laflin; doors open at 11 a.m. in the parish center, 42 Redwood Drive, Laflin. Bingo games held from 1 to 4 p.m. Admission fee: \$30, includes \$5 food voucher and 20 games (extra games available for added cost). Food and beverages available for purchase; event also includes basket raffle & bake sale. For tickets, contact the parish office at (570) 655-8956.

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