

# Support Catholic Education

## Turn Your Taxes Into Scholarships

**MAKE A GIFT FOR NEED-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS AND RECEIVE A 90% PA STATE INCOME TAX CREDIT!**

**Apply Now - Eligibility is First-Come, First-Served**

EAST STROUDSBURG – When Bob and Josie Brown first heard that they could turn their Pennsylvania taxes into Catholic education scholarships, they admitted being a little skeptical.

It almost sounded too good to be true.

“The application process was very easy. I had a few concerns at first and made some phone calls to confirm that our donation would be distributed as intended,” Josie said.

Pennsylvania allows qualifying individuals and businesses to use their tax obligations as need-based scholarships for Catholic school students through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Program. In many cases, individuals and businesses can receive up to a 90-percent tax credit!

“There are very few opportunities we have as taxpayers to direct how our tax dollars are spent. This EITC program literally allows me to direct a portion of our tax payments directly to our local Catholic school,” Josie explained. “I genuinely believe our Catholic schools are a worthy recipient of these funds and I was pleased to have been able to participate in this program.”

Both Josie and her four children have benefited from a Catholic education.

“I am forever grateful as a student and a parent to have had faith at the foundation of learning in my home and I am proud to help in some small way to the continued

efforts of schools to provide this for future generations,” she added.

Any individual or couple where at least one spouse owns or works for a for-profit company in Pennsylvania can participate. Non-profit employees that own at least one share of stock in a business that operates in Pennsylvania may also participate.

The Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System partners with the Central Pennsylvania Scholarship Fund to administer the program. The Scholarship Fund requires a minimum contribution of \$3,500 to participate.

“We are so grateful to a number of businesses and individuals who donate to our Catholic Schools need-based tuition assistance program through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit program. It’s a wonderful opportunity to support Catholic education and receive a 90% tax credit,” Jim Bebla, Diocesan Secretary for Development, explained. “If one makes a \$5,000 gift, for example, they can receive a \$4,500 tax credit on their business or personal income tax return. And the donor can also claim the remaining \$500 on their federal income tax.”

The Diocese of Scranton is now looking for help spreading the word about the program.

As the owners of RGB Custom Home Builders in the Pocono Mountains, Bob and



**Direct Your Tax Dollars to a Diocesan Catholic School**

Josie Brown are happy to be among many people who are laying the ‘foundation’ for the success of this initiative.

“This is the very best way to make a donation to your local Catholic school. Assuming you are paying taxes to the state, please consider this program,” Josie said. “It is easy and exponentially increases any donation you are able to make. If you are

unsure ask to speak to someone who has done it before.”

Eligibility is first-come, first-served and money for the individual tax credits runs out quickly. Anyone interested in this giving opportunity is encouraged to apply in July and August by contacting Jim Bebla at (570) 207-2250 or email [Jim-Bebbla@dioceseofscranton.org](mailto:Jim-Bebbla@dioceseofscranton.org).

## Vocations Golf Classic tees off for 13th year to support seminarians

DORRANCE TOWNSHIP – The weather could not have been better July 10 as 184 golfers hit the links for the 13th Vocations Golf Classic at Blue Ridge Trail Golf Club.

The tournament, held in memory of John A. Yourishen Jr., brought together men and women from every corner of the Diocese of Scranton.

“This tournament is a great way to bring people from East Stroudsburg, Williamsport, the Northern Tier, Scranton and Wilkes-Barre together to recognize that we’re one church,” Rev. Alex Roche, Director of Vocations and Seminarians, explained.

Proceeds from the tournament support seminarian expenses, education and

training.

“Many of our parishes support this tournament. The priests and pastors support it personally. They send parish teams so it is really a unifying event for the diocese,” Sandra Snyder, Diocesan Director of Foundation Relations and Special Events, added.

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**Golfers get ready to head out on the fairways at the 2023 Vocations Golf Classic.**

# Fond Farewell: Two longtime Catholic school principals retire

## Two familiar faces take over leading La Salle Academy & Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School

JESSUP – After dedicating 94 years to Catholic school students in the Diocese of Scranton, two long-time principals retired at the end of June.

Jeffrey Lyons, principal of Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg and Ellen Murphy, principal of La Salle Academy in Jessup, each ended a distinguished career in education on June 30, 2023.

“I have always believed that I was blessed with the best job in the world while working in three wonderful Catholic schools in the Diocese of Scranton,” Murphy said. “There is nothing more important in our world than our beautiful children and the time I spent with them enjoying their laughter and happiness are moments I will cherish forever.”

Murphy dedicated 42 years to Catholic education. She started her career as a teacher at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School in Carbondale where she later served as principal. She continued her administrative role as principal at Sacred Heart Primary/Elementary School in Carbondale and for the last 13 years served as principal of La Salle Academy.

“I knew each day walking through the doors of our school, filled with so much love and happiness, that it would be a great day,” she added. “Watching the excitement and pride in the eyes of our children while reaching that moment of understanding and working through their unique challenges were the moments I knew, that, together with my faculty and staff, we were doing great things for our children.”

Shaina Aquilina assumed the role of principal of La Salle Academy beginning July 1.

“La Salle Academy is comprised of faith-filled, hardworking and dedicated



**Mrs. Ellen Murphy**



**Mr. Jeffrey Lyons**



**Mrs. Shaina Aquilina**



**Mr. Bryan Scotton**

faculty and staff, students and families, and I am honored to be able to serve this incredible school community in a new capacity,” Aquilina said. “I have certainly been blessed with the opportunity to continue building upon the successes of the school that occurred under the direction of Mrs. Ellen Murphy and Mrs. Maryanne DeMark.”

Aquilina most recently served as the junior high math teacher at La Salle Academy but has also served in various capacities throughout the Diocese since 2016. She has led numerous professional development sessions focused on training teachers in technology, data analysis and STREAM instruction. She also revised the Teacher Induction Plan for the Diocese, which is used for all first year teachers and those new to the Diocese.

“As a former math teacher, I have always valued the ability to analyze data and use it to inform my instructional approach. As a Diocese, we are fortunate to have access to NWEA Map Growth Data to assist our educators in driving our instruction, differentiating our lessons and communicating with the families of our students,” she added. “I am eager to work

closely with our faculty to utilize this data in a way that targets individual students’ areas for growth and assists in urging every student to attain his or her fullest potential.”

After more than a half-century serving the Notre Dame School System, Lyons has also decided to move onto the next phase of his life.

“It is almost impossible to think of Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School and not think of Mr. Lyons as he has dedicated 52 years as a teacher, dean of students, and principal,” Kristen Donohue, Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Education/Superintendent of Catholic Schools, said in announcing his retirement. “Mr. Lyons not only shared his love of Catholic education, but sparked that same excitement in his students, teachers, staff and school community.”

Lyons started his career as an English teacher and then Dean of Students at Notre Dame High School. After 19 years in the classroom, he was appointed as principal of Notre Dame High School, a position he held for the last 33 years. Lyons never truly left the classroom, as he managed to teach one high school class each year.

“It is not often that an individual has the opportunity to impact generations of families but Mr. Lyons has done just that,” Donohue said. “Mr. Lyons prioritized time for students to pray and give thanks to God for the many blessings they have in their lives, while also balancing a rigorous academic schedule. This inseparable combination not only set Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School apart from any other schools but also emphasized Mr. Lyons’ true servant leadership.”

Bryan Scotton assumed the role of principal of Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School beginning July 1.

“I’m very excited to embrace this new role as principal,” Scotton said. “It has been a joy teaching at Notre Dame and I look forward to supporting my current coworkers and helping to provide the best Catholic education possible for our students. I know there will be challenges but knowing there are such great teachers and

students makes those challenges manageable.”

Prior to being appointed principal, Scotton served as music teacher and coach of cross-country and track at Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School. Prior to joining the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System, he was a religion teacher, curriculum coordinator for the religion and history departments and head of campus ministry at Mater Dei Prep High School in Middletown, N.J.

Scotton says he has many goals as he takes on his new leadership role.

“I think I will look forward the most to collaborating with teachers and staff to build upon the traditions that make Notre Dame unique, continue to grow the initiatives that we have already begun, and begin new journeys to make Notre Dame even better than it is. There is so much support and creative energy already at Notre Dame and I am looking forward to being a part of that.”



In the June 15th edition of *The Catholic Light*, an incorrect photo was published for Connor Pribula, one of the Seton Award winners from Wyoming Area Catholic School.

We apologize for the error and congratulate Connor for his devoutness to faith, compassion and desire to help others.

Diocese of Scranton

# CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

FAITH • ACADEMICS • SERVICE

*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.*



Just before the end of the 2022-23 school year, the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, celebrated two liturgies in Bradford County. One Mass was for students at **Epiphany School in Sayre** and the other for students at **Saint Agnes School in Towanda**. In his homilies, Bishop Bambera shared with the school communities how important it is that we treat others with respect, dignity and care. The Bishop told the students, "In God's eyes, we are all equal as He created us in His own image and likeness."

Nothing says summer like a baseball game! The community from **Holy Family Academy in Hazleton** planned a special mother/son trip to see the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders play at PNC Field. Tabatha Neyhart and her son, Theo, enjoy some snacks as they watch the game.



Students from **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** create a variety of tasty treats during the school's annual summer baking camp.



The volleyball team from **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** played "Like a ROYAL" showing leadership both on the court and in our community as they placed flags on the graves of veterans laid to rest at Saint Mary's Cemetery.



On the last week of school, students from **Saint John Neumann High School in Williamsport** took a well-deserved break from final exams and relaxed by playing a game of cornhole.



Congratulations to the eighth grade graduates from **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore**.



Graduation season at **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter** — the eighth graders pose in their gowns with the kindergarten graduates just before the 2022-23 school year ended.



Congratulations to the eighth grade graduates from **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston!**



The fifth grade class at **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton** completed an engineering design process project by designing and building their own shoes/sandals made out of recyclable items.



Every Thursday during the school year, students at **Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg** do their morning announcements via video. Indie Incavido presents information to her fellow students about being a botanist, their **STREAM** career of the week.



The legacy members of the Class of 2023 from **Holy Cross High School in Dunmore** pose in front of the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton with their parents and grandparents, all graduates of a Diocesan high school.



There's a lot of buzz at **All Saints Academy in Scranton**. Students in pre-kindergarten through second grade ended the school year performing their play "BUGZ."



Kindergarten students from **Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport** are cooking up some fun in the "Play Café" as part of their end-of-the-year field trip to the Lewisburg Children's Museum.



Dayton Lorenzo, Ryan Cosgrove, Ian Hale, Romeo Dorosz and Christopher Rinaldi, juniors at **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg**, show off some of their certificates from the school's Underclass Awards Ceremony.



These youngsters from **La Salle Academy in Jessup** never want to leave as they spent time "camped out" in kindergarten during their final week of school.