

Catholic educators receive Saint John Paul II Award for dedicated service

WILKES-BARRE – Three long-time educators in the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System were honored with the Saint John Paul II Award during the Diocesan Teachers' Institute Mass on Sept. 25, 2023.

Kimberly Art, April Ayres, and Brenda Quattrini were each presented the award for 25 years of dedicated service to Catholic education in the Diocese of Scranton by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, at Saint Nicholas Church.

"I'm very excited and very proud," Art said. "I know it is not easy to stick with something that long but I'm very proud and glad that I'm able to be in this school system."

Art began her career as the computer teacher at Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore and then moved into the role of fourth grade teacher in 2001. She has been there ever since.

"I'm Catholic. I lead with my heart, and I lead with Jesus, and I love that I'm able to incorporate Jesus into my daily lesson plans and my daily teaching and I'm glad that I can have Jesus lead me in teaching the children," she explained.

Quattrini attended Epiphany School in Sayre and in second grade decided she wanted to teach second grade.

"My second-grade teacher was my favorite teacher, and this was my dream,



Three Catholic school educators received the Saint John Paul II Award for 25 years of dedicated service during the Diocesan Teachers' Institute Mass at Saint Nicholas Parish on Sept. 25, 2023. Present for the award presentation were, from left: Michele Long, Assistant Superintendent; Kristen Donohue, Diocesan Secretary for Catholic Education/Superintendent of Catholic Schools; Brenda Quattrini, Epiphany School; Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton; Kimberly Art, Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School; April Ayres, La Salle Academy; and Charlene Krushinsky, Assistant Superintendent.

and I am living my dream," she explained.

Quattrini says she would not trade her experience in Catholic education for anything.

"I love how we're all family and we want to pass our religion onto the kids," the long-time educator added. "I am just

thrilled to be a part of it and that Sister Kathleen hired me many years ago!"

Catholic school educators impart a distinctive character to the education profession. They create an environment where the young grow and learn. They also direct the learning process, designing

programs and developing ways to encourage success. Most especially, they are witnesses to the faith, serving as sharers in the mission of Jesus Christ by leading young people to know, love, and serve God.

Ayres also grew up attending Catholic schools, including Saint Michael's in Jessup and Bishop O'Hara High School in Dunmore.

"I knew from an early age that I wanted to become a teacher when my brother was born. I was captivated by how learning occurs. That was just my calling. I knew that is what I wanted to do," Ayres said.

First hired at Saint Mary's in Dickson City, Ayres now teaches at La Salle Academy in Jessup. She spent three years teaching third grade and has taught fifth grade for 22 years.

"I grew up with a Catholic education. It was fabulous, the teachers, the support, the family atmosphere. I stayed all the way through high school. I promote it, I agree with it, I support it, and I absolutely love it," she added.

When asked what she would say to someone considering becoming a Catholic school educator, Ayres said it is a place where anyone can not only teach, but lead, inspire, challenge, and encourage.

"You will absolutely love it," Ayres stated. "It's family. It's a second home."

'Let your faith shine brightly for all to see,' Bishop Bambera tells Catholic School educators

WILKES-BARRE – As a new academic year begins in the Diocese of Scranton's 19 Catholic schools, teachers and administrators are being challenged to let their faith shine brightly for all to see.

"Your light shines more brightly than you might imagine," the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, said during his homily at the Diocesan Teachers' Institute Mass, which was held on Sept. 25 at Saint Nicholas Church.

"The children entrusted to your care, the young men and women, are who they are because of who you are every day," Bishop Bambera continued.

During his homily, the bishop thanked the hundreds of educators in attendance for helping students have a reverence for

Catholic rituals and prayers. After visiting each school for Mass last academic year, the bishop said that reverence is "palpable."

"Your appreciation for and your willingness to teach Catholic values is also obvious, and those are the values that set us apart from other fine educational opportunities, and the values that are at the heart of why we have a Catholic School System," he added.

During the Mass, the educators recited the 'Prayer of Commitment' to the ideals of Catholic education.



Catholic school educators celebrate the Diocesan Teachers' Institute Mass on Sept. 25, 2023.



Following Mass, educators and administrators took part in professional development programs.

"We are grateful to have this opportunity to pray together," Kristen Donohue, Diocesan Secretary for Catholic Education/Superintendent of Catholic Schools, said.

Diocese of Scranton

CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

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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.



The Class of 2024 at **Holy Cross High School in Dunmore** gathered at St. Anthony's Field at 6:30 a.m. to celebrate a special activity before graduation – Senior Sunrise! Join the Holy Cross community from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. on Sunday, October 29, for an Open House to hear more about the engaging activities and academic achievements going on at the school. For more information, visit their website at www.hchspa.org.



Students from **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green** came together to sing, dance and pray with their amazing musical guest, Vallimar Jansen. The entire student body enjoyed a mini-concert full of music, faith and joy at the Church of Saint Gregory in Clarks Green.



The kindergarten class at **All Saints Academy in Scranton** learned that friendship is about being kind and loving. Students worked in pairs to make friendship bracelets and then traded them with their partners.



Kindergarten students at **Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg** participate in a STREAM activity with Mrs. Durham.



Freshman art students at **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** decorated pumpkins and jars in the school's 2023-24 theme, *Be the Light*. To learn more about the educational and extra-curricular activities offered at Holy Redeemer, make plans to come to their Open House from 1 – 3 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 5. Visit www.holyredeemerhs.org for more details.



Second grade students from **Holy Family Academy in Hazleton** proudly show some fall creations they made in class.

Caroline Carmody, a first grade student at **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter**, along with all students at the school, just completed NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) testing. NWEA testing allows the teachers to track student progress throughout the year so that student growth can be quantified and lessons are created that are differentiated based on student needs.





With their new Hydroponica system, second graders at **Saint Agnes School in Towanda** harvested some delicious lettuce that they graciously shared and was served as part of the school lunch.



Students from **Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School in Williamsport** take a much-needed break during the school's annual Noble Knights Walk-A-Thon, held at the beginning of each school year.



It was a special day for students and their dogs, cats and stuffed animals at the annual Saint Francis Feast Day Pet Blessing at **Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre**.



Monsignor Neil Van Loon, V.F., pastor of Saint Paul Parish, works with third grade students from **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton**, who are training to become altar servers.



By purchasing Breast Cancer Awareness items, students at **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** supported The Paint Pittston Pink Foundation.



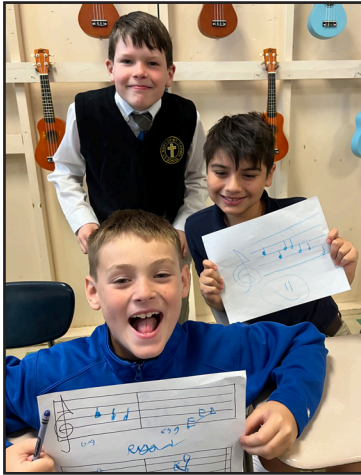
Ryan, Trevor and Michael, seventh grade students at **La Salle Academy in Jessup**, prepare for their regular volunteer shift at the Bread Basket Food Pantry, helping those in the community who are faced with food insecurity.



Celebrating A's! Pre-K4 students at **Epiphany School in Sayre** made apple-people crafts and tasted a variety of apples to see which ones they liked best as part of a STREAM activity that was based on the letter A.



It was Grandparents Day at **Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport**. Students invited grandparents and their special adults to lunch and tour their classrooms to celebrate.



Fourth grade students at **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore** are learning to sing and play "Cabbage Cafe," which is made of words like "BAG, EGG, DAD, and BAD," whose letters can all be found as notes in the treble clef.



Under the guidance of Mrs. Nicolai, the librarian at **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston**, Individualized Instruction student Grace will be participating in a library internship program this school year. Grace will be assisting Mrs. Nicolai in organizing and scanning library books, as well as sharing her love of reading with the GSA community.



Congratulations to Joseph Nguyen, a senior at **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg**, who was named a National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist. The National Merit Scholarship Program honors individual students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies.