



# ***The Catholic Light***

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

**Weekly E-Newsletter**

**January 18, 2024**

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity  
begins today**



## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

*January 18-24*

CNS Photo/Paul Haring



**Christians urged to pray for unity, peace,  
amid these turbulent times, Bishop  
Bambera says**



Amid the “paralyzing nature of polarization” in society today and the “tragedy of war” around the world, “the importance of living the love of Christ in our own circumstances cannot be overemphasized,” Bishop Bambara said in a message for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Jan. 18-25.

As chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, Bishop Bambara urged Christians throughout the United States to unite across denominational lines and pray for peace.

Each year a different country and theme is highlighted during the weeklong observance. For 2024, the Christians from Burkina Faso in West Africa developed the prayer materials and chose the theme from St. Luke’s

Gospel, "You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbor as yourself." (Lk 10:27)

"May Christians throughout our country come together across denominational lines to pray for peace in our world and an end to the sad divisions that prevent us from fully loving each other as Christ loves us all," Bishop Bambera said in his message released Jan. 12.

[Click Here to Read More of Bishop Bambera's Message for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#)

## **Ecumenical Service Jan. 24 to celebrate Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

### **ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE**

**CELEBRATING WEEK OF  
PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2024  
12:10 p.m.  
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton



***Prayer Service to be broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television***

Faithful throughout the Diocese of Scranton will join with members of various Christian congregations of northeastern Pennsylvania for an Ecumenical Celebration of the Word of God on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2024, at 12:10 p.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

The event highlights the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity which has been celebrated each January since its inception in 1908.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as leader of prayer for the traditional ecumenical prayer service. Bishop Bambera is once again serving as Chairman of the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

Guest homilist for this year's prayer service is Reverend Rebecca A. Barnes, Rector of Saint Luke Episcopal Church, Scranton, and President of the Scranton Multifaith Ministerium.

Students from Holy Rosary School in Duryea will provide the music for the religious gathering, under the direction of David Tighe.

The Ecumenical prayer service will be broadcast live at 12:10 p.m. on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton. It will also be made available on the Scranton Diocese website and across all diocesan social media platforms.

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

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**Sharing stories of faith draws Christians closer to one another, Pope Francis says**





A key step in the search for Christian unity is getting to know people of other churches and denominations and coming to appreciate their faith and spirituality, Pope Francis told a group of Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox students studying at Catholic universities in Rome.

The students are among hundreds who, since 1964, have received scholarships from the Catholic Committee for Cultural Collaboration to pursue degrees in Rome while living at Catholic seminaries and religious residences.

Pope Francis met the students and officials of the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, which coordinates the program, during an audience Jan. 12.

[Click Here to Read the Full Story from Catholic News Service](#)

**'Mass for Life' to be held Sunday at Cathedral of Saint Peter**

A background image showing a close-up of two hands, one holding the other, with a soft, warm light. The hands are positioned in the upper half of the image, with the fingers slightly curled.

# Mass for LIFE

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 2024**

5:00PM | CATHEDRAL OF ST. PETER, SCRANTON

CELEBRANT: MOST REV. JOSEPH C. BAMBERA  
BISHOP OF SCRANTON

**All are welcome to join us as we pray  
for a greater respect of all human life.**

**Please consider bringing an unopened package of  
diapers to be donated to local mothers in need.**

Faithful from parishes around the Diocese of Scranton will gather this Sunday to celebrate the Diocese of Scranton's annual 'Mass for Life' at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist at the Mass, which is being celebrated for a greater respect of all human life, from conception to natural death, and every moment in between.

While pro-life supporters from parishes and organizations in the Diocese of Scranton are expected to join the March for Life in Washington tomorrow (Jan. 19), the 'Mass for Life' is an opportunity for all people in the Diocese of Scranton to pray that every life is celebrated, valued and protected.

People attending the 'Mass for Life' are encouraged to bring a new pack of diapers to be donated to local organizations that assist mothers in need.

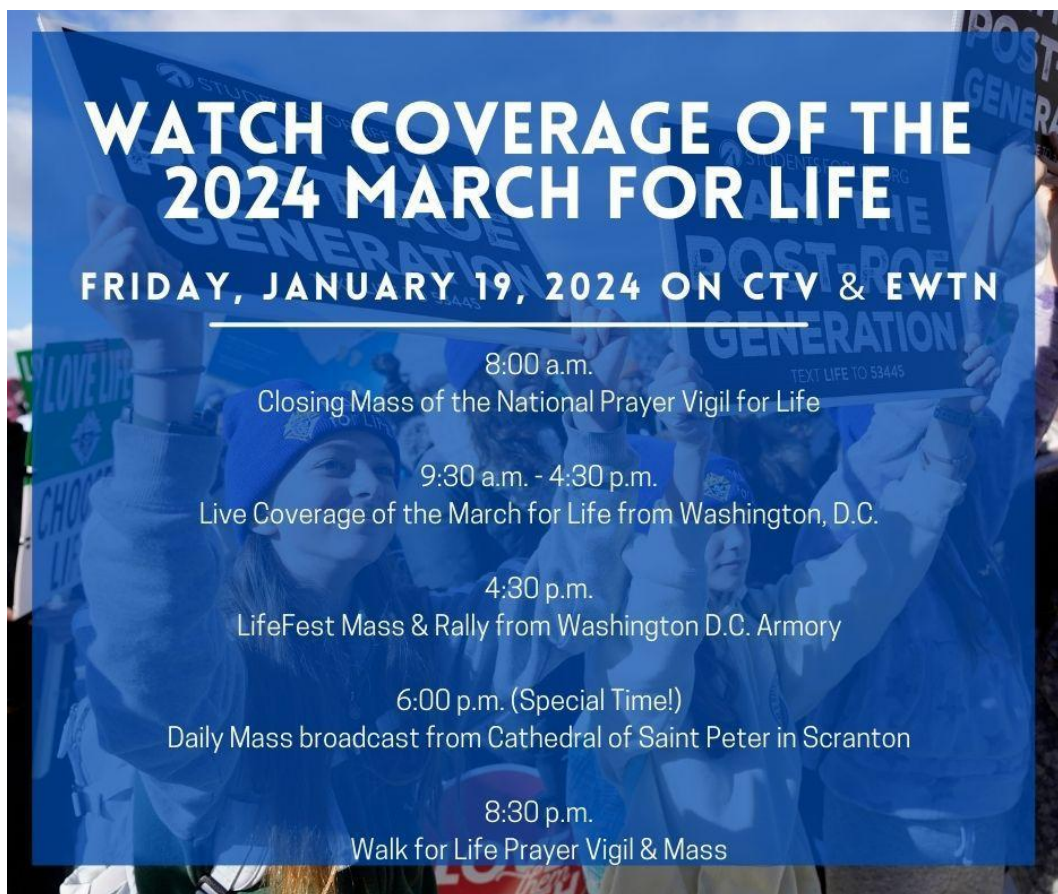
CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will broadcast the 'Mass for Life' live and will make a livestream available on the Diocese of Scranton website and all Diocesan social media platforms.

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

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**Can't make it to Washington for the 2024 March  
for Life on Friday? Live coverage planned on  
Catholic Television & EWTN**





If you are unable to make it to Washington, D.C., for the 2024 March for Life on Friday, you can watch live coverage on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton and EWTN.

At 8:00 a.m., the all-night National Prayer Vigil for Life concludes with a Closing Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Immediately following Mass, from 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., there will be live and complete coverage of the most important pro-life event of the year, the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C.

At 4:30 p.m., Archbishop William Lori will celebrate the 2nd annual Life Fest Mass and rally from the Washington D.C. Armory, sponsored by the Sisters of Life and the Knights of Columbus.

As a result of all of March for Life programming, the regular Daily Mass broadcast from the Cathedral of Saint Peter will only be shown on television once on Friday - at a special time of 6:00 p.m.

For those viewers who would like to watch the Daily Mass live, it will still be livestream on the Diocese of Scranton YouTube channel and website beginning at 12:10 p.m.

## Pope appeals for restraint against escalating conflict in Middle East



Pope Francis called for dialogue and cooperation between neighboring nations and appealed for restraint against any actions that could escalate tensions in the Middle East.

After missiles struck Irbil, the capital of Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region, Jan. 15 and killed at least four people and wounded six, the pope expressed "my sympathy and solidarity with the victims, all civilians, of the rocket attack."

"Good relations between neighbors are not built with such actions but with dialogue and cooperation," he said Jan. 17 at the end of his general audience in the Paul VI Audience Hall.

“I ask everyone to avoid any step that increases tension in the Middle East and other scenarios of war,” he added.

[Read the Full Story from Catholic News Service](#)

## New U.S. Bishops' report identifies five top areas of religious liberty concerns



A new annual report by the U.S. bishops' conference identifies five top threats to religious liberty in the United States, including a federal regulation it says could impose mandates on doctors to perform objectionable procedures and threats to the church's service to people who are migrants.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' first annual "State of Religious Liberty in the United States," published Jan. 16, said potential threats to religious liberty in the United States largely come in the form of federal regulations or cultural trends.

Five key areas of concern, the 48-page report said, include attacks against houses of worship, especially in the aftermath of the Israel-Hamas

conflict; the Section 1557 regulation from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which the report said “will likely impose a mandate on doctors to perform gender transition procedures and possibly abortions”; threats to religious charities serving migrants and refugees, “which will likely increase as the issue of immigration gains prominence in the election”; suppression of religious speech “on marriage and sexual difference”; and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s Pregnant Workers Fairness Act regulations, which the report said “aim to require religious employers to be complicit in abortion in an unprecedented way.”

[Read the Full Story from Our Sunday Visitor](#)

The sick, and the world, need 'therapy' of love, Pope Francis says in message





The “first therapy” that must be offered to the sick, and to the world, is a dose of closeness, friendship and love, Pope Francis said in his message for the World Day of the Sick.

“We came into the world because someone welcomed us; we were made for love; and we are called to communion and fraternity,” he wrote in his message for the annual observance Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

A connection with other people “is what sustains us, above all at times of illness and vulnerability,” the 87-year-old pope wrote. “It is also the first therapy that we must all adopt in order to heal the diseases of the society in which we live.”



The theme chosen for the 2024 observance is from the Book of Genesis, “It is not good that man should be alone.” It was subtitled, “Healing the Sick by Healing Relationships.”

[Read the Full Story from Catholic News Service](#)

## Gifts to the Diocesan Annual Appeal helped Catholic Social Services fulfill Christmas wishes for local children



Gifts to the Diocesan Annual Appeal are needed to help support life-changing ministries across the Diocese of Scranton, including Hispanic ministry programs.

From helping to support seminarians and retired priests, to supporting Catholic education and Communication efforts, to helping Catholic Social Services serve thousands of our neighbors - the work supported by the Annual Appeal is more than any one parish can do on its own!

Please prayerfully consider a gift today and click on the link below or call (570) 207-2250.

[Click Here to Give a Gift to the Diocesan Annual Appeal Now!](#)

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