



# ***The Catholic Light***

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

**Weekly E-Newsletter**

**January 4, 2024**

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**Diocese of Scranton to hold 'Mass for Life'  
on Jan. 21 at Cathedral of Saint Peter**

A close-up, soft-focus photograph of a baby's hands, with the fingers curled in a fist-like position. The hands are light-skinned and appear to be resting on a surface.

# 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.**

Just two days after the 2024 March for Life takes place in Washington, D.C., the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton will join together for the 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 that same week, 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.

[Click Here for More Information on the 2024 'Mass for Life' on Jan. 21](#)

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**Church and world must 'respect, defend, esteem' women, pope says**



The world and the Catholic Church must respect and defend women and foster a motherly care for others to end dehumanizing cycles of violence, Pope Francis said.

“The church needs Mary in order to recover her own feminine face, to resemble more fully the woman, virgin and mother, who is her model and perfect image, to make space for women and to be ‘generative’ through a pastoral ministry marked by concern and care,” the pope said during Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica for the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and World Peace Day Jan. 1.

The world too, he said, “needs to look to mothers and to women in order to find peace, to emerge from the spiral of violence and hatred, and once more see things with genuinely human eyes and hearts.”

In his homily, Pope Francis called on all societies to “accept the gift that is woman, every woman” and to “respect, defend and esteem woman in the knowledge that whoever harms a single woman profanes God, who was born of a woman.”

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



## **Bring Mary's gratitude and hope into the new year, Pope Francis says**



On New Year's Eve, believers and non-believers alike give thanks for all they have received in the last 12 months and express their hopes for the coming year, but Christians are called to cultivate their gratitude and hope following the example of Mary, Pope Francis said.

"Faith enables us to live this hour in a way different than that of a worldly mindset," the pope said during an evening prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica Dec. 31. "Faith in Jesus Christ, the incarnated God, born of the Virgin Mary, gives a new way of feeling time and life."

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

## **Late Pope Benedict remembered on First Anniversary of his death**



As an expression of ongoing affection and gratitude for the late Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis led tens of thousands of people in St. Peter's Square in a round of applause for his predecessor on the first anniversary of his death.

"A year ago, Pope Benedict XVI concluded his earthly journey after having served the church with love and wisdom," Pope Francis told an estimated 20,000 people gathered in the square for the midday recitation of the Angelus prayer Dec. 31.

Pope Benedict, who led the church from 2005 to 2013, died Dec. 31, 2022, at the age of 95.

"We feel so much affection, gratitude and admiration for him," the pope said. "From heaven, he blesses and accompanies us."

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

**'Padre Pio' actor Shia LaBeouf fully enters the Catholic Church New Year's Eve**



An actor who recently portrayed a beloved saint on screen has now fully come into the Catholic Church in real life.

Shia LaBeouf, a Hollywood veteran and star of director Abel Ferrara's film "Padre Pio," received the sacrament of confirmation, completing his initiation into the Catholic faith, during the New Year holiday weekend, according to announcements posted Jan. 2 to Facebook and Instagram by the Capuchin Franciscans' Western American Province.

The friars posted several pictures of a smiling LaBeouf with the friars and Bishop Robert E. Barron of Winona-Rochester, Minnesota, who had previously interviewed the actor through his Word on Fire apostolate.

Capuchin Father Joseph Seraphin Dederick, the provincial, told OSV News that Bishop Barron administered the sacrament to LaBeouf at the Old Mission Santa Inés in Solvang, California, on Dec. 31.

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



## Papal calendar for 2024: Not full, but puts spotlight on major events



As the new year begins, Pope Francis will be the oldest reigning pope since the early 1900s and the third oldest in history.

Having celebrated his 87th birthday in mid-December, Pope Francis' initial calendar for 2024 had just the essentials.

A full slate of the usual papal liturgies and meetings are scheduled; bishops will continue making "ad limina" visits; Argentina will have its first female saint; the Synod of Bishops on synodality will conclude in October; and the jubilee year opens at the year's end.

While doctors convinced the pope to cancel his scheduled trip to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in December, he has continued to speak confidently about at least three countries he has on his wish-list for papal trips in 2024.

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



## **Vatican News Agency reports 20 missionaries murdered in 2023**



In its annual report on Catholic missionaries murdered during the year, the Vatican-based news agency, Fides, noted what many of them had in common was living a normal life in areas where violence had become common.

“They did not carry out any sensational actions or out-of-the-ordinary deeds that could have attracted attention and put them in someone’s crosshairs,” the report said.


“They could have gone elsewhere, moved to safer places, or desisted from their Christian commitments, perhaps reducing them, but they did not do so, even though they were aware of the situation and the dangers they faced every day,” it added.

Fides, the news agency of the Pontifical Mission Societies which is part of the Dicastery for Evangelization, reported Dec. 30 that 20 pastoral workers were killed in 2023: one bishop, eight priests, two religious brothers, one seminarian, one novice and seven laypeople.

The agency said its tally was slightly higher than in 2022 when it counted 18 missionaries who died violently.

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


## Consider a New Year's Gift to the Diocesan Annual Appeal



**OUR CALL TO  
SERVE**  
DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL

*"They fell down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh."  
-Matthew 2:11*

Scan to donate  
or visit  
[annualappeal.org](https://annualappeal.org)



*This weekend we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord. Please take time to pray before presenting your gifts to the Lord. Your support of the Diocesan Annual Appeal helps thousands of our neighbors in need with food, shelter, and clothing each year.*

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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