

The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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Dependence on God becomes the 'seedbed for faith'

Bishop Bambera's 2024 Easter Message



Dear Friends,

"Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. ... But go and tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you.'"

These words from Saint Mark's Gospel confronted the first followers of Jesus on the day of his resurrection and boldly affirmed God's promise to save his people. Yet, despite the hope that such words imparted, the followers of Jesus were still amazed and fearful. They didn't understand. They would come to faith in the resurrection-but not immediately.

We know from accounts recorded in the Acts of the Apostles that the early Christian community *did* come to embrace Easter faith. We know too that despite the challenges that they faced, because of their encounter with the risen Jesus, they were of one mind and heart and worked together to proclaim by their lives the living presence of God in the world.

And yet, not unlike the experiences of those first Christians, the harsh reality of life continues to confront us with suffering and death. We have only to look to the Holy Land and the war raging between Israel and Hamas - to Ukraine - to Haiti - to Syria - to the families who grieve senseless deaths from the recent terrorist attack in Moscow - and to far too many lands around the globe that are enveloped by political unrest, abuse and blatant disrespect for human life. The scope of suffering and pain that is present throughout our world on a daily basis is incomprehensible.

While hardly free from grief and pain in our own land, in our families, and in our personal lives, we can choose to retreat from the global reality confronting so many of our brothers and sisters. Or, we can turn to the only thing that enables our broken world and lives to find healing, hope and peace: the Easter miracle - the promise of redemption won for us through the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus!

The great Christian martyr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed



in a Nazi death camp weeks before the Allied victory in World War II, challenged his fellow Christians to understand that the resurrection does not merely promise us life in God's eternity. Nor should redemption be reduced to "being redeemed out of sorrows, hardships and longings or an escape route out of earthly tasks and difficulties." Rather, the risen Christ "takes hold of human beings in the midst of their lives. ... Christ did not die to take us out of the world, but to affirm our existence in it. Yes, we have the hope of resurrection in the future. But we have the faith of redemption in the here and now."

Bishop Bambera's Easter Message Continues on Page 5

The Catholic Light

(ISSN 0164-9418)

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE
DIOCESE OF SCRANTON



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.

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Paschal Triduum Broadcasts on CTV

Thursday, March 28, 2024

Morning Prayer from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 8:00 a.m.

Father Jeffrey D. Tudgay, Pastor of the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, celebrates Morning Prayer on Holy Thursday.

Solemn Mass of the Lord's Supper from Rome, 11:00 a.m.

The Mass of the Lord's Supper is celebrated by Pope Francis live from the juvenile prison of "Casal del Marmo" in Rome.

Solemn Mass of the Lord's Supper from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 5:30 p.m.

On Holy Thursday, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera celebrates the Solemn Mass of the Lord's Supper live from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Night Prayer from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 9:00 p.m.

Father Jeffrey D. Tudgay, Pastor of the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, celebrates Night Prayer on Holy Thursday.

Friday, March 29, 2024

Morning Prayer from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 8:00 a.m.

Father Jeffrey D. Tudgay, Pastor of the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, celebrates Morning Prayer on Good Friday.

Commemoration of the Lord's Passion from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:10 p.m.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera presides over the Solemn commemoration of the Lord's Passion, live from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Commemoration of the Lord's Passion from Washington, D.C., 3:00 p.m.

From the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., join EWTN for a Solemn celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday.

Way of the Cross from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 5:00 p.m.

From the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, follow along with the solemn recognition of Jesus' last day on Earth as a man.

Way of the Cross from Rome, 6:30 p.m.

From the San Damaso Courtyard of the Apostolic Palace, see the oath swearing-in ceremony of new recruits for the Swiss Guards

Commemoration of the Lord's Passion from Rome, 8:00 p.m.

On Good Friday, His Holiness, Pope Francis, presides over the Solemn commemoration of the Lord's Passion, live from St. Peter's Basilica

Saturday, March 30, 2024

Morning Prayer from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 8:00 a.m.

Father Jeffrey D. Tudgay, Pastor of the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, celebrates Morning Prayer on Holy Saturday.

Easter Vigil Mass from Rome, 2:30 p.m.

His Holiness, Pope Francis, presides over the Easter Vigil Mass, live from Vatican City.

Easter Vigil Mass from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 8:00 p.m.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera serves as principal celebrant of the Solemn Easter Vigil Mass live from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Sunday, March 31, 2024

Solemn Mass of Easter Sunday from Rome, 4:00 a.m. (Rebroadcast at 7 p.m.)

He is Risen! Pope Francis celebrates the Solemn Mass of Easter Sunday in Vatican City and gives a traditional address and blessing to the world.

Urbi et Orbi: Message and Blessing, 6:00 a.m. (Rebroadcast at 9:30 p.m.)

Urbi et Orbi, the traditional Easter message and blessing to the city of Rome and to the world, is given by Pope Francis in Rome.

Easter Sunday Mass from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 10:00 a.m. (Rebroadcast at 5 p.m.)

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera serves as principal celebrant of the Easter Sunday Mass from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Easter Sunday Mass from Washington, D.C., Noon

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. is the setting for Easter Sunday services.

Bishop expresses deep gratitude to priests, people during Chrism Mass

SCRANTON — More than any other day of the liturgical year, the Tuesday of Holy Week spiritually draws the hearts and souls of faithful throughout the Diocese of Scranton to the solemn setting of the Cathedral of Saint Peter in downtown Scranton for the celebration of the Pontifical Mass of the Sacred Chrism.

On Tuesday afternoon, March 26, as principal celebrant and homilist for the venerable gathering, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, once again warmly welcomed to the Mother Church of the Diocese the throng of worshippers of all ages who came from the four corners of the 11-county Scranton See to take part in the annual Eucharistic liturgy, so richly concelebrated by the priests serving the Diocese in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.

The traditional Holy Week observance and gathering of the priests of the Diocese — customarily the largest of its kind each year — celebrates their clerical brotherhood and shared divine vocation.

During the Mass, priests and deacons, along with lay representatives from Diocesan parishes, acknowledge the Bishop's role as the unifying symbol for Church governance



Priests from the Diocese of Scranton celebrate the Liturgy of the Eucharist during the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Tuesday, March 26, 2024. (Photos/Mike Melisky)

and pastoral guidance.

All of the priests also recommit themselves to their office by renewing the promises they made on the day of their ordination to the priesthood, including their vow of obedience to the Bishop.

“I love coming to this gathering,” said Father John Chmil, pastor of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Swoyersville. “I especially look forward every year to renewing my priestly vows and promises, and the commitment to serve God's people.”

Echoing similar sentiments was Father Gus Ricciardi, who serves as pastor of Old Forge's Prince of Peace Parish.

“This Chrism Mass is a wonderful opportunity for us as fellow priests to get together not only for the camaraderie, but in fraternal community to renew our vows in support of each other and with the support of the Bishop,” Father Ricciardi commented.

Holding to ancient tradition, the Mass of the Sacred Chrism is highlighted by the blessing of the Holy Oils used during the conferral of sacraments throughout the Church year. They include the Oil of the Sick, and the Oil of Catechumens, which are used in the celebration of Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders, the Anointing of the Sick, and the Rites of the Catechumenate.

Father Bob Simon, pastor of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Brodheadsville, described the annual Chrism Mass gathering as a “beautiful time for our priests, deacons, and religious brothers to celebrate our ministry in the company of our Bishop.”

Baptism and continuing with Confirmation, Holy Orders and the Anointing of the Sick, right up to the moment when we prepare for our final journey to meet the Lord, through the use of sacred oils that we bless this day, God's merciful love is poured forth into our lives,” Bishop Bambera stated.

Addressing his brother priests directly, the Scranton Bishop offered, “Brothers, I thank you for engaging in the hard work of priestly ministry in these challenging times — times that demand a great deal from each of us as we discern how best to continue to serve our people and parishes.”

“Without a doubt, we are richly blessed with generous seminarians who join us today, as well as the presence of so many international priests who minister among us apart from their families, home dioceses and religious communities,” he added.

In his concluding remarks, Bishop Bambera spoke to the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton by saying, “To all my brothers and sisters who make up this local Church, thank you for living your baptism, for embracing the values of the Gospel and for doing your part in building up God's Kingdom.”

He further expressed, “It is also so special because you reflect and think about all the people who will be anointed during the coming year with the sacred oils that will be blessed here tonight.”

Bishop Bambera began his homily by referring to the day's Chrism Mass as a sign of the unity of God's people with their bishop and a time when the Church calls everyone to engage in the journey of the sacramental life it offers to all believers.

“Beginning with our first encounter with the Lord at



During the Chrism Mass, priests are invited to stand and renew their dedication to Christ and to the service of His people.



Bishop Bambera breathes upon the opening of the vessel of the Sacred Chrism during the Consecration Act.

Reflect on Jesus as a 'selfless servant,' Bishop said as Holy Week begins

SCRANTON – Holy Week began in parishes across the Diocese of Scranton on March 24 with Palm Sunday Masses.

At the Cathedral of Saint Peter, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, began the 12:15 p.m. liturgy in the Cathedral Prayer Garden, where he blessed the palms and led the faithful on a procession down Wyoming Avenue.

The Bishop began his homily by noting the tension between the "sense of celebration" as the faithful echo the hosannas shouted by the people of Jerusalem as Jesus enters the city and the account of Jesus' passion and death in the Gospel.

"This tension that permeates today's liturgy reflects so much of what we experience in life, doesn't it? We seek peace and harmony in our lives and in our families. Yet, we so often stoke fires of division and alienation," Bishop Bambera said. "We struggle to do the good, while yielding to self-consumed needs and desires. Most pointedly on this day, we are reminded by the Word of God that the faith



After blessing palms in the Cathedral Prayer Garden, Bishop Bambera leads a procession down Wyoming Avenue in Scranton at the beginning of Palm Sunday Mass on March 24, 2024. (Photos/Mike Melisky)

we profess with our lips does not always reflect what we profess by our lives."

Bishop Bambera stressed that by coming into the world, Jesus gave us a way forward.

"The radical humility that Jesus showed in eschewing self-glorification, assuming the role of a selfless servant and embracing His Father's will, even to the cross, is what we are called to make as our own," he said. "It is only through our imitation of

Jesus' pattern of living that we will ever discover the means to face the challenges of life with hope and be given a taste of God's enduring peace."

As Holy Week began, the Bishop stressed our faith calls us to affirm that God delivers us from the darkness of sin and the "brokenness of our world."

"Make no mistake; our experience of this Holy Week will not take away the harsh realities of life that we face each day.



A parishioner holds palm branches during Palm Sunday Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

But our authentic embrace of the example of Jesus' life and our willingness to care for the lives that God has given to us – even as we bear the crosses laid upon our shoulders – do have the power to open our lives to the mystery of God's saving grace."

Bishop Bambera will celebrate the Paschal Triduum at the Cathedral of Saint Peter at these times:

HOLY THURSDAY, MARCH 28

Holy Thursday marks the day on which Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist and the priestly Order and gave us the commandment concerning fraternal charity.

The Pontifical Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, which will include the Rite of the Washing of Feet, will begin at 5:30 p.m., with Bishop Bambera serving as the principal celebrant. Following

this Mass there will be the transfer of the Most Blessed Sacrament to the place of repose. Adoration will continue until 9:00 p.m. Night Prayer will be celebrated at 9:00 p.m. and broadcast via livestream

GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 29

The Commemoration of the Passion and Death of the Lord celebrated by Bishop Bambera will begin at 12:10 p.m. In addition, the Stations of the Cross will be prayed at 5:00 p.m. Good Friday is a day of fast and abstinence.

HOLY SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Bishop Bambera will be the principal celebrant and homilist of the Easter Vigil Mass at the Cathedral beginning at 8:00 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 31

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord is the most joyous day in the Church year. On Easter Day, Bishop Bambera will celebrate a Pontifical Mass at 10:00 a.m. at the Cathedral.

On Palm Sunday, pope prays people open hearts to God, quell all hatred

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Only Jesus can deliver humanity from hatred and violence, Pope Francis said on Palm Sunday.

"Jesus entered Jerusalem as a humble and peaceful king," he said in brief remarks after celebrating Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square. He prayed that the faithful would open their hearts to the Lord because he alone "can deliver us from animosity, hatred, violence, because he is mercy and the forgiveness of sins."

On a sunny and windy day, about 60,000 people attended the Mass March 24, which began with a solemn procession

of hundreds of people carrying green palm branches followed by about 60 cardinals and bishops, carrying "palmurelli," pale green palm branches that were woven and braided.

Dressed in red vestments, the color of the Passion, Pope Francis presided over the Mass, the solemn beginning of Holy Week, but he skipped the homily and did not have an aide read any prepared remarks. Cardinal Claudio Gugerotti, prefect of the Dicastery for Eastern Churches, was the main celebrant at the altar.

The Vatican offered no explanation about why there was no homily. The pope did read brief



Prelates carry palm fronds in procession as Pope Francis looks on at the start of the celebration of Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican March 24, 2024. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

remarks after praying the Angelus, greeted the cardinals in attendance from his wheelchair, and he rode

in the popemobile for about 15 minutes enthusiastically greeting the faithful, waving, gesturing, offering a thumbs up and occasionally calling out remarks to those he saw.

In his brief remarks, he expressed his sorrow over a deadly attack in Moscow March 22 in which more than 130 people were killed inside a crowded concert venue.

He prayed for the victims of this "cowardly terrorist attack" and called for the conversion of the

"hearts of those who plan, organize and carry out these inhumane actions that offend God, who commanded, 'Thou shalt not kill.'"

The pope extended his prayers to all people who suffer because of war, particularly those in Ukraine, "where so many people find themselves without electricity because of intense attacks against the infrastructure that, in addition to causing death and suffering, carry the risk of an even larger humanitarian catastrophe."

He also asked people not to forget about the people of Gaza who "are suffering so much" and the other places experiencing war.

La dependencia de Dios se convierte en el 'semillero de la fe'

Mensaje de Pascua del obispo Bambera para 2024

Queridos amigos,

"¡No os asombréis! Buscas a Jesús de Nazaret, el crucificado. Ha resucitado; él no está aquí. ... Pero id y decid a sus discípulos y a Pedro: 'Él va delante de vosotros a Galilea; allí lo veréis, como os dijo.'"

Estas palabras del Evangelio de San Marcos confrontaron a los primeros seguidores de Jesús el día de su resurrección y afirmaron con valentía la promesa de Dios de salvar a su pueblo. Sin embargo, a pesar de la esperanza que esas palabras transmitían, los seguidores de Jesús todavía estaban asombrados y temerosos. No entendieron. Llegarían a la fe en la resurrección, pero no de inmediato.

Sabemos por los relatos registrados en los Hechos de los Apóstoles que la primera comunidad cristiana llegó a abrazar la fe pascual. Sabemos también que a pesar de los desafíos que enfrentaron, debido a su encuentro con Jesús resucitado, tenían una sola mente y un solo corazón y trabajaron juntos para proclamar con sus vidas la presencia viva de Dios en el mundo.

Y, sin embargo, al igual que las experiencias de aquellos primeros cristianos, la dura realidad de la vida continúa enfrentándonos al sufrimiento y la muerte. Sólo tenemos que mirar a Tierra Santa y la guerra que se libra entre Israel y Hamás, a Ucrania, a Haití, a Siria, a las familias que lamentan muertes sin sentido por el reciente ataque terrorista en Moscú, y a demasiadas tierras alrededor del mundo. mundo que están envueltos por el malestar político, los abusos y la flagrante falta de respeto por la vida humana. La magnitud del sufrimiento y el dolor que está presente en nuestro mundo a diario es incomprensible.

Si bien difícilmente estamos libres de pena y dolor en nuestra propia tierra, en nuestras familias y en nuestra vida personal, podemos optar por retirarnos de la realidad global que enfrentan tantos de nuestros hermanos y hermanas. O podemos recurrir a lo único que permite que nuestro mundo y nuestras vidas quebrantados encuentren sanación, esperanza y paz: el milagro pascual: ¡la promesa de redención ganada para nosotros a través del sufrimiento, la muerte y la resurrección de Jesús!

El gran mártir cristiano, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, que fue ejecutado en un campo de exterminio nazi semanas antes de la victoria aliada en la Segunda Guerra Mundial, desafió a sus hermanos cristianos a comprender que la resurrección no solo nos promete vida en la eternidad de Dios. La redención tampoco debe reducirse a "ser redimido de dolores, dificultades y anhelos o una ruta de escape de las tareas y dificultades terrenales". Más bien, Cristo resucitado "se apodera del hombre en medio de su vida. ... Cristo no murió para sacarnos del mundo, sino para afirmar nuestra existencia en él. Sí, tenemos la esperanza de la resurrección en el futuro. Pero tenemos la fe de la redención aquí y ahora".

El Papa Francisco, reflexionando sobre nuestra necesidad de esperanza mientras navegamos por un mundo complicado y nuestras propias vidas desafiantes, lo expresó mejor.

"Para experimentar la esperanza de la Pascua, debemos estar dispuestos a entrar en el misterio de Dios. ... El misterio exige que no tengamos miedo de la realidad: que no nos encerremos en nosotros mismos, que no huyamos de lo que no logramos comprender, que no cerremos los ojos ante los problemas ni los neguemos, que no descartemos nuestras preguntas. ... Para entrar en el misterio de Dios, necesitamos la humildad de reconocer quiénes somos realmente, criaturas con fortalezas y debilidades, pecadores necesitados de perdón", dijo el Santo Padre.

Como tal, debemos apreciar nuestra impotencia y nuestra absoluta dependencia de Dios.

De hecho, la impotencia y la dependencia de Dios se convierten en el semillero de la fe; una fe que nace no de algún tipo de prueba - sino que nace dentro de corazones que son lo suficientemente humildes como para buscar la presencia de Dios - una fe caracterizada a veces por la incertidumbre y la duda - pero una fe, sin embargo, que conduce a una confianza inquebrantable en una persona: la persona de Jesús, resucitado de entre los muertos. Esa es la Pascua, hermanos y hermanas, y donde encontramos esperanza y paz duradera.

Uno de los mayores signos del poder de la resurrección es la presencia de 177 catecúmenos y candidatos de toda la Diócesis de Scranton que serán bautizados en la vida, muerte y resurrección de Jesús y presentados para la plena comunión en la Iglesia Católica durante la gran Vigilia de Pascua. Estos catecúmenos y candidatos -nuestros familiares, vecinos y amigos- se unirán a miles de catecúmenos y candidatos de todo el mundo para profesar públicamente su fe en Jesucristo y asumir su lugar con nosotros en el cuerpo de Jesús, la Iglesia.

Hermanos y hermanas, gracias por su disposición a caminar conmigo en este increíble viaje de fe, junto con nuestros dedicados sacerdotes, diáconos, mujeres y hombres en la vida consagrada, mientras juntos buscamos proclamar a Jesús resucitado y su evangelio de vida.

Este es el día que hizo el Señor. ¡Alegrémonos y alegrémonos!

Fielmente vuestro en Cristo Resucitado,

Reverendísimo Joseph C. Bambera, DD, JCL
Obispo de Scranton

"In Easter, we find hope and lasting peace"

Bishop Bambera's Easter Message

Continued from Page 1

Pope Francis, reflecting upon our need for hope as we navigate a complicated world and our own challenging lives, put it best.

"To experience the hope of Easter, we must be willing to enter into the mystery of God. ... The mystery demands that we not be afraid of reality: that we not be locked into ourselves, that we not flee from what we fail to understand, that we not close our eyes to problems or deny them, that we not dismiss our questions. ... To enter into the mystery of God, we need the humility to recognize who we really are, creatures with strengths and weaknesses, sinners in need of forgiveness," the Holy Father said.

As such, we need to appreciate our powerlessness and our absolute dependence upon God.

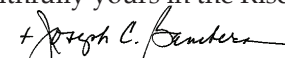
In fact, powerlessness and dependence upon God become the very seedbeds for faith; a faith born not from some sort of proof - but born within hearts that are humble enough to seek the presence of God - a faith characterized at times by uncertainty and doubt - but a faith, nonetheless, that leads to an unshakable trust in a person: the person of Jesus, risen from the dead. That is Easter, brothers and sisters, and where we find hope and lasting peace.

One of the greatest signs of the power of the resurrection is the presence of 177 catechumens and candidates from throughout the Diocese of Scranton who will be baptized into the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and presented for full communion in the Catholic Church during the great Vigil of Easter. These catechumens and candidates - our relatives, neighbors and friends - will join with thousands of catechumens and candidates from around the world to publicly profess their faith in Jesus Christ and to assume their place with us in Jesus' body, the Church.

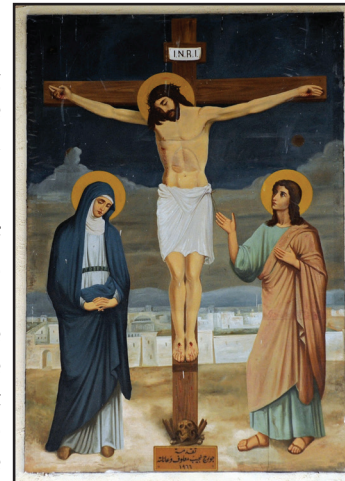
Brothers and sisters, thank you for your willingness to walk with me on this incredible journey of faith, along with our dedicated priests and deacons and women and men in consecrated life, as together we seek to proclaim the risen Jesus and his gospel of life.

This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad!

Faithfully yours in the Risen Christ,



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



Bishop Bambera concludes Lenten Holy Hours prior to Holy Week

SCRANTON - The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, wrapped up a series of 12 Holy Hours during Lent on March 20, 2024, at Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish in Scranton.

At the request of many who attended the events in deaneries all across the Diocese, the Bishop's homily, as prepared for delivery, is below:

For over two years, we have been participating with Catholics from throughout our land in a Eucharistic Revival, a time that has invited us to renew our spirits through the living presence of Jesus in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. I thank our host pastor, my brother priests and deacons and so many of you from parishes throughout this Deanery for the kind opportunity to reflect with you for just a few moments upon the gift of Jesus in the Eucharist – the source and summit of our lives as Christians.

Recall the words just proclaimed from Saint Mark's Gospel. During the course of the Last Supper, Jesus "took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it" to his disciples. We know these words well. While they are familiar words reflecting the action of Jesus at the Last Supper, let's probe their meaning a bit more and allow them to speak to our hearts. In their simplicity and familiarity, they capture the essence of the Eucharist and what we are about during this season of revival: "Jesus took, blessed, broke and gave bread to his disciples."

First, Jesus "took" bread. Jesus took what was placed upon a table in the upper room for the Passover meal. He didn't give directions for how it was to have been baked – or its shape – or the length of time for baking. Maybe it was underbaked. Perhaps it was burned on the edges. Yet, Jesus took what he found.

Reflecting upon Jesus' feeding of the multitudes, Saint Teresa of Calcutta offered these words, "Before Jesus taught the people, he had pity on the multitude, and he fed them. He made a miracle. He blessed the bread, and he fed five thousand people. He did so not because they were perfect but because he loved them. He had pity on them. He saw the hunger in their faces, and he fed them. And only once they were fed did he teach them."

Just so with us! In inviting us to the table of the Eucharist, Jesus takes us as we



The Wilkes-Barre Deanery gathered for a Lenten Holy Hour on March 18 at Our Lady of Hope Parish in Wilkes-Barre.

are – wounds, blemishes and all! He sees the hunger in our faces, and he responds to us with compassion and mercy. Recall Jesus' words from Saint Luke's Gospel, "I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners."

How do we see ourselves as we come to the Eucharist? Do we carry with us the belief that we must be perfect and righteous in all that we do to approach the Lord? Do we bring a judgment that some of us are worthy of the Eucharist while others are not?

Or do we come to the table of the Lord in a spirit of honesty and openness to God's will, recognizing that none of us are worthy on our own – but by the grace and mercy of God. Do we come with the words of Pope Francis seared into our hearts, "Although it is the fullness of sacramental life, the Eucharist is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak."

Do we come searching and seeking a power bigger than ourselves that alone can lift us out of the mess of this world and our lives and give us hope?

Jesus did not live in two worlds, one sacred and one profane. He did not lead two lives, one holy and one secular. The incarnation destroyed that distinction. In the loving plan of God for creation, Jesus immersed himself in our human condition for the simple fact that



Faithful from the northern tier gathered for a Lenten Holy Hour on March 7 at Epiphany Parish in Sayre.

on our own, we are unable to save ourselves! Recall the words that we hear so often from John's Gospel: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life."

As he "took" bread, Jesus takes us – as we are – to be transformed into his life!

Then Jesus "blessed" the bread and does the same to each life that approaches him in the Eucharist with faith and humility.

While Mark's gospel describes Jesus as having "blessed" bread, the words with which most of us are familiar from the Eucharistic Prayers offered at Mass are "giving thanks." Much like we give thanks and ask God's blessing upon the food that we receive at mealtime, Jesus gives thanks to his Father and blesses bread, making it holy – just as he blesses us, making us holy – despite our limitations, brokenness and sin.

While privileged to receive the very life of God in this great sacrament, we ought never sidestep the reality of sin in our lives. Far from it. The Eucharist celebrates the firm belief that within Christ's personhood, which is at the heart of the sacrament, the bounty of God's grace and human brokenness are forever joined together. The great Saint Thomas Aquinas affirmed this reality, noting that "no other sacrament has greater healing power; through it sins are purged away."

While encouraged to seek the forgiveness of serious sin in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we ought not forget that the healing nature of the Eucharist is acknowledged at every Mass in the words of institution, "This is the chalice of my blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins." We don't

often stop to reflect upon the healing, forgiving power of the Eucharist, do we? Yet, Jesus took bread as he found it, blessed it and made it holy – just as he does with us!

Following the actions of "taking" and "blessing," Jesus "broke" the bread.

Throughout the gospels, we find Jesus, time and again, moved with pity for the suffering world in which he was immersed. From hungry

masses yearning to be fed, to wounded souls in search of healing, to lives on the margins of society oppressed by the self-righteous, Jesus' own life begins to break apart for the sake of those he loved so well. In broken bread, then, we discover the broken Christ whose blood was poured forth for our life and salvation.

But we are also challenged to see ourselves in this action. The words of institution are not solely about what happens to Jesus or to bread and wine. They are also about what happens to those of us who embrace the crosses that rest upon our shoulders and walk the journey of life with Jesus. They are words that speak to our lives when we carry the cross of an addicted child – an aging parent – a suffering spouse – and give so completely of ourselves for their life and well-being.

As Jesus' suffering and death gave way to life and resurrection, our encounter with the risen Lord will also give way to life, but only when we are humble enough to place our lives on the cross of Christ and to suffer with him for the sake of the gospel for which he gave his life. Therein is the mystery, the power and the true grace found in the Eucharist.

Finally, brothers and sisters, at the Last Supper, Jesus "gave" bread to his disciples. He gave his broken body and blood as food for their life and salvation. In the singular act of Jesus' self-giving to us, we begin to understand that an authentic encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist demands far more than a few moments alone with the Lord whom we adore.

The selfless pattern of Jesus' life becomes the path for our journey as disciples.

Continued on Page 23

Living Stations of the Cross bring students closer to the Passion of Christ

MILFORD – With Holy Week now underway, Stations of the Cross are not only being prayed, but reenacted, around the Diocese of Scranton.

Numerous parishes and Diocesan schools have been holding ‘Living Stations of the Cross’ presentations recently, which are opportunities for students to read and act out the Stations in a prayerful and moving way that often incorporates music.

A moving reenactment of Jesus’ Via Dolorosa, or final journey to Calvary, was presented by faith formation students at Saint Patrick Parish in Milford on Friday, March 22, 2024.

“We practiced for three weeks, for about an hour each time,” eighth grader Patrick Fleming said.

Fleming portrayed Jesus this year and found the experience to be a powerful opportunity to reflect on His journey.

“I really understand it fully now,” he said.

Angelica Barcia served as narrator for the second year in a row.

She appreciates participating in the Living Stations because it gives everyone a full understanding of the many things that Jesus had to endure before His death.

“It’s so important for people to realize that He didn’t just die on the cross for our sins,” Barcia said. “He was human and He had all the mental capacities that we do.”

After participating in the presentation for several years now, Barcia says the Stations of the Cross now hit “closer to home.”

“It’s not just a story,” she said. “This helps me visualize and understand exactly what lengths Jesus went through when He died on the cross for us.”

She is often struck by the reactions from the audience.

“I think people understand it better, and emotionally, they have a deeper connection with it,” Barcia added. “You definitely see it in their facial expressions.”

Connor Giblin, a high school sophomore, participated in the program for the first time this year. The presentation also impacted him.

“Going through it, it really makes me appreciate everything He (Jesus) did for us on a whole new level,” he said.

Giblin will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Easter Vigil Mass this



Faith formation students of Saint Patrick Parish in Milford perform ‘Living Stations.’

year. Participating in the Living Stations allowed him to reflect on Jesus’ journey in preparation of that special day.

“When I sat down and listened to each Station individually and I realized what He had to go through, it was a shock to my core, it sent a chill down my spine,” he said.

Giblin portrayed a soldier, and while not the biggest part, it was certainly meaningful.

“You feel like you’re in the soldier’s position and you realize what they had to put Jesus through. Morally, it feels wrong to me, being in that position, but that really connects me to the scene even more,” he explained.

Other students participating in the Living Stations included: Kaitlin Murphy as Mary, Cristian Caciralli as Simon, Clare Barcia as Veronica, Slawomir Kratochwill as a soldier, and Emersyn Delrio, Selena Dolan, Angelina Giovane and Adele Kahmar as holy women.

The Living Stations reenactment at Saint Patrick Parish was directed by Laurie Barcia of Milford, featured costumes by Michelle Baron, also of Milford, music by the parish’s music ministry, and professional lighting by Micah Sweeney and Kevin Striker. Special prayers were led by Father Joseph Manarchuck, pastor.

The presentation was followed by a “Glow in the Dark” egg hunt in Saint Patrick’s Hall, with pizza provided by the Knights of Columbus.

Parishes plan *Divine Mercy* Sunday celebrations for April 7

SCRANTON — Divine Mercy Parish in the Minooka section of Scranton will celebrate its patronal feast with devotions and the Eucharistic liturgy for Divine Mercy Sunday on April 7.

Coinciding with the canonization of Saint Faustina Kowalska on April 30, 2000, Pope Saint John Paul II officially designated the Second Sunday of Easter as the Sunday of Divine Mercy.

The Divine Mercy Sunday devotion has its foundation in the mystical writings of Saint Faustina, based on the divine apparitions and revelations she received from the Lord Jesus in the 1930s in Poland.

During the spiritual encounters, Christ declared through the Polish nun the necessity for all of humankind to seek and receive his Divine Mercy, which was poured out for the entire world through his death on the cross.

Since the papal proclamation of Divine Mercy Sunday in 2000, Catholic faithful are strongly encouraged to join together in prayer and adoration on the Sunday following Easter Sunday to implore God’s mercy for themselves and the whole world.

Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul McDonnell, pastor of Divine Mercy Parish, announces the Divine Mercy devotion

begins with sacramental confessions and prayers at 1 p.m. at the parish worship site of Saint Joseph Church, 312 Davis St., Minooka, Scranton.

The pastor will serve as celebrant and homilist for Divine Mercy Sunday Mass at 3 p.m. A light reception will follow the devotions in the parish hall.

For more information, contact the parish office at (570) 344-1724.

Divine Mercy **at Avoca Parish**

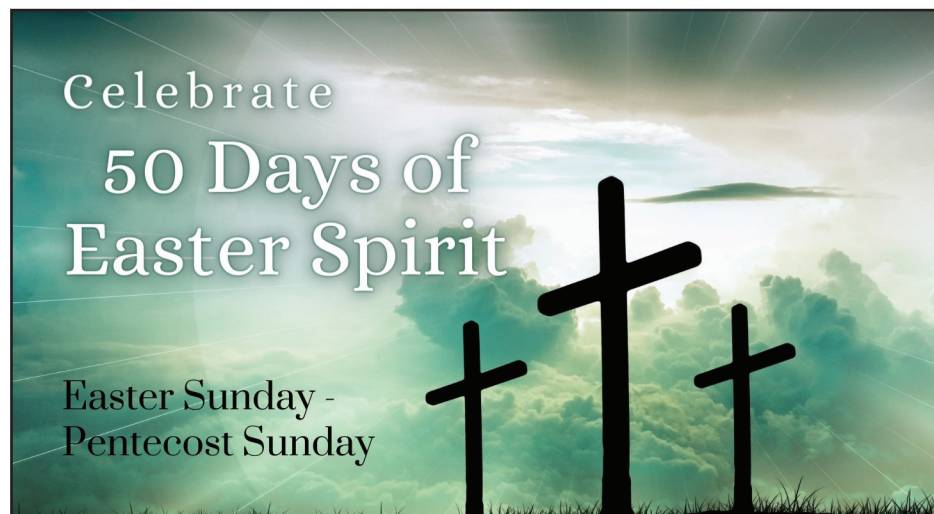
Divine Mercy Sunday coordinators Father Phillip Sladicka, pastor, and Deacon Jim Rose announce Queen of the Apostles Parish, 715 Hawthorne

St., Avoca, will host the Divine Mercy celebration on Sunday, April 7.

Beginning at 12:30 p.m. in the parish’s Saint Mary Church, the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confessions) will be offered until 2 p.m., followed by the celebration of Mass for Divine Mercy Sunday.

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy will be prayed at 3 p.m. Benediction and blessing with the first-class relic of Saint Faustina will conclude the special celebration.

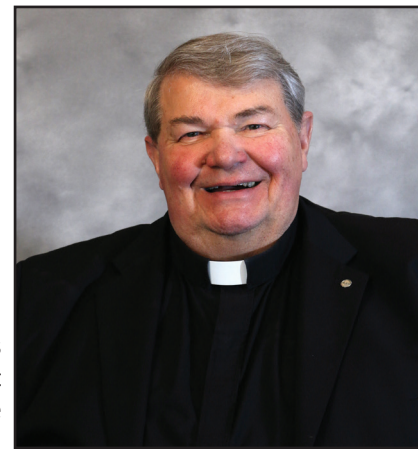
All faithful are welcome to participate. For more information, call Queen of the Apostles Parish at (570) 457-3412.





“EUCHARIST: THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST”

*A Priesthood Perspective by Monsignor John J. Bendik -
Pastor Emeritus of Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Pittston*



On the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, Dr. David Marx, the Deacon at Saint John the Evangelist in Pittston, shared a memory of an event that happened when he was a young altar server.

As the pastor was placing the Communion hosts into the chalice before Mass, one fell on the floor. The priest bent over to pick it up, showed the unconsecrated host to all who were in the sacristy, and said, “Can you imagine who this would have become?”

David has never forgotten that moment.

How well do we acknowledge the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and give our Lord proper reverence?

Every time I prepared to celebrate with our children their First Holy Communion, I pondered over how I would explain this Sacrament to them in an understandable way.

I will never forget the homily given by the pastor in my first year as a priest when he told the children that when you receive the host, “you will be ‘walking ciboriums.’” I wondered some fifty-plus years ago how many of their parents would even know what a ciborium was.

When I became a pastor, for my parish’s First Holy Communion, I came up with an idea that I hoped would help our precious children understand.

I sat on a chair in front of the altar and asked the children to sit as close to me as they could so everyone could see. On my left I had a large “mystery box” filled with several “signs.”

I knew that they were

well instructed by our religious education teachers. They knew that the Eucharist was a sacrament — a sign.

I pointed out my “mystery box” and told them that I was going to ask them to identify each of the “signs” I was about to show them.

The first “sign” I pulled out of my box was a pair of Mickey Mouse ears, which I promptly placed upon my head.

Of course, the children chuckled as did their parents.

I asked them this question: “Whose sign is this?” And they joyfully responded, “Mickey Mouse.”

I commended them and then asked, “When I put on Mickey Mouse’s ears do I become Mickey Mouse?”

They quickly said: “NO!”

I took off the ears and passed it to one of the children to hold for me.

I did the same for the other signs I had in the box, asking whose sign it was and if I became that sign. My signs changed over the years, but most recently I had, along with Mickey, a Santa Claus hat, the Easter Bunny’s ears, a Spider Man mask, SpongeBob Square Pants, and Olaf from “Frozen.”

At one point I also had a Shrek mask as well as Barney, the purple dinosaur.

In all cases, the children cheerfully announced that I did not become any of those characters.

I then took out a cross and held it up and asked whose sign it was.

They all chimed in to say, “Jesus.” They went on to explain to me how Jesus died on the cross because he loved them. I took out the Host I would soon be consecrating at the Mass and asked the most important of all questions: “When I and our other priests pray over the Hosts at Mass Who does it become?” They replied: “Jesus.”

I then reiterated that when I put on the “sign” of the characters in my box of signs, at no point did I become that character. However, when we offered that special prayer at Mass, Jesus becomes really present to us in the bread and the wine because he loves us so much.

To this day, I cannot tell you how many young people, and some not-so-young, remember that unique homily.

I share this special memory because it is distressing to read

the percentage of Catholics who do not believe that Jesus is really present in the Blessed Sacrament.

Why is this such a challenging mystery for so many?

Does it really take an abundance of grace and faith to believe this? Was Jesus really serious when he took the bread and the cup of wine and proclaimed: “*This is my Body. This is my Blood?*”

This was the last time he would be with all his disciples at a meal. One would assume that he meant what he said and said what he meant.

His word was powerful! His touch was salvific! He gave sight to the blind, healing to lepers, and even turned water into wine for a wedding feast. He told persons with disabilities to walk, he multiplied loaves and fishes, he cast out demons, and

he raised from the dead Jairus’ daughter, the widow of Naim’s son, and his friend Lazarus.

He did this with a simple word. He who is the Word of God spoke and miracles happened. And, even more significantly, his word had a profound effect on the hearts and souls of those who heard him preach and tell stories that made incredible sense to them. They repented and believed that the Kingdom of God was at hand.

If we believe that Jesus actually did all that he did, why do some have such a hard time believing that his words of institution at the Last Supper were mere signs that had no transformational effect?

That is the real mystery for me.

Discounted tickets available for the National Eucharistic Congress in July

SCRANTON – The Diocese of Scranton has a limited number of discounted passes for the National Eucharistic Congress that will take place July 17-21 in Indianapolis.

The passes are available now and can be reserved online at the Diocese of Scranton website (dioceseofscranton.org).

The passes are valid for the full five-days (or any part) of the National Eucharistic Congress and are priced at \$200. A regular five-day pass is normally priced at \$360. The passes are only being

sold online and are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The passes do not include travel, meals, or housing for the Congress.

The National Eucharistic Congress is part of the National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year initiative launched by the U.S. bishops in 2022 to deepen Catholics’ relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist.

Each day, attendees will select their preferred series of impact sessions for the morning and breakout sessions for the afternoon. Then, gathered together as one, the whole assembly will experience the powerful revival sessions in Lucas Oil Stadium each evening.

Healing Mass for Survivors of Abuse to be held April 11

SCRANTON - The month of April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. It is a time to recognize the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse and neglect.

The month of April gives us all a chance to recommit ourselves to creating safe environments in our parishes, schools and related institutions.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will celebrate the Diocese of Scranton's annual "Healing Mass for Survivors of Abuse" on Thursday, April 11, at 12:10 p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

For those unable to attend in person, the Mass will be broadcast live on Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton. A livestream will also be available on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel and links on Diocesan social media.

POPE: CHURCH MUST STOP PROTECTING ABUSERS 'WHO HIDE BEHIND THEIR POSITION'

The work of protecting minors and other vulnerable people in the Catholic Church involves holding those in positions of power accountable for the abuse they commit, Pope Francis said.

The church's safeguarding efforts

"must undoubtedly aim at eradicating situations that protect those who hide behind their positions to impose themselves on others in a perverse way," the pope wrote in a message to participants in a safeguarding conference.

In the message, released March 12, he also said the church must try to understand why such people are "unable to relate to others in a healthy way."

PAPAL COMMISSION TO SUBMIT FIRST SAFEGUARDING REPORT

The pope's commission for advancing the Catholic Church's efforts to prevent the abuse of vulnerable persons is due to submit its first annual report on the state of safeguarding in the church this summer.

The commission also announced the approval of a study group "to examine the reality of vulnerable persons in the context of the Church's ministry and how this informs safeguarding efforts."

The goal of the study group is to "adopt a multi-disciplinary approach to the questions around vulnerability to provide concrete recommendations on how the Church might better combat the harms committed against non-minors by the Church's ministers in a variety of pastoral settings," the statement added.

APPOINTMENTS

His Excellency, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, announces the following appointments, effective as indicated

PAROCHIAL VICAR

Reverend Edison Gregorio Arreaga Arce, from Parochial Vicar, Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Brodheadsville, effective March 2, 2024. Father Arreaga Arce will return to Ministry with the Passionist Congregation, Ecuador.

Reverend Sudhir Toppo, from Parochial Vicar, Saint John Bosco Parish, Conyngham to Parochial Vicar, Saint Ann Parish, Shohola, Saint John Neumann Parish, Hawley, and Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Milford, effective April 2, 2024.

PARISH LIFE COORDINATOR

Deacon William F. Behm, from Parish Life Coordinator, Saint Andrew Parish, Wilkes-Barre, effective May 28, 2024.

SACRAMENTAL MINISTER

Reverend Joseph A. Kearney, Retired, from Sacramental Minister, Saint Andrew Parish, Wilkes-Barre, effective immediately.



BISHOP BAMBERA'S SCHEDULE

March 28 - Mass of the Lord's Supper

Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 5:30 p.m.

March 29 - Commemoration of the Lord's Passion

Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.

March 30 - Easter Vigil Mass

Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 8:00 p.m.

March 31 - Easter Sunday Mass

Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 10:00 a.m.

April 4 - Confirmation for Saint Matthew Parish

East Stroudsburg, 6:30 p.m.

April 7 - Mass for RCIA Candidates at The University of Scranton

Madonna Della Strada Chapel, Scranton, 11:00 a.m.

April 7 - Bishop's Youth Awards

Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 2:30 p.m.

April 8 - Confirmation for Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish

Brodheadsville, 5:00 p.m.

April 9 - Confirmation for Christ the King Parish and Sacred Hearts of

Jesus and Mary Parish in Archbald, 5:00 p.m.

April 10 - Zoom Meeting of Major Superiors

1:30 p.m.

April 10 - Confirmation for Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish, Our Lady of

Mount Carmel Parish, Saint Leo Parish and Holy Spirit Parish in Nanticoke, 5:00 p.m.

April 11 - Healing Mass for Survivors of Abuse

Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.

April 14 - Bishop's Youth Awards

Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 2:30 p.m.

April 15 - Confirmation for SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish, Queen of Heaven

Parish and Most Precious Blood Parish in Hazleton, 5:00 p.m.

April 16 - Confirmation for Saint Ann Basilica Parish, Saint Patrick Parish and

Divine Mercy Parish in Scranton, 5:00 p.m.

April 18 - Confirmation for Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Saint John

Neumann Parish, Saint Joseph Parish, Saint Patrick Parish and Saint Ann Parish in Dingman Township, 6:30 p.m.

April 20 - Scout Mass

Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 5:30 p.m.

April 21 - World Day of Prayer for Vocations Mass

Saint Nicholas Church, Wilkes-Barre, 10:00 a.m.

Saint Aloysius Church in Wilkes-Barre to celebrate 125th anniversary

Bishop Bambera to celebrate Mass of Thanksgiving on April 28

WILKES-BARRE – The faithful of Saint Robert Bellarmine Parish will come together in late April to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Saint Aloysius Church.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving for the 125th anniversary at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, April 28, 2024. All are invited to attend this special liturgy.

A special 125th anniversary dinner at R & D Memories will follow the Mass.

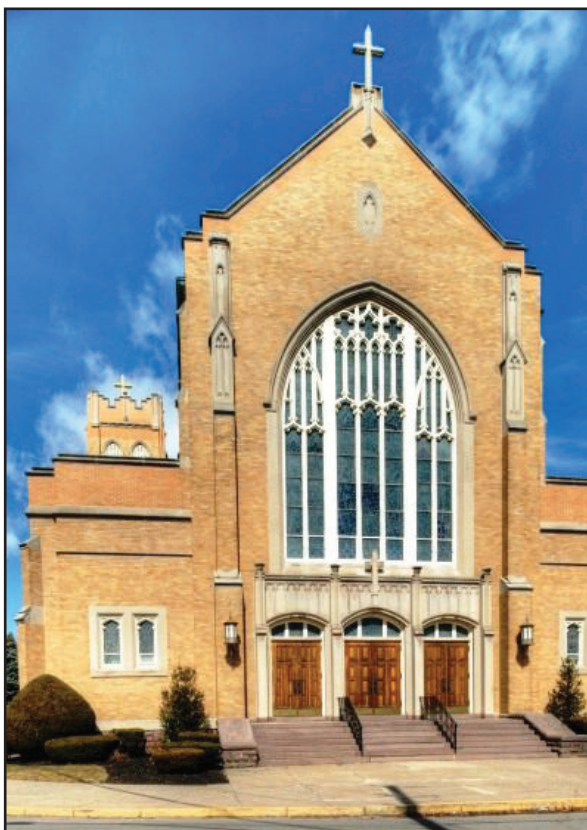
“It is really a milestone,” Father Richard Cirba, pastor, said. “What we are celebrating is the past, the present, and the hope for the future.”

In order to prepare for the special celebration, the parish has hired Robert A. Ritterbeck Painting, Inc., to paint the sanctuary area of the church. Workers recently installed 42-foot-tall scaffolding to complete the work.

“Right now, we’re brightening up the sanctuary area of the church behind the altar. The work will take a couple of weeks,” Father Cirba said. “We have a Lenten drive going on to help defray the cost of the painting.”

The faithful of Saint Robert Bellarmine parish have responded generously in the last year to stewardship efforts with the theme “Faith in the Present, Hope for the Future”, indicating to their pastor that they value their church community.

“We are nowhere without the past. We are standing on the shoulders of our ancestors and to be 125 years old, it’s amazing!” Father Cirba added. “We had a



Saint Aloysius Church, 143 West Division Street, Wilkes-Barre, will celebrate its 125th anniversary with a special Mass on Sunday, April 28, 2024.

school for many years. Many people have been educated through this parish so what we’re celebrating and what we’re hoping for is that we continue to build on what we’ve been given as the torch has been passed.”

Saint Robert Bellarmine Parish – and specifically Saint Aloysius Church – are proud of the vocations to the priesthood and religious life that have been fostered within the parish community.

The parish currently has two seminarians – Andrew McCarroll



In advance of its 125th anniversary Mass, 42-foot-tall scaffolding has been temporarily put up inside Saint Aloysius Church so that the sanctuary area of the church can be painted by Robert A. Ritterbeck Painting, Inc.

and Peter Stec – discerning the priesthood. McCarroll is slated to be ordained to the Diaconate in May. Several native sons are already Diocesan priests, including Father Jeffrey Tudgay, Father Andrew Sinnott, Father James Nash, Father Richard Fox and

Father John Doris.

“The seeds of a vocation come from within the parish. They come from the people, they come from the community,” Father Cirba added.

HISTORY OF SAINT ALOYSIUS CHURCH

Saint Aloysius was formed in 1899 when more than 30 families presented their case for a new parish to Father Richard McAndrew, pastor of Saint Mary’s Church of the Immaculate Conception in the city. The families had been traveling to Saint Mary’s, Saint Leo’s in Ashley, and Saint Charles in Sugar Notch to attend Mass.

Scranton Bishop Michael J. Hoban granted Father McAndrew’s petition and on April 29, 1900, blessed and dedicated the cornerstone for the new church in south Wilkes-Barre.

Father McAndrew guided the new parish until Father Thomas Brehony was appointed pastor by Bishop Hoban on Nov. 4, 1901. Due to Father Brehony’s health, Father John Griffin was appointed assistant pastor in 1903 and later rose to administrator and pastor of the parish.

Father Daniel McCarthy was appointed the third pastor of the parish in 1913 and began a 32-year era of expansion. By the end of World War I, the parish served the spiritual needs of nearly 450 families and was outgrowing the original church building.

Father McCarthy led the building project, and the present brick, Gothic church was blessed and dedicated on Nov. 24, 1927, by Cardinal Dennis Dougherty, Archbishop of Philadelphia, with more than 200 priests in attendance.

In 1938, Father McCarthy added the rectory, which still stands.

Upon the death of Father McCarthy, Father Thomas Monahan was installed as pastor in 1945. His lasting contributions were the establishment of a parish school in 1948, the establishment of a convent to house the sisters who taught there, and the construction of a school building, which was blessed and dedicated on Aug. 30, 1953.

Continued on Page 11



In April 1899, the identity and graced history of Saint Aloysius Church began with a meeting of concerned faithful in a carpenter’s shop on Luzerne Street in Wilkes-Barre. At that time, the parish consisted of more than 30 families and by 1913, had grown to 100 dedicated families.

Letter & photo from 1915 recovered from former Saint Mary of Vilna Church

EYNON – More than two decades after permanently closing its doors, the former Saint Mary of Vilna Church on Third Street was taken down by demolition crews March 13, 2024.

Workers from Stafursky Paving Company began shortly after 8:00 a.m., and after more than four hours of steady and meticulous work, the building was mostly gone by noon.

“We want to remember the history here, the parishioners who built Saint Mary of Vilna, and the many sacraments celebrated here,” Father Ryan Glenn, Pastor, Christ the King Parish in Archbald, said. “We recognize the church as a living organism and this particular site has been closed for more than 20 years.”

The church permanently closed in spring 2001 due to a mold problem after being plagued by moisture and water drainage issues. After final consultation with parish leaders in 2023, a decision was made to bring down the church building.

“This is really an act of being a good neighbor, making sure this building doesn’t cause any harm,” Father Glenn said as he



A small metal canister containing a letter and photo from 1915 were recovered from the former Saint Mary of Vilna Church in Eynon. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

personally observed the demolition. “It is a sign that we’re continuing to move forward as parishes here in the Mid Valley. During Lent, we’re reminded that something has to die for something new to be born. That is our faith.”

Christ the King Parish – with its worship sites of Saint Thomas Aquinas Church, Archbald, and Saint Mary of

Czestochowa Church, Eynon – recently linked with Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Parish in Jermyn.

Lovey Wargo has lived across the street from Saint Mary Vilna Church since she was nine years old.

As she watched the crews work, her mind filled with many memories, from the baptisms of her five children to previous pastors who had served there.

“I used to help with the collections and I used to help with the flowers,” Wargo explained. “My sister-in-law also fixed anything. When the Sacred Heart (statue’s) fingers were broken, she fixed all that and we repainted every one of them.”

The church plans to retain the land and plant grass at the site.

“That will provide access to the cemetery and we’re hoping that it actually allows easier access to the cemetery, so people can visit their loved ones without the risks and hazards of having the old

church on the grounds,” Father Ryan said.

Before moving forward with demolition, Christ the King Parish hired Alicon Environmental, Inc., to do an asbestos survey of the site. As part of its work, the demolition company consulted with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to ensure the work could be completed safely.

One last remaining artifact from the church was retrieved on the day of demolition – the cornerstone that contained a small metal time capsule from more than a century ago.

“We’re very excited to see what’s inside that time capsule and to share the contents with the parish. It’s that living link with the history of the parish,” Father Ryan added.

The container contained a letter and photo from 1915. The photo is believed to be of the former pastor of the church, and the letter, which is mostly intact, is written in either Lithuanian or Latin. The parish is currently working to translate the contents of the letter and will plan to share it with the community.

Saint Aloysius Church prepares to celebrate milestone anniversary

Continued from Page 10

The original convent quickly became overcrowded and Father Monahan directed the building of a new facility for the Sisters of Mercy who taught at the school. The new convent was dedicated on Aug. 18, 1963.

Father Monahan passed away in 1967, and Bishop J. Carroll McCormick appointed Msgr. Joseph Padden as the new pastor. Parochial activities grew, the parish debt was retired, and the future was bright for the parish until disaster struck five years later.

In 1972, the Agnes Flood nearly destroyed the parish complex as the Susquehanna River rose to the second floor of all the parish buildings. For several months, while the church was repaired, the Saint Aloysius congregation celebrated Mass at nearby Baptist Tabernacle Church.

Msgr. Padden directed the renovation of the church, school, convent and rectory with the assistance of federal loans, which were paid in 1992. He retired as pastor in



Flood waters from the Susquehanna River inundated Saint Aloysius Church in July 1972. This photo was taken when water was nearly to the top of the church doors.

1982 and passed away on March 19, 1990.

Msgr. Donald McAndrews was appointed the sixth pastor at Saint Aloysius on June 22, 1982, and began a new series of improvements for the parish, which

housed 1,800 families at the time.

The original pipe organ was restored, building exteriors were repaired, the rectory was expanded, and the church was made handicap accessible in a project led by a young parishioner, James Post III, and his family.

A major interior renovation of the church began in 1991. The altar, tabernacle, pulpit, and baptismal font were replaced; the interior was repainted; a new electrical and sound system and air conditioning were added; the woodwork and pews were refinished, and the stained glass windows were resealed. On Nov. 27, 1993, Bishop James C. Timlin rededicated Saint Aloysius Church.

In 2010, Saint Aloysius Church joined together with Saint Casimir’s to form the current parish of Saint Robert Bellarmine, which serves the Catholic community of both south Wilkes-Barre and the Hanover Township area. Looking to the tradition of



Rev. Thomas P. Monahan breaks ground for a convent on Saint Aloysius Church property on August 23, 1962. The convent was built to care for the Sisters of Mercy stationed at Saint Aloysius.

its pastor ancestors, the parish community continues to look to the future; that through its legacy parishioners may continue to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, live as examples to a world in darkness, and be stewards to all in need.

Two Scranton parishes to focus on Youth & Young Adult Ministry

Parishioner generosity allows for hiring of new part-time position

SCRANTON – As more young professionals move into downtown Scranton, Father Jeffrey Tudgay, Pastor of the Cathedral of Saint Peter, wants to ensure faith formation and service opportunities are available to them.

At the same time, he is also hoping to engage more high school students at the second parish he shepherds, Immaculate Conception, in the city's Hill Section.

To accomplish both tasks – Father Tudgay recently hired a new part-time Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministry that will serve both parishes. Kyra Krzywicki has been selected to take on this new role.

“I’m very excited because there is a diverse group of people at these two parishes. The Cathedral has a lot of visitors and tourists who are looking at the Cathedral’s beauty, in addition to parishioners who have been there for years and there are a lot of new families,” Krzywicki said. “At Immaculate Conception, there are a lot of families in the religious education program who are hungry for more and are eager to dive deeper into their faith.”

The new Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministry position is being made possible because of the generous financial support of parishioners through recent stewardship education efforts.

Last year, the Cathedral launched a ‘Cathedral Mission Forward’ initiative and has continued its efforts in 2024 with a ‘Cathedral Mission Renewed’ campaign. Immaculate Conception Parish will also be launching a similar stewardship program in the near future.

In discussing each campaign with parishioners, Father Tudgay talked about where the parish stood with its finances, discussed the opportunities he saw, and the vision they could create together. That helped many understand the connection between their generosity and the ministries that are available.

“We tried to take a very light approach with it and people responded really well, especially to ‘Cathedral Mission Forward,’” Father Tudgay said. “We were then able to look at what we could then do with the increase in offertory that we saw.”



Kyra Krzywicki, far left, poses with other young adults following the annual Leave a Mark Mass on Nov. 5, 2023. Krzywicki has been hired to serve as the new Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Immaculate Conception Parishes in Scranton.

Krzywicki plans to “start small but dream big.” She is planning projects and programs to help both parish communities grow.

“We have a lot of goals and dreams for these parish communities and I’m also looking forward to hearing what their thoughts are as well – what they’re looking forward to – or if there is something they’ve been hoping for,” Krzywicki explained.

At the Cathedral, Krzywicki plans to continue “First Sunday” events for the young adult ministry that started last year that include celebrating Mass together and enjoying fellowship at a social.

At Immaculate Conception, the

ministry focus will likely be a little different, making sure high school students remain involved in the life of the parish.

“It’s an opportunity to build some programming around that and set them up for success when they go to college, to be able to recognize that what they’ve experienced in their parish is something they will experience in campus ministry when they go to college,” Father Tudgay added.

As both parishes continue to grow together in their linkage, both Father Tudgay and Krzywicki are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead.

“We want to have a very joyful



The Cathedral of Saint Peter, top, and Immaculate Conception Parish came together in a linkage in July 2023.

atmosphere for parishioners to grow in their faith and I’m really looking forward to being a beacon for that – to hopefully help them grow in their relationship with God, with each other and with their parish community,” Krzywicki said.

Lenten Bible study showcases desire for faith formation

SCRANTON – While studying to be a Deacon, Michael Colaneri felt called to start and lead a new bible study program for the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Immaculate Conception Parish. The response has been much more than he expected.

Each Tuesday in Lent, Colaneri organized a session in the church hall at Immaculate Conception Parish at 6:00 p.m.

“I only expected a handful of people, roughly six to eight, to sign up and show up,” Colaneri said. “In week four, the class I am leading had a small,

devoted faction about 50 strong as of last count.”

While designed to only last one hour, the bible study sessions often last upwards of two hours.

“It has exploded into something beyond my wildest dreams. This is a group that has tremendous potential in the future, and an area of our pastoral work that is largely unnoticed,” Colaneri added.

The Deacon aspirant calls the new ministry “nothing short of humbling and deeply moving.” Because of the response from parishioners, he expects the program to continue after the Lenten season.

Father Jeffrey Tudgay, Pastor, said the recent stewardship efforts at the Cathedral are helping to put the focus on ministerial outreach.

“As this mission focus continues to unfold in both parishes, parishioners are looking at the life of both parishes from a mission perspective,” Father Tudgay said. “Michael’s bible study has been incredibly fruitful, not only because it has been enriching for parishioners, but because it has brought parishioners from both parishes together. They can see that their own faith life benefits from their investment in the parish.”

“It really is inspirational to be able to witness the outpouring of giving”

Increased stewardship efforts allow Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish to create new ministries

HANOVER TOWNSHIP- Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish has always been active in its community, but within the last year, several new ministry efforts have been launched because of the generosity of parishioners.

Due to the success of the parish’s “We Accomplish Great Things Together” initiative in 2023, the Luzerne County parish community has started distributing food to the community, launched a cancer ministry, and increased adult faith formation opportunities.

“It really is inspirational to be able to witness the outpouring of giving of the people,” Father Richard Cirba, Pastor of Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, said. “Both young and old. They value the ministry, and they value the mission. You can’t have one without the other.”

On Wednesday of this week, the parish held an Easter food distribution in its church parking lot from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Food was distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. On Feb. 25, in a similar fashion, the parish provided more than 150 households with food care packages thanks to the generosity of the parish.

“Since the pandemic, the need is greater and continues to rise. We’ve been fortunate to provide warm meals and food care packages to the community through the support and donations of our parishioners,” Lynn Blazaskie, head of the parish’s service committee, said. “Through these donations, we’ve also been able to provide clothing, jackets, shoes, back-to-school supplies, backpacks, and Christmas gifts to those in need.”

Blazaskie said she is currently working with The Commission on Economic Opportunity (CEO) to



More than 50 volunteers from Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish came together in late February to create food packages for people in need in the community. The packages were then distributed to more than 150 households in need in the community. (Photos/Exaltation Parish)

start a permanent food pantry at Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish.

“This vision is finally coming to fruition,” she explained. “My next dream is to have a permanent clothing/hygiene program on site, titled Holy Closet, where children and families can shop.”

Father Cirba credits parishioners who willingly increased their giving to help the parish build and enhance the current ministries and service and outreach efforts offered.

“The Increased Offertory Program enables us to pay full cost for any student wishing to attend any of the Diocesan retreats or conferences, like ‘Up and Over’ in the fall or NCYC (National Catholic Youth Conference) in Indianapolis,” Father Cirba said. “We pay for all of that. They don’t have to pay a cent. We’re able to do that because of the increase in offertory.”

Last summer, the parish also started “Wine Down Wednesday” events each month, in which a speaker was invited to come in and talk about their faith.

“We don’t want things to go by the wayside in the summer, so we held them three times,” the Hanover Township pastor added. “We have food and drink, and we have opportunities to socialize. It has brought together parishioners and even outsiders!”

Prior to the start of the “We Accomplish Great Things Together” initiative, Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish already had many service-oriented ministries. Together, parishioners volunteered at the Weinberg Food Bank; volunteered at Thanksgiving food drives; adopted families at The Catherine McAuley House in Plymouth for Christmas; visited nursing homes; participated in suicide



Last fall, the service committee at Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish began a cancer ministry. The parish held its first cancer walk in October 2023 in honor of those battling cancer and those that lost their battle to cancer.



Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish parishioners participate in a ‘Wine Down Wednesday’ event on July 19, 2023. Events like this have been made possible due to parishioners’ increased generosity.

prevention walks; and provided outreach to the homebound and elderly members of the parish.

“The service committee expanded this past fall to include a cancer ministry. We held our first cancer walk in October in honor of those battling cancer and those that lost their battle to cancer,” Blazaskie said. “This event included raffle baskets and donations; all proceeds benefited local cancer charities. The walk was a huge success and will be an annual event moving forward. This outreach will continue to

honor those battling cancer, their families, and caregivers, as well as those we remember.”

As he reflects on the outpouring of generosity from parishioners, Father Cirba often thinks about the Word of God proclaimed at Mass – especially Matthew 25.

“It’s living out the Gospel. We do what we do because we’re living out the Gospel,” he said. “Because we accomplish great things together, we’re able to fulfill the command of Jesus and fulfill the mission through ministry.”

Gifts to the Diocesan Annual Appeal fund Catholic ministries all year!

Without your support, events like these might not be possible

Theology on Tap

The next Theology on Tap event, which is part of the Diocese of Scranton's Young Adult Ministry and open to individuals between the ages of 21-40, will take place at 7:00 p.m. on **Thursday, April 11, 2024**, at Sabatini's Bottleshop in Exeter.

Father Thomas M. Muldowney will be the guest speaker for the evening. His presentation is titled, "Trauma, Self-Image & Spiritual Formation: How Trauma Impacts How We See Ourselves and God."

Father Muldowney is the Pastor of Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow, and is board certified as a Crisis Chaplain and Trauma Expert. He is also certified in Crisis Intervention and in Emergency Crisis Response and has been designated as a Diplomat by the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress.

Quo Vadis Days 2024

High school men (rising sophomores through graduating seniors) are invited to join the Diocesan Vocations Office for our annual Quo Vadis Days, **June 24-26**, at Marywood University!

Quo Vadis is a three-day summer camp for high school men that is designed to teach them about vocations and enrich their faith through prayer, fellowship, speakers, and activities.

Participants will have the opportunity to connect with other faithful young men in the Diocese through games, sports, music, and small group discussion. The event also includes a visit from Bishop Joseph C. Bambera and the seminarians of the Diocese of Scranton.

Those interested in participating must have a recommendation from their Pastor, Youth Minister, Director of Religious Education, Deacon, or other parish minister. For more information, please email info@dioceseofscranton.org or call (570) 207-1452.

Fiat Days 2024

High school women (rising sophomores through graduating seniors) are invited to join the Diocesan Vocations Office for our first Fiat Days, **June 24-26**, at Marywood University!

Fiat is a three-day summer camp for high school women that is designed to teach them about vocations and enrich their faith through prayer, fellowship, speakers, and activities.

Participants will have the opportunity to connect with other faithful young women in the Diocese through games, sports, music, small group discussion, and more! Throughout the camp, these young women will connect with religious communities serving in the Diocese of Scranton, hear discernment stories from various religious sisters, and chat one-on-one with a sister if they wish.

Those interested in participating must have a recommendation from their Pastor, a Religious Sister, Youth Minister, Director of Religious Education, Deacon, or other parish minister. For more information, please email info@dioceseofscranton.org or call (570) 207-1452.

Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Celebration

Every summer, the Diocese of Scranton holds a Wedding Anniversary Celebration for couples celebrating their 25th and 50th years of marriage. This year's Mass will be held at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on **June 23, 2024** at 2:30 p.m.

Registration for this special celebration is now open and available on the Diocese of Scranton website (dioceseofscranton.org)

For more information, please call Bridget Guarnieri, Program Coordinator, Family Life at (570) 207-2213 x 1133 or email familylife@dioceseofscranton.org

Parishes Close to Appeal Goal

PARISHES THAT HAVE REACHED 90% OF GOAL

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Lake Silkworth (99%).....	\$118 needed
Immaculate Conception Parish, Scranton (98%).....	\$925.80 needed
Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, Dorrance (97%).....	\$575 needed
Saint Jude Parish, Mountain Top (96%).....	\$2,944 needed
Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Honesdale (95%).....	\$2,993 needed
Saint Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg (95%).....	\$2,897 needed
Saint Lawrence Parish, South Williamsport (94%).....	\$1,675 needed
SS Cyril & Methodius Parish, Hazleton (94%).....	\$2,731.50 needed
Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton (93%).....	\$1,185 needed
Saint Joseph Parish, Matamoras (92%).....	\$2,877 needed
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Dushore (91%).....	\$3,595 needed
Holy Child Parish, Mansfield (90%).....	\$2,686 needed
Queen of the Apostles Parish, Avoca (90%).....	\$2,371.75 needed
Saint Ignatius Loyola Parish, Kingston (90%).....	\$7,784.64 needed

PARISHES THAT HAVE REACHED 80% OF GOAL

Immaculate Conception Parish, Bastress (88%).....	\$3,090 needed
Saint John Vianney Parish, Montdale (87%).....	\$4,046 needed
Nativity of the BVM Parish, Tunkhannock (86%).....	\$4,617 needed
Saint Peter Parish, Wellsboro (86%).....	\$5,855 needed
Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace, Hawley (85%).....	\$11,268 needed
Saint Ann Parish, Williamsport (85%).....	\$9,045 needed
Saint Boniface Parish, Williamsport (85%).....	\$8,920 needed
Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish, Pocono Pines (85%).....	\$3,617 needed
Saint Robert Bellarmine Parish, Wilkes-Barre (85%).....	\$5,040 needed
Visitation of the BVM Parish, Dickson City (85%).....	\$8,359.25 needed

Our Lady of the Snows Parish (84%).....	\$13,579.60 needed
Saint Thomas More Parish, Lake Ariel (84%).....	\$7,915.60 needed
Christ the King, Archbald (83%).....	\$11,663.15 needed
Most Precious Blood Parish, Hazleton (83%).....	\$6,295.05 needed
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Montoursville (83%).....	\$6,948 needed
Resurrection Parish, Muncy (83%).....	\$5,655 needed
Saint Monica Parish, West Wyoming (83%).....	\$5,400 needed
Ascension Parish, Forest City (82%).....	\$4,475 needed
Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco (82%).....	\$8,908.80 needed
Saint John the Baptist Parish, Larksville (82%).....	\$3,724 needed
Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Pittston (80%).....	\$10,736 needed
Saint Rita Parish, Gouldsboro (80%).....	\$2,733 needed

PARISHES THAT HAVE REACHED 70% OF GOAL

Queen of Heaven Parish, Hazleton (79%).....	\$6,130 needed
Saint John Neumann Parish, Lords Valley (79%).....	\$5,952 needed
Most Holy Trinity Parish, Susquehanna (78%).....	\$6,747.10 needed
Saint Elizabeth Parish, Bear Creek (78%).....	\$5,355 needed
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Dunmore (77%).....	\$13,008.50 needed
Saint Eulalia Parish, Roaring Brook Twp. (76%).....	\$9,696.76 needed
Saint Michael Parish, Scranton (76%).....	\$2,167 needed
Divine Mercy, Scranton (75%).....	\$15,863 needed
SS Peter & Paul Parish, Scranton (75%).....	\$3,265 needed
Saint Rose of Lima Parish, Carbondale (75%).....	\$15,213 needed
SS Anthony & Rocco Parish, Dunmore (74%).....	\$12,450 needed
Saint Patrick Parish, Nicholson (74%).....	\$2,355 needed
Holy Cross Parish, Olyphant (73%).....	\$12,759 needed
Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, Pittston (73%).....	\$4,365 needed
Saint Luke Parish, Jersey Shore (73%).....	\$4,380.67 needed
Epiphany Parish, Sayre (70%).....	\$25,552 needed

Current Parish Goal Report for the Diocesan Annual Appeal
\$3.89 million of \$4.5 million Goal (86%) as of March 22, 2024
Visit AnnualAppeal.org or call (570) 207-2250 to make a gift!

	<i>Progress to Parish Goal</i>		<i>Progress to Parish Goal</i>
All Saints Parish - Plymouth.....	\$16,051.00 / \$37,000.00 (43%)	St. Ann Basilica - Scranton.....	\$30,400.00 / \$30,000.00 (101%)
Annunciation Parish - Hazleton.....	\$21,699.00 / \$33,000.00 (66%)	St. Ann Parish - Shohola.....	\$20,468.00 / \$20,000.00 (102%)
Ascension Parish - Forest City.....	\$20,525.00 / \$25,000.00 (82%)	St. Ann Parish - Williamsport.....	\$49,995.00 / \$59,000.00 (85%)
Blessed Sacrament Parish - Throop.....	\$17,725.00 / \$16,000.00 (111%)	St. Barbara Parish - Exeter.....	\$18,888.00 / \$31,000.00 (62%)
BVM Queen of Peace Parish - Hawley.....	\$64,732.00 / \$76,000.00 (85%)	St. Boniface Parish - Williamsport.....	\$51,080.00 / \$60,000.00 (85%)
Christ the King Parish - Archbald.....	\$55,336.85 / \$67,000.00 (83%)	St. Brigid Parish - Friendsville.....	\$32,600.00 / \$22,000.00 (148%)
Corpus Christi Parish - West Pittston.....	\$38,410.00 / \$30,000.00 (128%)	St. Catherine of Siena Parish - Moscow.....	\$74,057.75 / \$63,000.00 (118%)
Divine Mercy Parish - Scranton.....	\$47,137.00 / \$63,000.00 (75%)	St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish - Swoyersville..	\$45,030.00 / \$44,000.00 (102%)
Epiphany Parish - Sayre.....	\$59,448.00 / \$85,000.00 (70%)	St. Elizabeth Parish - Bear Creek.....	\$18,645.00 / \$24,000.00 (78%)
Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish - Hanover Twp..	\$24,270.00 / \$15,000.00 (162%)	St. Eulalia Parish - Roaring Brook Township....	\$30,303.24 / \$40,000.00 (76%)
Gate of Heaven Parish - Dallas.....	\$30,830.00 / \$47,000.00 (66%)	St. Faustina Kowalska Parish - Nanticoke.....	\$30,766.94 / \$47,000.00 (65%)
Good Shepherd Parish - Drums.....	\$13,180.00 / \$24,000.00 (55%)	St. Frances X. Cabrini Parish - Carverton.....	\$18,090.32 / \$13,000.00 (139%)
Holy Child Parish - Mansfield.....	\$25,314.00 / \$28,000.00 (90%)	St. Gregory Parish - Clarks Green.....	\$85,431.40 / \$74,000.00 (115%)
Holy Cross Parish - Olyphant.....	\$34,241.00 / \$47,000.00 (73%)	St. Ignatius Loyola Parish - Kingston.....	\$69,215.36 / \$77,000.00 (90%)
Holy Family Parish - Luzerne.....	\$44,374.32 / \$40,000.00 (111%)	St. John Bosco Parish - Conyngham.....	\$67,792.15 / \$58,000.00 (117%)
Holy Name of Jesus Parish - West Hazleton.....	\$11,185.00 / \$21,000.00 (53%)	St. John Neumann Parish - Lords Valley.....	\$22,048.00 / \$28,000.00 (79%)
Holy Name of Mary Parish - Montrose.....	\$20,300.00 / \$16,000.00 (127%)	St. John Neumann Parish - Scranton.....	\$21,879.00 / \$52,000.00 (42%)
Holy Rosary Parish - Hazleton.....	\$15,815.00 / \$17,000.00 (93%)	St. John Parish - E. Stroudsburg.....	\$35,353.00 / \$57,000.00 (62%)
Holy Spirit Parish - Mocanaqua.....	\$13,455.00 / \$28,000.00 (48%)	St. John the Baptist Parish - Larksville.....	\$17,276.00 / \$21,000.00 (82%)
Immaculate Conception Parish - Williamsport.....	\$22,910.00 / \$26,000.00 (88%)	St. John the Evangelist Parish - Honesdale.....	\$61,007.00 / \$64,000.00 (95%)
Immaculate Conception Parish - Scranton.....	\$39,074.20 / \$40,000.00 (98%)	St. John the Evangelist Parish - Pittston.....	\$43,264.00 / \$54,000.00 (80%)
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish - Dushore.....	\$34,405.00 / \$38,000.00 (91%)	St. John Vianney Parish - Montdale.....	\$25,954.00 / \$30,000.00 (87%)
Mary, Mother of God Parish - Scranton.....	\$56,000.00 / \$56,000.00 (100%)	St. Joseph Marello Parish - Pittston.....	\$30,541.00 / \$27,000.00 (113%)
Most Holy Trinity Parish - Cresco.....	\$40,091.20 / \$49,000.00 (82%)	St. Joseph Parish - Matamoras.....	\$34,123.00 / \$37,000.00 (92%)
Most Holy Trinity Parish - Susquehanna.....	\$23,252.90 / \$30,000.00 (78%)	St. Joseph the Worker Parish - Williamsport....	\$82,061.40 / \$75,000.00 (109%)
Most Precious Blood Parish - Hazleton.....	\$29,704.95 / \$36,000.00 (83%)	St. Jude Parish - Mountain Top.....	\$76,056.00 / \$79,000.00 (96%)
Nativity of Our Lord Parish - Duryea.....	\$40,550.00 / \$40,000.00 (101%)	St. Katharine Drexel Parish - Pleasant Mount..	\$19,050.00 / \$13,000.00 (147%)
Nativity of the BVM Parish - Tunkhannock.....	\$27,383.00 / \$32,000.00 (86%)	St. Lawrence Parish - S. Williamsport.....	\$24,325.00 / \$26,000.00 (94%)
Our Lady Help of Christians Parish - Dorrance.....	\$17,425.00 / \$18,000.00 (97%)	St. Leo Parish - Ashley.....	\$20,158.00 / \$33,000.00 (61%)
Our Lady of Fatima Parish - Wilkes-Barre.....	\$19,160.00 / \$30,000.00 (64%)	St. Lucy Parish - Scranton.....	\$5,962.00 / \$19,000.00 (31%)
Our Lady of Hope Parish - Wilkes-Barre.....	\$35,218.50 / \$35,000.00 (101%)	St. Luke Parish - Jersey Shore.....	\$11,619.33 / \$16,000.00 (73%)
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish - Montoursville.....	\$34,052.00 / \$41,000.00 (83%)	St. Luke Parish - Stroudsburg.....	\$117,016.00 / \$114,000.00 (103%)
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish - Carbondale..	\$8,130.00 / \$23,000.00 (35%)	St. Maria Goretti Parish - Lafin.....	\$22,090.00 / \$42,000.00 (53%)
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish - Dunmore.....	\$42,991.50 / \$56,000.00 (77%)	St. Mary of the Lake Parish - Lake Winola.....	\$7,860.00 / \$12,000.00 (66%)
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish - Lake Silkworth...	\$18,882.00 / \$19,000.00 (99%)	St. Mary Parish - Waymart.....	\$23,466.00 / \$17,000.00 (138%)
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish - Wyalusing...	\$10,950.00 / \$10,000.00 (110%)	St. Matthew Parish - E. Stroudsburg.....	\$57,103.00 / \$60,000.00 (95%)
Our Lady of the Abingtons Parish - Dalton.....	\$8,340.00 / \$16,000.00 (52%)	St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish - Pocono Pines....	\$20,383.00 / \$24,000.00 (85%)
Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish - Pittston.....	\$11,635.00 / \$16,000.00 (73%)	St. Michael Parish - Canton.....	\$15,148.00 / \$12,000.00 (126%)
Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception - Freeland..	\$15,101.00 / \$26,000.00 (58%)	St. Michael Parish - Scranton.....	\$6,833.00 / \$9,000.00 (76%)
Our Lady of the Snows Parish - Clarks Summit....	\$73,420.40 / \$87,000.00 (84%)	St. Monica Parish - West Wyoming.....	\$25,600.00 / \$31,000.00 (83%)
Our Lady of Victory Parish - Harveys Lake.....	\$22,884.60 / \$37,000.00 (62%)	St. Nicholas Parish - Wilkes-Barre.....	\$57,310.00 / \$52,000.00 (110%)
Our Lady of Victory Parish - Tannersville.....	\$53,496.00 / \$52,000.00 (103%)	St. Patrick Parish - Milford.....	\$33,205.00 / \$33,000.00 (101%)
Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish - Brodheadsville..	\$66,306.30 / \$58,000.00 (114%)	St. Patrick Parish - Nicholson.....	\$6,645.00 / \$9,000.00 (74%)
Prince of Peace Parish - Old Forge.....	\$15,870.00 / \$28,000.00 (57%)	St. Patrick Parish - Scranton.....	\$22,943.00 / \$42,000.00 (55%)
Queen of Angels Parish - Jessup.....	\$15,042.00 / \$26,000.00 (58%)	St. Patrick Parish - White Haven.....	\$7,957.00 / \$16,000.00 (50%)
Queen of Heaven Parish - Hazleton.....	\$22,870.00 / \$29,000.00 (79%)	St. Paul of the Cross Parish - Scranton.....	\$17,625.00 / \$52,000.00 (34%)
Queen of the Apostles Parish - Avoca.....	\$20,628.25 / \$23,000.00 (90%)	St. Paul Parish - Scranton.....	\$43,325.00 / \$66,000.00 (66%)
Resurrection Parish - Muncy.....	\$27,345.00 / \$33,000.00 (83%)	St. Peter Parish - Wellsboro.....	\$37,145.00 / \$43,000.00 (86%)
Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish - Dupont.....	\$15,942.45 / \$30,000.00 (53%)	St. Peter's Cathedral - Scranton.....	\$119,622.92 / \$71,000.00 (168%)
Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish - Peckville.....	\$53,514.77 / \$41,000.00 (131%)	St. Rita Parish - Gouldsboro.....	\$11,267.00 / \$14,000.00 (80%)
Sacred Hearts of Jesus & Mary Parish - Jermyn...	\$12,536.40 / \$21,000.00 (60%)	St. Robert Bellarmine Parish - Wilkes-Barre....	\$28,960.00 / \$34,000.00 (85%)
SS Anthony & Rocco Parish - Dunmore.....	\$34,550.00 / \$47,000.00 (74%)	St. Rose of Lima Parish - Carbondale.....	\$46,787.00 / \$62,000.00 (75%)
SS Cyril & Methodius Parish - Hazleton.....	\$40,268.50 / \$43,000.00 (94%)	St. Therese Parish - Shavertown.....	\$88,555.00 / \$71,000.00 (125%)
SS Peter & Paul Parish - Plains.....	\$54,344.00 / \$50,000.00 (109%)	St. Thomas More Parish - Lake Ariel.....	\$41,084.40 / \$49,000.00 (84%)
SS Peter & Paul Parish - Scranton.....	\$9,735.00 / \$13,000.00 (75%)	St. Thomas the Apostle Parish - Elkland.....	\$8,058.00 / \$13,000.00 (62%)
SS Peter & Paul Parish - Towanda.....	\$35,245.00 / \$31,000.00 (114%)	St. Vincent de Paul Parish - Milford.....	\$41,075.00 / \$35,000.00 (117%)
St. Andrew Parish - Wilkes-Barre.....	\$7,535.00 / \$17,000.00 (45%)	Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Dickson City	\$46,640.75 / \$55,000.00 (85%)

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.

The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, continues to celebrate Mass at each Diocesan Catholic school during this academic year. In the past few weeks, he visited both **All Saints Academy in Scranton** and **Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre**. While with the students, he reminded them that we are all "called to assist one another in a variety of ways but it is most important to take the great gift of faith and live it out in service to others."



The eighth grade class at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green** presented Living Stations of the Cross in preparation for Easter.



All Saints Academy in Scranton



St. Nicholas/St. Mary School in Wilkes-Barre



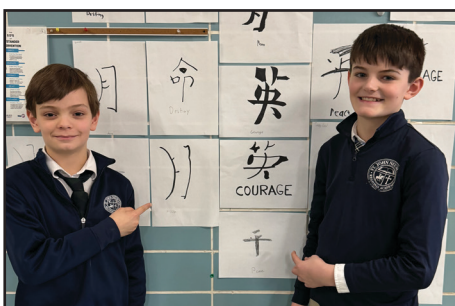
The third and fourth grades at **Epiphany School in Sayre** hosted a Living Saints Museum for students, faculty and families.



Timed in conjunction with Read Across America Day, the Honors Creative Writing Class of **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** draws inspiration from Dr. Seuss for a poetry writing unit.



In honor of Pi Day (3/14), **Holy Family Academy in Hazleton** hosted their annual Pie Eating Contest. These students' faces tell how much fun this contest can be.



Students in sixth and seventh grade World History class at **Saint John Neumann High School in Williamsport** recently learned the art of Chinese Calligraphy and were given the opportunity to choose a symbol to recreate. They soon realized how difficult Chinese Calligraphy can be, as many of them recreated their symbols multiple times to get them just right.



The Individualized Instruction Class of **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston** celebrated their annual Autism Awareness Liturgy with Father John Chmil, pastor of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Swoyersville, as the celebrant. The students participated as readers, gift bearers and cantors. At the end of the liturgy, the students presented a donation to Brighter Journeys to support their work with children who are diagnosed with autism.



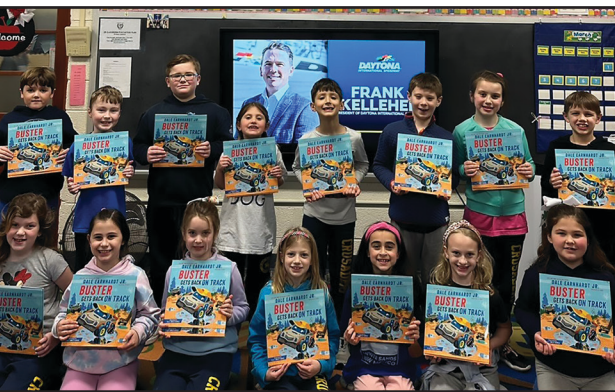
The Nittany Lion and a representative from Penn State University brought some swag boxes to students at **Holy Cross High School in Dunmore** who were accepted to Penn State.



Congratulations to the cast and crew of “The Other Josh Cohen,” the spring musical students at **Notre Dame High School in East Stroudsburg** recently performed in the school’s theater.



During “National Music in Our Schools Month,” **Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg** hosted a talent show with first through sixth graders performing ballet and Irish step dancing, singing, and playing violins and the piano.



Second grade students from **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton** had a special visit from Frank Kelleher, the President of Daytona International Speedway in Florida. Mr. Kelleher videoed in with the students to read a story during Read Across America Week and provided a copy of the book, “Buster Gets Back on Track,” by Dale Earnhardt Jr., to each of the students.



Kindergarten students at **Saint Agnes School in Towanda** are learning about “New Life” during the Lenten season.



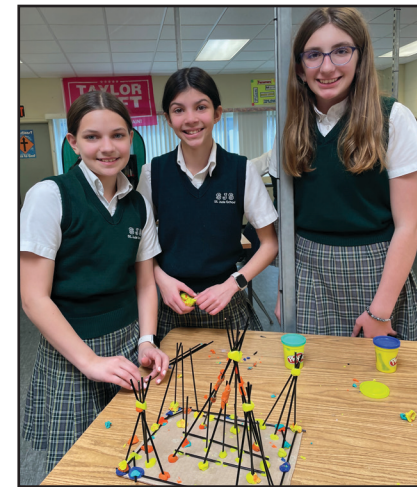
Student Council members at **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore** organized their Shamrock Shake treat for Saint Patrick’s Day.



Atarah McLean, Madison Torbik, Claire Silinskie, Hannah Beekman, Scarlett O’Hop, Victoria Sabetta, Eva Gilson, Lydenn Jernigan, Grace Kelly, Gia Galante and Nathan Picotti, a team of fourth and fifth graders at **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter**, competed in NEIU 19’s Reading Tournament and scored an unbelievable 40/40 questions correct.



Kindergarten students at **Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport** learn about Saint Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, to prepare for the Feast of Saint Patrick.



Katherine Ventra, Lily Holtz and Elizabeth Decowski, sixth grade students at **Saint Jude School in Mountain Top**, test their earthquake-proof structure on a shake table.



Matthew Williams and Angelo Alba, third grade students at **Holy Rosary School in Duryea**, place book donations in the “Little Library” found close to the school in Duryea’s town park. This free library gives local children the chance to take a book to enjoy and drop off those they have already read.



Sam Mulvey, a cadet at West Point Military Academy and an alumnus of **La Salle Academy** and **Holy Cross High School**, visited the kindergarten class at **La Salle Academy in Jessup**, reading a book and sharing stories about life as a cadet.

Changing lives, one person at a time

Bridge to Independence Program celebrates fifth anniversary in Hazleton

HAZLETON — Just four months after joining Catholic Social Services' Bridge to Independence Program, Briana Fleming has set and achieved many personal goals.

The 21-year-old woman has created a resume and gotten a job, has learned how to save money and completed her taxes online, and maybe most importantly, applied to and been accepted to college.

Fleming credits much of her recent success to the Bridge to Independence Program, which is celebrating its fifth anniversary this April.

"I am learning a lot about being an adult. They have taught me how to do everything from getting my insurance to (applying for) food stamps," Fleming said. "I got a job a week or two after getting to Bridge because the supervisor helped me make a

resume because I did not know how to make one."

The Bridge to Independence Program is a young adult residential program which serves people from ages 18 to 26. The facility, located in Catholic Social Services property in Hazleton, includes eight private bedrooms, a community room, as well as a common kitchen, dining room, laundry facility and office with computers.

The goal of the Bridge to Independence Program, as its name implies, is to help develop and enhance life skills that will enable program participants to live independently and attain self-sufficiency.

Danielle Matarella, Greater Hazleton Regional Coordinator for Catholic Social Services, says the Bridge to Independence Program is important because it addresses the need for mental



Briana Fleming

health services in the community.

"Participants have to have a mental health diagnosis and that is what we focus on when they get into the Bridge to Independence," Matarella explained.

Fleming says it was her therapist who initially recommended she consider participating in the Bridge to Independence Program.

"She said it would be a good fit for me to get a fresh start and it would be a place that would help me get on my two feet a little faster," Fleming explained.

Fleming credits the Bridge to Independence staff for helping her make such significant progress in such a small amount of time.

"I've been saving up for a car right now. That is my main focus," she explained. "I applied to Penn State Hazleton and I got accepted, so hopefully, I will start in the fall."

"Briana is amazing. She came in, was responsible with going to her appointments and because of that, she is meeting all of her goals," Matarella added.

Over the last five years of the Bridge to Independence Program, Matarella can point to many other young adults who have been helped.

"There are so many stories," she said with a smile,

For Fleming, the most important part of the Bridge to Independence Program has been that ability to set and reach personal milestones.

"It has helped me to reach the goals that I've been wanting to reach for a long time," Fleming said. "I think I'm going to be at Bridge until I save up a good amount (of money) to get my own place because I didn't want to live on campus. I'm going to be working my way to getting my own place probably near campus. I'll be close by school and close by work."

Anyone interested in learning more about the Bridge to Independence Program can contact the Catholic Social Services Office in Hazleton at (570) 455-1521.

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Catholic Women's Conference set for June 8

Special program on Friday night, June 7, is new addition this year

SCRANTON - This year's Catholic Women's Conference, "Refresh Your Faith," will focus heavily on the power of the Holy Eucharist and invite attendees to experience a life-changing encounter with Jesus.

The conference will be held Saturday, June 8, 2024, in Nazareth Hall on the grounds of Marywood University.

There will also be a special program on Friday evening, June 7, in the chapel at Marywood University with keynote speaker Father Justin Cinnante, a Carmelite priest and the Chaplain at Iona Preparatory High School in New Rochelle, NY.

The Friday evening program has a separate registration along with options for dinner and overnight accommodations.

Attendees can also choose to participate in the Catholic Women's Conference on Saturday only.

Another year of outstanding and inspirational speakers awaits participants. The day will include Mass with Bishop Bambera, talks given by keynote speakers Father Justin Cinnante, O. Carm., Father Giuseppe Maria Siniscalchi, CFR, and Jackie Francois Angel, doing double duty as a keynote speaker and provider of inspirational music. Mary Clare Hallman, Diocesan Secretary for Parish Life, will host the day's events.

The day will also include a continental breakfast, buffet lunch, opportunities for confession, the rosary and Eucharistic Adoration led by Father Justin and Father Giuseppe with inspirational music by Jackie Angel. Attendees will also have opportunities for shopping in the Catholic Marketplace.

Cost to attend the full day Saturday conference is \$55. Student tickets (under 22 years

of age) are \$20, and women religious are welcome free of charge.

Special Friday evening talk with Father Justin Cinnante ranges from \$20 for the talk only to \$40 for a buffet dinner and Father Justin's talk with additional options for overnight accommodations.

For more information and to register, visit dioceseofscranton.org,



Women's Conference

Saturday, June 8, 2024
Marywood University, Scranton

Friday, June 7, 2024
Overnight accommodations, dinner, and talk

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Jackie Angel

Fr. Giuseppe Maria Siniscalchi, CFR

Rev. Justin Cinnante, O.Carm.

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Irish heritage on display at St. Patrick's Parade Day Mass



SCRANTON - On Saturday, March 9, 2024, hundreds of people filled the Cathedral of Saint Peter at 10:00 a.m. to celebrate Mass before the city's annual Saint Patrick's Parade.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant and homilist.

"For all that we are about on this Parade Day - this feast of song, music, dance, reunion, stories, memories, friends and family, and maybe even a pint or two of Guinness - make no mistake that what we do at this moment as we gather to pray in this great Cathedral Church is where the greatest legacy of Saint Patrick is to be found," Bishop Bambera said during his homily.

Apostleship of Prayer

Papal Intention for April 2024

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MISSION MESSAGE

Just Want to Say 'Goodbye'

By Deacon Edward Kelly
Interim Director,
Pontifical Mission Societies



Today is Holy Thursday, the beginning of the Sacred Triduum and the high point of the entire Liturgical Year. On Holy Thursday, priests all over the world will wash the feet of people from every race and culture. It is a clear and powerful reminder of the last night that Jesus spent on this earth.

On that first Holy Thursday, Jesus, facing the reality of His death, leaves His followers His last two gifts: the Sacrament of His Body and Blood — the Eucharist — and the gift of the towel and the basin — His last lesson on humble servanthood. He does the washing... He does the drying. And as He does this, He kneels down at the feet of His brethren. He didn't want to see whether the face was beautiful or worn; whether the face had virtue or vice written on it. He did not want to know whether the face was black or white or yellow; whether it belonged to a man or a

woman; slave or free; master or servant; Jew or Gentile.

Jesus teaches all of us, in the washing of the feet, the lesson that there is only one kind of greatness — the greatness of service. And if we would aspire to this, then we should get on our knees and wash the feet of all manner of humankind.

This is the mandate of The Pontifical Mission Societies which supports missionaries who are on their knees in the trenches in places where the pavement stops and the street lamps are no more, where there's no running water and no electricity. Missionaries who hear and answer the cries of the beggars of the world. Missionaries who bring the hope that saves — Jesus Christ — to a broken world.

For 12 years (2005-2012), and more recently for these past 13 months, it has been a privilege to have been an advocate for such missionaries and the poorest of the poor whom they serve. It also has been a privilege to have written this column over all those years. The time has now come to pass on the baton. As I leave this position, there are two ordinary yet profound experiences that I witnessed very innocently which I would like to leave with you. One involves a young girl far away, a stranger from Africa named Marie. The other is someone close by, a family member — my Aunt Margaret.

On a Saturday morning in Nairobi, Kenya, I attended a Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) Mass. There were 33,000 African kids in attendance. The

Mass lasted four hours. The Offertory alone took more than an hour as the young boys and girls processed to the altar sharing out of their poverty.

Before the four-hour Mass began, I met a group of Kenyan children who had to be moved to another section of the open field. Before they left, I asked the group to come back and say goodbye to me after the Mass. Four hours later, I had forgotten, but one of the children, a nine-year-old girl named Marie, tapped me on the shoulder. She said, "I just want to say goodbye and to thank you for being here." I will never forget the lesson I received from that young Kenyan girl named Marie. No one is ever too poor to give and no one is ever too rich to receive.

I still remember hearing my Aunt Margaret's tea kettle whistling on her coal stove and watching her pour the boiling water over a twice-used Red Rose tea bag. I would sit with her at her small kitchen table where she kept The Society for the Propagation of the Faith *Mission* magazine with an envelope next to it. My aunt would tape two quarters inside the envelope and set it in the corner of that kitchen table, ready to be mailed. The buying power of what she gave amounted to almost nothing. But in what manners to God, what she gave was everything. At that time, I didn't realize the lasting influence that would have on my life. I believe that seemingly small donation, that sacrifice, is still making its way around the world.

On behalf of the poorest of the poor, I want to thank all of you for your prayers, sacrifices and donations which wash the feet of your brothers and sisters in the mission fields.

And just like that nine-year-old girl from Africa, who didn't forget to say goodbye to me, I just want to say goodbye to all of you and may God bless you always.



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Kowalski appointed Director of Pontifical Mission Societies & Service

SCRANTON – The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, has appointed Shannon Kowalski to serve as the new Director of Pontifical Mission Societies. Kowalski will begin this new role on April 1, 2024. She will continue to serve in the Diocesan Office for Parish Life as Director of Service.

In the role of Director of Pontifical Mission Societies & Service, Kowalski will promote the faithful's Baptismal call to mission and work to gather support for the more than 1,150 mission dioceses in Asia, Africa, the Pacific Islands and Latin America.

In her role as Director of Service in the Office for Parish Life, she will continue to promote the Gospel message by empowering Catholics in the Diocese of Scranton to live out the call to care for human life and dignity, and God's creation by organizing social action ministries and public advocacy.

"Mission work and serving others have always been an important part of my ministry and I am grateful for the opportunity to make an even wider impact through the work of the Pontifical Mission Societies Office," Kowalski said about her new appointment.

Kowalski began working for the

Diocese of Scranton as Coordinator for Youth and Young Adult Ministry in 2017 after spending five years in parish-based ministry. In July 2020, just after the start of the pandemic, she added the additional service and public advocacy responsibilities to her title.

"While the last twelve years in youth and young adult ministry have been filled with many blessings and happy memories, I am looking forward to this new opportunity to work directly with clergy and parishes to support the work of the pontifical missions," Kowalski added.

As part of the transition,

Kowalski has been working alongside Deacon Ed Kelly, who has been serving as Interim Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies, for several months.

"I would like to thank Deacon Ed Kelly not just for the work that he has done as Interim Director, but

also for mentoring and orienting me to the processes of the office. Our Pontifical Mission Societies Office has a great reputation both in our diocese and around the country and that is thanks to the legacy of Miriam Heverline and Deacon Ed Kelly," Kowalski stated.



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Bishop concludes Lenten Holy Hours; homily released

Continued from Page 6

In receiving Christ in the Eucharist, we discover who and what we are to become. Recall the words of Saint Augustine, shared many times during this season of eucharistic revival, "Become the mystery you celebrate."

Become the broken Christ whose life was poured forth for those that he loved!

In reflecting upon the Eucharist, Pope Francis reminds us that "in the Body and Blood of Christ, we find Jesus' presence, His life given for each of us. He not only gives us help to go forward, but He gives us himself - He makes himself our travelling companion, He enters into our affairs ... giving meaning to our life, to our darkness, our doubts."

Yet, the Holy Father goes on to say that the Lord not only calls us to be citizens of Heaven. He also considers the journey we must face here on earth.

"Sometimes there is the risk of confining the Eucharist to a vague dimension, bright and perfumed with incense, but distant from the straits of everyday life. ... Our Eucharistic adoration comes alive when we take care of our neighbor like Jesus does. There

is hunger for food, but also for companionship, for consolation, friendship, good humor; there is hunger for attention and hunger to be evangelized. We find this in the Eucharistic - Christ's attention to our needs and the invitation to do the same toward those who are beside us." The Holy Father concluded, "We need to eat but we also need to feed others."

As Jesus "gave" broken bread to His disciples - to you and me - the gift of His life carries with it a responsibility for mission. His life must be given away.

May we, then, who receive and adore Christ, become Christ in loving service to one another. May we become Christ for our husband, our wife, for our mother, our father, our son/daughter, our neighbor, our friend. May we become Christ for the unborn child, for the hungry poor, for those whom we have relegated to the margins of our world because of our own self-righteousness, for the immigrant, for victims of war and terrorism, and for the forgotten.

Brothers and sisters, through the grace and power of God's Spirit, may we see ourselves in the Christ whom we worship and adore this night. And may his voice

speak to our hearts as he calls us, through his grace and mercy, to become bread for one another - taken by God as we are - blessed and transformed - broken - and given for the life of our world. Amen!

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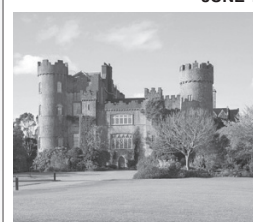


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Notice Regarding Reporting Sexual Abuse of a Minor

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 Respeto 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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March Madness event to benefit Catholic Youth Center

WILKES-BARRE - For more than 75 years, the Wyoming Valley Catholic Youth Center has been a home away from home for many of children.

Now, more than ever, specialized programming at the CYC is an important component in the lives of our young people as they journey through their childhood and teenage years.

Whether they make use of the 24 hour-a-day childcare center, drop-in program for teenagers, respite sessions to give their caregivers a break, or are enrolled in our Keystone Star 4 preschool or play in a sports league, they know the CYC will always be here for them.

The CYC's 2024 March Madness event will take place from 6:00 - 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 6, at the Westmoreland Club in Wilkes-Barre.

Guests can expect a grand, yet laid-back, atmosphere complete with fun, festive, sports-themed food and drinks, exciting basketball games and an online silent auction.

The spirit of March Madness

will be everywhere as we turn the Westmoreland Club tent into NEPA's best sports bar. As guests arrive, they will be greeted by waitstaff dressed in black and white basketball referee uniforms. The Final Four basketball games will be broadcast on large screens throughout the venue.

An online auction will open at noon on Wednesday, April 3, and close at 9:30 p.m. on April 6.

More than 100 items with a total value of more than \$25,000 will be up for bid. Bidders do not need to attend the event to place bids.

Everyone is encouraged to purchase tickets for the event or to take part in the online auction.

Please help us get the word out by sharing the auction site with friends and family.

We hope you can join us for a fun night!

Preview the auction, sign up to bid, or purchase event tickets by visiting the following website: <https://2024marchmadness.cbo.io>.

There is also a link to the online auction website on the Diocese of Scranton website (dioceseofscranton.org).



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*Breen Chair in Catholic Theology & Chair of
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at John Carroll University*

presents

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*For further information, please contact Rev. Michael Wurtz, C.S.C.,
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Knights of Lithuania celebrate Saint Casimir feast day



Members of Knights of Lithuania Council 143 in Pittston celebrated the Feast of Saint Casimir with a Mass on March 3 at Saint John the Evangelist Church in the city. A luncheon and meeting of the Council's Amber District followed the service in the Monsignor Bendik Center. Council 143 members, Amber District officers, members and guests pictured are, front row, from left: Mary Lidaka, Tom Wierbowski, Linda Savinski, Annalyse Towns, Judy Stodolny, Barbara Miller, Anne Marie Distin, Dennis Palladino, Mary Claire Voveris, Janet Palladino, Eileen Kelly and Beverly Harnen. Second row, from left: Mary Portelli, June Supey, Les Distin, Tom Miller, Elaine Elko, Don Waxmonsky, Shirley Skamarakus, Joe Francik and Mike Loncoski. Third row, from left: John Kovalski, Irene Kovalski, Fran Siklus, Marlene Warren, Sue Robinson, Sylvia Waxmonsky, Steve Tichy, Bill Sodnik, Camille Stanis and Larry Domalakes.

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Alhambra offering scholarship program for those pursuing careers in special education

In recognition of the increasing importance of education for those with special needs, the International Order of Alhambra announces its annual scholarship program providing financial aid to students pursuing careers in education for persons with disabilities.

Alhambra slates dinner for Special Olympians

WILKES-BARRE — Local caravan Alhambra No. 4, Order of Alhambra, will host a Spring Dinner Dance for Special Olympics bowlers and their families on Wednesday, May 1, in the Sheehy-Farmer Campus Center at King's College, 133 North Franklin St., Wilkes-Barre.

All are invited to attend the gala from 5 to 8 p.m.

Dinner entrée includes breaded chicken, mashed potatoes and green beans, with fruit salad and apple pie. Coffee, tea and soft drinks will be provided.

Jester Entertainment will provide the evening's

The Alhambra Scholarship awards assist college students studying to teach intellectually and developmentally disabled persons. Open to all eligible U.S. residents, the scholarships are granted on the basis that applicants are dedicated

entertainment. Tickets cost \$35 each. Reservations, including guests' names and check payable to Alhambra Caravan 4, are required by April 18. Remit to: Alhambra Caravan 4, 17 English St., West Wyoming, PA 18644.

For more information, contact Ada Magni at (570) 693-1338.

Founded in 1904, the Order of Alhambra is Catholic fraternal organization dedicated to assisting those with intellectual disabilities. Alhambra members meet on the second Wednesday of the month on the campus of King's College in Wilkes-Barre.

to the field of special education.

The number of scholarships and amounts vary each year, based on program fund levels. Eligibility guidelines include college undergraduate junior and seniors enrolled in qualifying programs, and master's degree and community college students in special education studies who have accrued half of the required graduation credits.

For more information and applications, contact Ada Magni at amagni@earthlink.net. Application deadline is April 19.

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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 at parish locations and high-rise housing buildings in Carbondale and Olyphant, and also weekly meals at parish sites in Roaring Brook Township and Archbald. The Kitchen also operates a Client-Choice Food Pantry and a Free Clothing Store, which has expanded with a Free Clothing Mobile Trailer to bring clothing items to those in need at various locations.

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. Major sponsorship levels are also available beginning at \$500.



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.

Recent contributors to the Host-for-a-Day campaign are receiving an appeal directly from the Kitchen through the mail or will be contacted by a member of the Advisory Board.

Donations can also be made by:

Calling the Kitchen at 570-342-5556, online at stfranciskitchen.org, [facebook.com/stfranciskitchen](https://www.facebook.com/stfranciskitchen), text SFAK to 26989, 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 be celebrated at Fiorelli's in Peckville on Wednesday, April 10, at 6 p.m. RSVPs are required by March 30. Those who would like to sponsor the reception are asked to call the Kitchen at 570-342-5556.



Wolff basketball tourney benefits soup kitchen



The Scranton High School Athletic Department recently hosted the Donald J. Wolff freshman basketball tournament, with proceeds from the competition benefiting Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen in Scranton. The recent sporting event honored the memory of the late Don Wolff, a well-known advocate of Saint Francis Kitchen and former longtime superintendent of Catholic Cemeteries for the Diocese of Scranton. Shown, from left: Ted Anderson, Scranton High School athletic director and volunteer referee; John Coyle, Scranton High School principal; student volunteers Kole Chandler, Jaheam Roberts, Leigha Pacheco; Robert Williams, executive director of Saint Francis Kitchen; Tim Wolff, grandson of Mr. Wolff and volunteer referee; and student volunteers Rob Rowinski, Mike Marinelli and Billy Gibbons.

Eucharistic Miracles presentation continues for public display throughout Diocese



Gloria Calabro, a member of Saint Leo Parish in Ashley, is continuing to offer for public display a comprehensive exhibit of educational story panels chronicling Eucharistic miracles recognized by the universal Catholic Church throughout the ages. With the National Eucharistic Revival well underway in the Church in America, Calabro expressed that opportunities still exist for parishes in the Diocese of Scranton to host the display, which includes approximately 80 historical capsule accounts provided by the Vatican International Eucharistic Miracle initiative. To inquire about scheduling parish visits for the presentation, contact Gloria Calabro at (570) 479-1175.

Eucharistic Miracles exhibit coming to two Diocesan parishes

The Eucharistic Miracles display presentation currently available for open visitations throughout the Scranton Diocese through the efforts of the exhibit's guardian, Gloria Calabro, will travel to two parish communities during the Easter season.

The Knights of Columbus of Saint Michael Parish in Canton will host an appearance of the Eucharistic Miracles exhibition at Saint Michael Church, 106 North Washington St., during the weekend of Divine Mercy Sunday, April 5-7.

The exhibit will be open for public display on Friday, April 5, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., during which time Eucharistic exposition and adoration will be held in the church.

Visitation hours will also be offered on Saturday, April 6, from noon to 5 p.m., and Sunday, April 7, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The parish communities of Our Lady of the Abingtons, Dalton; Saint Mary of the

Lake, Lake Winola; and Saint Patrick, Nicholson, will host the Eucharistic Miracles exhibit on the Third Sunday of Easter.

The presentation showcasing dozens of Church-approved historical instances testifying to the True Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament will be on display on Sunday, April 14, at Saint Patrick Church, 205 Main St., Nicholson, from noon to 2 p.m.

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Parish offering youth mental health training session on April 20

SCOTT TOWNSHIP — The Mental Health Ministry at Saint John Vianney Parish is offering a Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) training for adults who interact with youth, ages 12 to 18.

The training program will be held on Saturday, April 20, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Saint John Vianney Parish, 704 Montdale Road, Scott Township. Offered free of charge, the session includes a light breakfast and lunch.

YMHFA training is specifically designed as a support program for parents of teens and other adults who engage with adolescents in the age group, including school staff/teachers/coaches, camp counselors, youth group leaders and youth ministers.

The in-person program requires approximately two hours of online pre-work.

Training objectives include:

- Recognition of the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges that may impact youth.
- Explanation of the impact of traumatic experiences and the role of resilience on adolescent development.
- Application of the appropriate steps of the YMHFA Action Plan (ALGEE).

Registration is limited and available online at catholicmhm.org/csdeanery-mhm. Certification is optional.

Deadline to register for the YMHFA training at Saint John Vianney is Wednesday, April 17.

Scranton Thesians seeking new members



The Scranton community branch of the International Thesians confraternity recently celebrated the 60th anniversary of their founding by the late Marion Clauss (pictured inset). Shown at the anniversary gathering at Cooper's restaurant in Scranton are, foreground from left: Alice Stofko; Joyce Weby; Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Katie Clauss, guest speaker and daughter of Mrs. Clauss; Mary Boretsky, Scranton Thesians president; Mary Joy Havey; Mary Jule Kapacs, vice president; Valerie Riggi; Annette Amendaloro; Barbara Utter; Barbara Whitford; Annette Profera and Marcia Bosak. Background, from left: Kim Durban, secretary; Diane Trentley; Linda Helene Burns, treasurer; Judy Manago; Barbara Long; and Marie Conmy, trustee.

SCRANTON — The Scranton community branch of Thesians International extends an invitation to area Catholic women to join the sodality under the patronage of Saint Therese Lisieux, "The Little Flower of Jesus."

Founded in 1963 by the late Marion Clauss, who remained active as the group leader under her death last May, the spiritual community gathers on the second Tuesday of each month (September thru June) at Saint Mary of Mount Carmel Church in Dunmore at 11:30 a.m. for recitation of the Rosary prior to the noon Mass.

Following the liturgy, members proceed to Cooper's restaurant in Scranton for a

luncheon meeting, featuring a guest speaker.

The Thesians serve in fostering religious vocations through prayer and example. Membership duties include daily recitation of the Theresian prayer, offering a weekly Holy Hour, regular meeting attendance and a yearly dues of \$30.

Appointed by the Diocesan bishop, Father James Paisley, pastor of Saint Ann Basilica Parish, West Scranton, currently serves as Thesians chaplain.

Any woman interested in membership is asked to contact Mary Boretsky, president, at (570) 780-3452; or Linda Helene Burns, treasurer, (570) 575-9851.

PHL 'Sing for Life' Concert April 18

The Scranton Chapter of Pennsylvanians for Human Life will sponsor its "Sing for Life" concert and program on Thursday, April 18, at 6 p.m. at Saint Mary's Center, Scranton.

Admission cost for the concert program is \$10. All students admitted free of charge.

For reservations, call (570) 343-5099 or visit: prolifescranton.org/event/sing-for-life/

Catholic Happenings

Tuesday Novena Devotion to Saint Anthony of Padua — APRIL 2-JUNE 11, hosted by Our Lady of Hope Parish, 40 Park Ave., Wilkes-Barre; Saint Anthony Novena devotion offered for 13 weeks on Tuesday evenings, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the parish church. Novena theme: "The Holy Eucharist & Real Presence of Christ: Miracle of All Miracles." Novena services include blessing with the Saint Anthony relic. All faithful are welcome; for more information, call (570) 824-7832.

Mental Health Film Presentation — APRIL 3, sponsored by the mental health support group at Visitation of the BVM Parish in Dickson City; begins at 6:30 p.m. in the parish rectory (1090 Carmal St. entrance). Presentation offered to provide support for family members/

caregivers of those struggling with mental illness. All are welcome; for more information, call Brian Lennon (570) 955-6521.

Rummage Sale — APRIL 8 & 9, sponsored by the Christian Mothers of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, 116 Hughes St., Swoyersville; sale held on Monday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., & Tuesday (Bag Day), 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the school gymnasium. Event also includes bake sale, refreshments, hoagies, hot dogs and wimpies.

Weekly Bereavement Support Group Sessions — APRIL 8-MAY 13, sponsored by St. John Neumann Parish in Hawley; bereavement support group meets on consecutive Monday afternoons from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in the St. John parish hall, 705 Route 739,

Continued on page 30

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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Continued from page 29

Lords Valley. Weekly gatherings address topics dealing with the grief process to enable participants to find healing following the loss of a loved one. All are welcome; advance registration required at stvgriefgroup@att.net or by calling the parish office (570) 775-6791.

Providence Pregnancy Center Annual Dinner: "From Death to Life" — APRIL 11, pro-life event offered to the community to advance the culture of life; held from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Center, Mifflin Avenue, Scranton.

Keynote speaker: medical surgeon and missionary Sister Deirdre Byrne, a member of the Little Workers of the Sacred Heart religious congregation. Evening program also includes dinner & presentations, raffle drawings, music and cash bar. Cost: \$23 per person. Advance reservations required; call (570) 341-7045 or visit: ppscscranton.org/events.

Purse & Cash Bingo — APRIL 13, sponsored by St. Ann Basilica Parish in West Scranton; hosted at St. Stanislaus PNCC Youth Center, 530 East Elm St., Scranton. Doors open at 5 p.m. and games begin at 6 p.m. Event includes 20 games, specials, theme basket and cash raffle drawings. Cost: \$25 (in advance); \$30 (at door). Tickets may be purchased at St. Ann's Shrine Center or the parish office. For more information, call Debbie at (570) 313-3175.

Grief Support Journey: "Loss of a Spouse" — APRIL 14, hosted by Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, 2011 State Route 29, Hunlock Creek (Lake Silkworth); grief support session held from 2 to 4:30 p.m. Program offered to assist those mourning the loss of a life partner through the grief journey. Reservations requested; call Our Lady of Mount Carmel church office (570) 477-5040.

Designer Bag Bingo — APRIL 14, sponsored by the St. Catherine of Siena Parish Altar & Rosary Society in Moscow; hosted

at the parish's Kelly Hall, 220 Church St., Moscow. Doors open at 12:30 p.m.; bingo games begin at 1:30 p.m. Cost: \$25, in advance; \$30, at door. Admission includes 20 regular games; additional games available for \$5 each or 4/\$15. Event also features sale of homemade foods, beverages, cash & basket raffle tickets. Admission tickets available at the parish office; for more information, including event sponsorship, call Mary (570) 842-4561, or Ann Marie (570) 510-3125.

Cash Bingo — APRIL 14, sponsored by the Social Concerns Committee at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, 116 Hughes St., Swoyersville; doors open at noon and bingo games start at 1 p.m. Admission fee: \$25 per person. Cash prizes include: 15 regular games, \$100 each; four special games, \$200 each; and \$500 overall. Event includes bake sale, door prizes, 50/50 cash drawing, basket raffles and lunch. Seating limited to 250. Tickets available at April 6 & 7 weekend Masses.

Men's Faith & Fellowship Gathering — APRIL 17, hosted at St. Maximilian Parish, 5112 Pocono Crest Road, Pocono Pines, beginning at 6:30 p.m.; informal gathering of adult-age men includes Rosary prayers and guest speakers/topical video presentations encouraging faith-sharing and discussion. Open to all men; refreshments included

Continued on page 31

Who makes house calls?

As of October 2015, I will now meet clients either at their home, or at a location they choose and no longer require clients to meet at my office. I have decided that I would change the way I meet with people so it will be as easy and as convenient as possible for the client.

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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Marian Devotion Rosary prayer service

Fostering prayerful devotion to Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary through recitation of the Holy Rosary, Marian Devotion Ministries in the Diocese of Scranton continues its Rosary prayer services for 2024.

Prayer rallies and Rosary evenings are hosted throughout the Diocese and include the Rosary with chanted Scriptural

mysteries, Fatima prayers and hymns.

An upcoming Marian Devotion event during the Easter season is scheduled as follows:

Monday Evening of Marian Devotion — April 15, at 6 p.m. at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, Route 315, Laflin.

For information, contact Ernie Pappa (570) 241-8171.

Catholic Happenings

Continued from page 30

and free-will offering accepted. Anyone interested in attending is asked to contact Jack Zarra (570) 807-1618.

Parish Presentation: "The Jesuits & The Dinchers" — **APRIL 17**, hosted at St. Lawrence Parish Hall, 800 West Central Ave., South Williamsport; presentation offered twice at 2 & 7 p.m. Program focuses on St. Ignatius of Loyola and the historical significance of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) religious order which he founded in 1540. Presentation also highlights two native sons of St. Boniface Parish, Williamsport, who served as Jesuit missionaries: Father Fred Dincher, who ministered in the Philippines during World War II; and his nephew, Father Carl Dincher, who as a missionary to India became a spiritual guide and close friend to St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Open to the public free of charge.

"Nazareth Group" Days for High School Girls — **APRIL 20**, hosted by the Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth in Tunkhannock and Williamsport; Saturday programs are presented by the Nazareth

Group for young women interested in deepening their faith and growing in their relationship with Jesus Christ. The encounter groups include enriching prayer, talks, discussions and nature walks.

Open to all girls in grades 9-12; the experience is offered from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Capuchin Sisters' two convent locations: Mother of God Convent, 215 Wellwood Drive, Tunkhannock; and Mother of the Eucharist Convent, 6100 Jacks Hollow Road, Williamsport. Reservations are required. For Tunkhannock, contact Sister Angela of the Capuchin Sisters at (570) 836-2737; for Williamsport, contact Sister Clare at (570) 745-3334.

Gift Card Bingo — **APRIL 20**, sponsored by the Youth Ministry of Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish; hosted at the Warrior Run Fire Hall, 316 Academy St., Warrior Run. Doors open at 11 a.m.; games begin at 12:30 p.m. Admission fee: \$20, includes 15 regular games. Event features five specials, door prizes, basket raffle, bake & food sales, and cash raffle. For tickets/more information, visit www.exhc.org or call (570) 328-4004.



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Prayer Requests for Priests

The Daily Prayer Request for Priests schedule is as follows:

March 28, Father John Boyle; March 29, Father Stephen Brenyah; March 30, Father Michael Bryant; March 31, Passionist Father Richard Burke; April 1, Pope Francis; April 2, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; April 3, Jesuit Father Timothy Cadigan; April 4, Father William Campbell; April 5, Father David Cappelloni; April 6, Passionist Father Robert Carbonneau; April 7, Father Sean Carpenter; April 8, Father Eugene Carr; April 9, Father Edward Casey; April 10, Father John Chmil; April 11, Father Richard Cirba; April 12, Father Brian J.T. Clarke; April 13, Father Brian J.W. Clarke; April 14, Father Charles Connor; April 15, Father William Corcoran; April 16, Father David Cramer; April 17, Father William Culnane; April 18, Father Charles Cummings; April 19, Father Richard Czachor, V.E.; April 20, Father Vincent Dang; April 21, Father Mark DeCelles; April 22, Jesuit Father John Dennis; April 23, Father John Doris.

Kitchen Advisory Board Member honored

WILKES-BARRE- The Advisory Board of Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen in Wilkes-Barre recently presented Dr. Dave Shemo, outgoing advisory board president, with a plaque of appreciation for his 15 years of service as President of the Advisory Board.



Dr. Shemo was also presented with a miniature statue of Saint Vincent de Paul and a gift card to Freidman Hospitality restaurants. Flowing his tenure as Advisory Board President, Dr. Shemo will remain a member of the Advisory Board.

Shown, from left: Chris Bedwick, incoming advisory board president, Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen; Dr. Dave Shemo; Carl Frank, past advisory board president, Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen. Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen is a program of Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton.

For more information about the Kitchen, call (570) 829-7796.

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