



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

March 28, 2024

**Dependence on God becomes the
'seedbed for faith,' Bishop Bambera
says in 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.”

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
Bishop of Scranton

[Read and Share Bishop Bambera's Easter Message from the Diocese of Scranton Website](#)

On Holy Thursday, parishes extend Adoration times,
invite parishioners to the Altar of Repose



GET UP AND PRAY!

**FOLLOWING TONIGHT'S MASS OF
THE LORD'S SUPPER, PLAN TO
SPEND TIME IN ADORATION**

Many parishes will have extended Adoration Hours at the Altar of Repose. Visit dioceseofscranton.org for a full listing

At the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, the Church celebrates the institution of the Eucharist and Christ giving the Twelve Apostles and their successors the authority to be ministers of the Sacrament. At the end of Mass, the Eucharist is taken in solemn procession to an Altar of Repose.

At the Altar of Repose, parishioners keep vigil in silent prayer and adoration, recalling our Lord's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane and his rebuke to his disciples: "What? Could you not watch one hour with me?"

On Holy Thursday in particular, Catholics are encouraged to pray for priests and seminarians – that they be holy messengers of hope, reconciliation and peace.

Tonight, the Diocese of Scranton is inviting you to participate on a prayer journey and is asking you to share that journey on social media.

Invite your family, friends or assemble a group of people from your parish (young adults are especially encouraged to participate) to visit the Altar of Repose in several different churches in your community.

[Click Here for an Updated List of Parishes Participating in the 'Get Up and Pray' Initiative](#)

**Bishop expresses deep gratitude to
priests, people during Chrism Mass**



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 and pastoral guidance.

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

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.

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

Let 'tears of repentance' flow, Pope Francis tells priests at Chrism Mass



Just before some 1,500 priests, bishops and cardinals renewed their priestly promises, Pope Francis asked them to embrace “compunction,” which he said was “an aspect of the spiritual life that has been somewhat neglected yet remains essential.”

Looking at its etymology, he said that “compunction is ‘a piercing of the heart’ that is painful and evokes tears of repentance,” but it also is the only path to spiritual growth and to a merciful ministry to others.

Presiding over the chrism Mass March 28 in St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Francis ended his lengthy homily by thanking the priests present and, by extension, those around the world.

“Thank you, dear priests, for your open and docile hearts. Thank you for all your hard work and your tears. Thank you, because you bring the miracle of God’s mercy to our brothers and sisters in today’s world,” he said. “May the Lord console you, strengthen you and reward you.”

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

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



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.

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

"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.

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

Pope writes meditations for *Via Crucis* at Colosseum, Vatican says



For the first time in his 11-year papacy, Pope Francis has chosen to write his own meditations for the Good Friday Way of the Cross service at Rome's Colosseum, the head of the Vatican press office said.

For the service March 29, Pope Francis has chosen the theme "In prayer with Jesus on the way of the cross," Matteo Bruni, the press office director, told reporters March 26.

St. John Paul II began a tradition in 1985 of entrusting the writing of the meditations to cardinals and other church personalities, well-known writers or groups of people, including young people and journalists. However, he wrote the reflections himself for the Colosseum ceremony during the Holy Year 2000.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger wrote the meditations for Good Friday 2005, less than a month before being elected Pope Benedict XVI. Throughout his pontificate, though, he entrusted the drafting to different people each year.

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

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



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 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.

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

U.S. Bishops ask faithful to pray during Holy Week for end to Israel-Hamas War



The president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on International Justice and Peace called upon the faithful to renew prayers during Holy Week for an end to the Israel-Hamas war.

“As the Church enters Holy Week and Christ’s suffering on the cross and his resurrection are made present to us so vividly, we are connected to the very source of hope. It is that hope that spurs us to call on Catholics here in the United States and all those of good will to renew their prayers for an

end to the raging Israel-Hamas war,” wrote Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services USA, USCCB president, and Bishop A. Elias Zaidan of the Maronite Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, International Justice and Peace committee chairman, in a March 23 statement.

Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip have killed more than 32,000 people, including more than 13,000 children, with an additional estimated 75,000 injured, in Israel’s retaliation on the Palestinian territory following Hamas’ Oct. 7 attack on communities along Israel’s southern border. Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups have killed more than 1,100 people and injured more than 8,700, taking more than 240 hostages. A reported 130 hostages remain in Gaza, including at least 33 dead. With Israel restricting Gaza from access to resources, including food, many Gaza residents are facing catastrophic levels of hunger and imminent “famine.”

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

Diocesan Annual Appeal allows Catholic Television to broadcast Masses from Cathedral of Saint Peter, especially significant during Holy Week

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.

Your support of the Diocesan Annual Appeal helps the Diocesan Office for Communications spread the Good News of Jesus to all people in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania, and beyond, all year long - but the efforts are especially appreciated by many people during Holy Week and the Paschal Triduum.

Each morning of the Triduum, Catholic Television will broadcast Morning Prayer from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, at 8:00 a.m.

The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper will be broadcast tonight at 5:30 p.m., with Bishop Bambera serving as principal celebrant and Father Gerald W. Shantillo serving as homilist.

The Commemoration of the Lord's Passion from the Cathedral will be broadcast at 12:10 p.m. on Friday. Bishop Bambera will serve as celebrant of the liturgy and Father Jeffrey Tudgay will serve as homilist.

Bishop Bambera will celebrate the Easter Vigil Mass at 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, and Easter Sunday Mass, at 10:00 a.m., all of which will also be broadcast by Catholic Television.

Numerous other broadcasts from the Vatican and Washington D.C., will be broadcast over the next four days to help people celebrate the Passion of Christ and the joy of the Resurrection.

Our Diocesan Annual Appeal campaign has now reached 86-percent of its goal, but we need all faithful to participate to ensure that we get to 100-percent – and make sure there is funding for the vital ministries of our diocese that no one parish can provide on its own.

None of this work can happen without you.

During the Paschal Triduum – please ask yourself how God is calling you to give of yourself to others.

[Catholic Television Broadcasts for the Paschal Triduum from Scranton, Washington & Vatican](#)

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