The Catholic Light **DIOCESE OF SCRANTON**

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Celebrating the Birth of Christ and the Promise of Hope in the Upcoming Jubilee Year

BISHOP BAMBERA'S 2024 **CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**

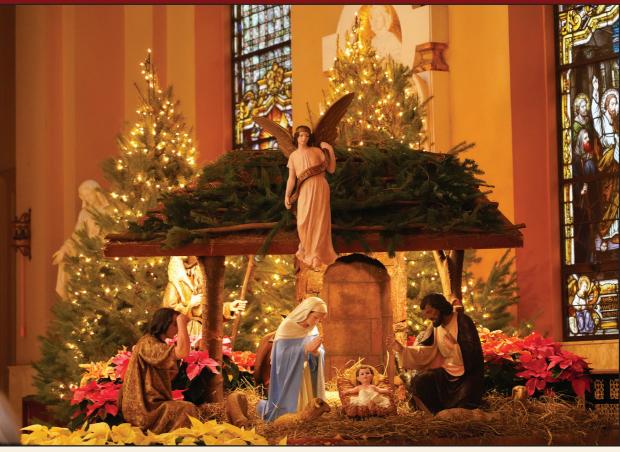


Dear Friends in Christ,

The very first spoken words recorded in Saint Luke's gospel, as the evangelist chronicles the birth of Jesus, are words of hope shared with poor shepherds who represent the broken, suffering world Jesus was born to save. "Do not be afraid. ... A savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord" (Luke 2:10,11).

This year, on Christmas Eve, that same world. On that sacred night, Pope Francis will open the Holy Door in Saint Peter's Basilica Church celebrates every twenty-five years in accordance with an ancient tradition. Rooted in Saint Paul's words from his letter to the John Lateran, the Cathedral of Rome. On that giving message of Christmas and the presence opening of the great Jubilee Year. of the living God in our midst.

message of God's love addressed to all," and before the life that has been won for us by Jesus discrimination, bigotry and hatred. that "the Church might bear faithful witness" and to allow its light to illumine our lives! And to this message in every part of the world," we need the assurance of knowing that we are



The Nativity scene, as displayed in the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Christmas Eve in 2023. In his 2024 message of hope will resound throughout our Christmas message, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera focuses on a message of hope, which is also the theme of upcoming Jubilee Year in 2025. (Photo/Mike Melisky)

open the Holy Door of the Archbasilica of St. nothing to fear.

in Rome to begin a Jubilee Year which the four days later, on the feast of the Holy Family forgiven and loved, that our lives matter, and of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Pope Francis will that, like the shepherds of Bethlehem, we have

Sadly, our world has become a frightening Romans, "Hope does not disappoint," the day, by decree of the Holy Father, the Church and disappointing place. Random acts of Holy Father will invite the entire Church to of Scranton will join with bishops and faithful violence are all too common in our land. Wars begin a journey throughout the upcoming year in every cathedral throughout the world are raging throughout our world in the Middle during which we open our hearts to the life- to celebrate Mass and to mark the solemn East, Ukraine, Africa and countless other places. Life is still sadly disregarded, especially Brothers and sisters, more than we realize, in the unborn, the poor, disabled and elderly. Praying that "the light of Christian hope we need the hope promised through this And immigrants and refugees seeking a better might illumine every man and woman, as a Jubilee Year. We need to embrace like never life are forced to the margins of society by

Christmas Message Continues on Page 3

The Catholic Light

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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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Christmas Broadcasts on CTV



Friday, December 20, 2024

Sing Noel! A Christmas Concert, 10:30 p.m.

From Ottawa, Canada, the Thirteen Strings Candlelight Orchestra and the Seventeen Voyces choir perform Fantasia on Christmas Carols and the Christmas Oratorio; French Noels sung by the Children's Choir from the Ecole Secondaire De la Salle. Encore: Dec. 22 at 1:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 22, 2024

Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent & Evening Prayer, 5:00 p.m.

Live broadcast of the 5:00 p.m. Mass from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Advent Evening Prayer

Carols by Candlelight from Knock Shrine, 10:00 p.m.

Experience the sights and sounds of Christmas from the Marian Shrine in Knock, Ireland. This beautiful concert of Christmas carols, sung by candlelight, will lift your spirits and bring joy to this wonderful season

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

Mass of the Nativity of Our Lord and Opening of the Holy Door, 1:00 p.m.

Live from St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, Pope Francis presides over Midnight Mass on the Solemnity of the Birth of Our Lord.

Encore: Wednesday, Dec. 25 at 4:00 a.m.

Pontifical Vigil Mass of Christmas from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, 4:00 p.m.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist for the Solemn Pontifical Vigil Mass of Christmas live from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Choral Meditations on the Nativity, 10:00 p.m.

The Nativity of Jesus is musically brought to life in this series of choral meditations, live from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

Solemn Mass on Christmas Eve, 10:30 p.m.

The traditional "Midnight Mass" of Christmas live from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

Wednesday, December 25, 2024

Midnight Mass from the Holy Land, 1:00 a.m.

Holy Mass celebrating the Solemnity of the Nativity, live from the Holy Land.

"Urbi Et Orbi:" Pope Francis' Christmas Message & Blessing to the World, 6:00 a.m.

Live from St. Peter's Square in Rome, Pope Francis delivers his Christmas blessing to the city of Rome and the world. Encore: Sunday, Dec. 25 at 3:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.

Solemn Mass of Christmas from EWTN, 8:00 a.m.

The Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word celebrate the Solemn Christmas Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Chapel in Alabama.

Solemn Mass of Christmas from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, 10:00 a.m.

Celebrate the Solemn Mass of Christmas Day live from the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. Encore: Saturday, December 25, 5:00 p.m.

Solemn Mass of Christmas Day, Noon

The Solemn Mass of Christmas from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

Celebrando el Nacimiento de Cristo y la Promesa de Esperanza en el Próximo Año Jubilar

Mensaje de Navidad 2024 del Obispo Bambera

Queridos amigos en Cristo,

Las primeras palabras pronunciadas que se registran en el evangelio de San Lucas, cuando el evangelista narra el nacimiento de Jesús, son palabras de esperanza compartidas con los pobres pastores que representan el mundo roto y sufriente que Jesús vino a salvar. "No teman. ... Les ha nacido un salvador, que es el Cristo, el Señor" (Lucas 2:10,11).

Este año, en la víspera de Navidad, ese mismo mensaje de esperanza resonará en todo nuestro mundo. En esa noche sagrada, el Papa Francisco abrirá la Puerta Santa en la Basílica de San Pedro en Roma para comenzar un Año Jubilar que la Iglesia celebra cada veinticinco años según una antigua tradición. Enraizado en las palabras de San Pablo en su carta a los romanos, "La esperanza no defrauda", el Santo Padre invitará a toda la Iglesia a comenzar un camino durante el próximo año, en el cual abriremos nuestros corazones al mensaje vivificador de la Navidad y a la presencia del Dios vivo entre nosotros.

Orando para que "la luz de la esperanza cristiana ilumine a todo hombre y mujer, como un mensaje del amor de Dios dirigido a todos", y para que "la Iglesia dé un testimonio fiel de este mensaje en todas partes del mundo", cuatro días después, en la fiesta de la Sagrada Familia de Jesús, María y José, el Papa Francisco abrirá la Puerta Santa de la Archibasílica de San Juan de Letrán, la Catedral de Roma. En ese día, por decreto del Santo Padre, la Iglesia de Scranton se unirá con los obispos y fieles en todas las catedrales del mundo para celebrar la Misa y marcar la solemne apertura del gran Año Jubilar.

Hermanos y hermanas, más de lo que nos damos cuenta, necesitamos la esperanza prometida a través de este Año Jubilar. ¡Necesitamos abrazar como nunca antes la vida que Jesús ha ganado para nosotros y permitir que su luz ilumine nuestras vidas! Y necesitamos la certeza de saber que somos perdonados y amados, que nuestras vidas importan y que, al igual que los pastores de Belén, no tenemos nada que temer.

Lamentablemente, nuestro mundo se ha convertido en un lugar aterrador y decepcionante. Los actos de violencia al azar son demasiado comunes en nuestra tierra. Las guerras están desatadas en todo el mundo, en el Medio Oriente, Ucrania, África y en incontables otros lugares. La vida sigue siendo lamentablemente ignorada, especialmente en los no nacidos, los pobres, los discapacitados y los ancianos. Y los inmigrantes y refugiados que buscan una vida mejor son marginados por la discriminación, el fanatismo y el odio.

Sin embargo, para todos nosotros que somos lo suficientemente humildes como para reconocer las dificultades que enfrentamos y mirar, escuchar y abrir nuestros corazones al poder y la presencia de Dios, la bendición de la Navidad y la promesa del gran Año Jubilar son tesoros llenos de esperanza para todos los creyentes. Durante el Año Jubilar, habrá innumerables oportunidades, tanto aquí en nuestra Diócesis, en Roma, como en todo el mundo, para crecer en nuestra fe y celebrar nuestra vida como discípulos de Jesús, renacidos en el Bautismo y renovados en espíritu a través de Su gracia redentora.

Al anunciar el Año Jubilar hace algún tiempo, el Papa Francisco nos invitó a todos a "avivar la llama de esperanza que se nos ha dado y ayudar a todos a ganar nuevas fuerzas y certeza mirando hacia el futuro con un espíritu abierto, un corazón confiado y una visión de largo alcance". Luego compartió que "el próximo Jubileo puede contribuir enormemente a restaurar un clima de esperanza y confianza como preludio de la renovación y el renacimiento que tan urgentemente deseamos" en nuestras vidas, en nuestras familias y en nuestro mundo.

Que el poder de la esperanza llene nuestras vidas mientras nos preparamos para celebrar el nacimiento de nuestro Salvador, Jesús, y esperamos con confianza y esperanza el Año Jubilar de gracia.

Con gratitud por su presencia en la Diócesis de Scranton y con oraciones por una bendita Navidad para ustedes y sus familias,

Fielmente suyo en Cristo,

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

Bishop Bambera's 2024 **Christmas Message**

Continued from Page 1

Yet, for all of us who are humble enough acknowledge difficulties the we face and to look, to listen, and to open our hearts to the power and presence of God, the blessing of Christmas and the promise the great Jubilee Year are treasures steeped in hope for all believers. During the Jubilee Year, there will be many opportunities both here in our Diocese, in Rome,



Mary and Joseph are seen in a mud and thatch hut, the centerpiece of the Nativity scene in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Dec. 10, 2024. Mary is holding a lily until Christmas Eve when a statue of baby Jesus will be added. (CNS photo/Cindy Wooden)

and throughout our world, to grow in our faith and to celebrate our life as disciples of Jesus, reborn through Baptism and renewed in spirit through His redeeming grace.

In announcing the Jubilee Year some time ago, Pope Francis invited us all to "fan the flame of hope that has been given us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision." He went on to share that "the forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire" in our lives, in our families and in our world.

May the power of hope fill our lives as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus, and look forward with confidence and hope to the Jubilee Year of grace.

With gratitude for your presence within the Diocese of Scranton and with prayers for a blessed Christmas for you and your families, I am

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+ Joseph C. Bambera

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

"IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE"

Parishes Give Back to the Community at Christmas

Knights donate winter coats for students

JERMYN - Knights of Columbus Padre Pio Assembly 2768 of Sacred Heart of Mary Church in Jermyn recently donated dozens of winter coats worth nearly \$500 to the Mayfield Campus of Lakeland Elementary School.

The charitable project and donation were dedicated Kevin Sullivan, principal, Faithful Navigator Tony to the memory of recently Lakeland Joseph Mark Sr.

Pictured, from left: Knight Kevin Pittack; Dr. Marc Wyandt.



Elementary Spataro; Faithful Scribe Ted deceased Assembly Knight Mayfield Campus; Knight Prusinski; and Lakeland Harry Newberry; Grand Superintendent of Schools

Knights send winter coats to pro-life center

MILFORD - Knights of Columbus Council John Paul II Council 13935 donated 72 new coats to the nearby Tri-State Family & Pregnancy Center (TSFPC) as part of the K of C "Coats for Kids" initiative.

The program is a vital part of the Knights' mission addressing the essential needs of children. A valued pregnancies. community partner, TSFPC plays a crucial role in center offers comprehensive children.



to serve the community by supporting families and services, including parenting mothers facing unexpected classes, material assistance,

> The Pike

pregnancy counseling, County and resources for young



Christmas gift bags distributed to children in need

DUNMORE-Members Dunmore recently joined animals, Playground Association more. in Dunmore to assemble children served by the in Scranton.

The Christmas gift of the Holy Name Society bags, which were assembled of the parishes of Saints by members on Dec. 4, Anthony & Rocco and Our each contained a number Lady of Mount Carmel in of treats, including stuffed candy canes, with the Saint Anthony's snacks, coloring books and

The gift bags were Christmas gift bags for distributed to area students their after-school Friends of the Poor in programs just in time for the Christmas holiday.



Religious education students make goodie bags for local food pantry

FRIENDSVILLE- fruit Religious students at Saint Brigid much more. Parish in Susquehanna pantry and eight family baskets on Dec. 15 as part project.

The contained snack items that pictures on the front of the

goldfish snacks, education crackers, applesauce and

Parishioners of the County made more than 50 parish generously donate goodie bags for a local food many of the items to make the distribution successful.

In addition to packing of their Christmas service all of the goodie bags, the religious education students goodie bags also created colorful included chips, popcorn, bags for recipients to enjoy.



Mid Valley parish 'socks it' to VNA in **Olyphant**

JESSUP - During their pastor, Father Gerard the month of November, McGlone. parishioners and Visiting Nurses Association surrounding communities. in Olyphant.

parish children responsible Social Services by offering for the giant "Socks in ornaments from an Angel

Since 1895, the Visiting students from Queen of Nurses Association has Angels Parish collected been bringing exceptional approximately 700 pairs of home health care to homes socks for the clients of the in Lackawanna County and

The parish also assisted Shown are some the the needy through Catholic the Box" present held by Giving Tree in their church.



Pocono Pines parish provides gifts to community through 'giving tree'

call went out at all Masses surrounding communities. in early November that St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish sets its own quota," would again participate in the explained annually sponsored by at TOMEC, who was busy the Top of the Mountain checking in the gifts from Ecumenical Council St. (TOMEC) headquartered Parish. "St. Max does at the Five Loaf House in twice as much as any of the Pocono Pines.

A 'Giving Tree' was set tied with ribbon to the tree's spirit of giving." branches.

gifts wrapped in a blaze of to kids," added Nowak. color strewn at the foot of the

on Dec. 3. The gifts were so much." part of TOMEC's six-263 children in 115 families to families on Dec. 9 & 10.

POCONO PINES - The in Tobyhanna Township and

"Each congregation Kim 'Giving Tree' gift program, 'Giving Tree' coordinator Maximilian Kolbe congregations."

"Giving Tree' is a great up in the church's narthex opportunity for the parish to to attract the attention of get together for a community parishioners attending the outreach especially at this three weekend Masses. time of year," said Juli Instead of traditional tree Reese, parish office manager decorations, 85 index cards at St. Maximilian Kolbe with a child's first name, Parish. "It gets our families, age (17 or younger), type of children, grandparents and clothing and size, gender, people who don't have and tracking number were children involved in the

"It's very important that By the Dec. 1 deadline, parishioners are aware that all 85 cards had been their gifts are not going to a replaced with more than 85 business but rather directly

She further explained tree and around the narthex. that the 'Giving Tree' is The gifts, each tagged just what it is. "It is an ideal with one of those 85 index way to give a child a gift cards, were delivered by and we are thrilled to help the parish's 'Giving Tree' our community along with Coordinator Dorota Nowak the churches in TOMEC at to the Five Loaf House a time when giving means

Gifts from the local congregation effort to reach congregations were given

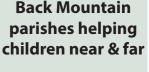




Dunmore parishes' CCD students receive Advent calendars

DUNMORE - The Dunmore parishes of Saints Advent presents including local students & Mount Carmel School.

Pictured in the photo Holy Name and Altar & with some the students Rosary Societies from the proudly displaying their Anthony & Rocco and Our Father David Cappelloni, Lady of Mount Carmel pastor of the Dunmore recently presented Advent parish communities, and Calendars to all CCD representatives of the students from both parishes, Holy Name and Altar Rosary societies, attending Saint Mary of including Martha Gervasi and Alfredo Pisa.



DALLAS - For their 2024 local mission project, parish children from the Back Mountain parish communities of Gate of Heaven, Dallas, and Our Lady of Victory, Harveys Lake, collected new pajamas for children in the Luzerne County Head Start program.

At the same time, the young parishioners widened their focus for a global mission project, donating \$435 to the Missionary Childhood Association to help the world's poorest children.

Each year, parishes choose different organizations to support and receive help from faith formation students. teachers and parishioners.



Parish donates dozens of blessing bags to Catholic Social Services

CARBONDALE During the first week of deodorant. December, Marian Society members from Our Lady blessing bags, the parish of the Rosary Parish put also collected 40 sets of together 40 blessing bags to sweatshirts, joggers, thermal be distributed by Catholic shirts, winter vests and Social Services to local underwear to distribute. individuals in need.

The blessing contained snacks essential toiletry items like collection in November.

- toothpaste, wipes, soap and

In addition to the

The effort was made bags possible because of the and generous support of a parish

Volunteers bring joy and hope to 5,000 children with Gifts for Kids Program

SCRANTON – In the days leading up to Christmas each year, you will always find Jessica Bruno of Simpson giving back to the community.

"I like to give back. I look forward to seeing the joy on people's faces," Bruno said.

As someone who has received help from community non-profit organizations herself, Bruno knows how much of a helping hand the Christmas Gifts for Kids program is to families that are struggling.

"There are a lot of people out there that can't afford gifts, especially with today's economy. This helps a lot of families," she explained.

This year, 5,000 children in the greater Scranton area will receive gifts from the Christmas Gifts for Kids Program. The annual event is a cooperative effort between Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton, Friends of the Poor, volunteers represented local parishes and working parents. and the Catherine McAuley Center.

"It is a good feeling to be able to Mahoney, Catholic Social Services Chief Executive Officer, stated. "We couldn't do this without community support."

In the months leading up to the toy distribution events, held this year on Dec. 15 & 16, at The University of Scranton, generous community members have been donating gifts for children of all ages, from toddlers to teens.

The toys, games, and books were all sorted and organized by a team of toy distribution dates fell on a weekend-



Volunteers sort thousands of toys, puzzles and games as part of the Christmas Gifts for Kids Program at The University of Scranton on Dec. 14, 2024. (Photo/Dan Piazza)

church youth groups.

Barre, a parishioner at Saint Maria Goretti Friends of the Poor, explained. Parish in Laflin, said.

gifts donated by the community.

"This is a wonderful, wonderful event," she added.

This year, for the first time, one of the

"We really wanted to accommodate "This has been a spectacular working parents, and we wanted to make help the community for Christmas," Joe experience. It is the first time I'm sure we're not asking anyone to take off volunteering for something like this, work, especially unpaid, to be able to and it really does get you in the spirit of come and get their toys," Meghan Loftus, Christmas," Donna Zehner of Wilkes- President and Chief Executive Officer of children and families in Scranton,

> Zehner was shocked by the number of Kids Program so unique is that parents of the community, in both Carbondale and get to choose the toys that they think their children would like best. In all, Loftus said about 2,000 families pre-registered for the received presents, and in Carbondale, toy distribution this year.

"We try to hit that mark because that volunteers on Dec. 14. Many of the which was done specifically to help is roughly the poverty line in Scranton, it said.

is about 15-percent of our population. That would attribute for most of the children living behind the poverty line," Loftus explained.

For the families who benefit from the program, the Christmas Gifts for Kids initiative is nothing short of a lifeline. Many parents, especially single mothers and fathers working multiple jobs to make ends meet, would struggle to provide the kind of gifts their children dream of at Christmas.

For these families, the program is not just about the presents - it's about the peace of mind that comes with knowing their children won't be left out.

"Everyone is here to support the kids," volunteer Elijah Lyons, a parishioner of Sacred Heart Parish in Dupont, said.

As the final toys were distributed, there is no doubt Christmas may not have been the same without the support of the community – and organizers hope the love and hope shared through this effort will continue to resonate in the community, long after the season of giving is over.

In addition to providing gifts to Catholic Social Services also holds What makes the Christmas Gifts for separate toy distributions, with the help

> In Hazleton, a total of 580 children more than 300 children were served.

"Helping kids is magical," Mahoney

Students share the spirit of giving by packing shoeboxes for those in need

from area parishes learned the importance Brodheadsville, said. of giving back to their community this annual event at Saint Francis Kitchen that helps spread the holiday spirit.

On Dec. 14, the teens came together brothers and sisters who might be homeless or struggling financially.

"I love how God has given us the together and do something like this for

SCRANTON - Dozens of students at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in on Christmas, it's particularly important to

The students filled each shoebox with holiday season by participating in an items that many of us take for granted – shampoo, deodorant, soap, toothpaste, and about them and know that they're not other basic hygiene products.

"We all pass the boxes down and to pack 200 shoeboxes filled with essential put one or two of each item in the box," toiletries, offering help and support to our Demarco Ceccacci, a middle school student the project was a powerful reminder of who attends Mass at Saint Catherine of Siena Parish in Moscow, explained.

The boxes, carefully packed by ability to love and just be able to come the students and then wrapped, will be distributed on Christmas Day at Saint those less fortunate," Brooke Landis, a Francis of Assisi Kitchen. The kitchen high school student who attends Mass serves hundreds of meals each week, and

make sure everyone feels seen, valued, and

"I hope they feel that people care alone," Alec Weinberger, a student from Wyoming Seminary, stated.

For many of the students involved, the difference a small act of kindness can make. As they packed the boxes, they were reminded that the true meaning of the Christmas season lies not in the presents they receive, but in the love they give.

motivation to come and help those who are Francis Kitchen Board Member, said.



Alec Weinberger, right, a student from Wyoming Seminary, helps to pack shoeboxes with toiletries on Dec. 14, 2024, at Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen in Scranton.

"The Kitchen really appreciates their less fortunate," Paola Giangiacomo, Saint

Christmas carols unite parish community in celebration of faith and joy

PITTSTON - Saint John the Evangelist Church opened its doors to the community on Dec. 15 to help people celebrate the Christmas season with music and song.

The parish held a free Christmas organ concert and sing-along just ten days before Christmas, featuring beautiful holiday music played on the church's historic organ.

"This is a great time to just relax, take a breath, and prepare spiritually, sing some of those wonderful songs, hear some of the readings of Christmas, and take a break from the hustle of preparing and all of the things that we have to do to get ready for Christmas," Father Joseph Elston, Pastor, said.

After a brief welcome by Father Elston, familiar songs like O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, O Little Town of Bethlehem, The First Noel, Silent Night, and Away in a *Manger*, rang out inside the church.

brought back many childhood memories of songs she grew up singing.

I was little, but now knowing what the singing along, brings out so much more wonderful experience!"

emotion, feeling, and meaning about what Christmas is all about," Charbonneau said.

As she walked away from the event, Charbonneau felt much more in tune with the true meaning of the holiday.

"God sent us his only son here on earth as a human and taught us so much about what real love is," she added.

The organ music was led by Michael Sowa, director of music at Saint John the Evangelist Parish.

"Singing Christmas carols is a centuries-old tradition, and we had a wonderful opportunity to have members of different faith communities come here to our church to continue this tradition, accompanied by our pipe organ," Sowa said.



Michael Sowa, director of music at Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Pittston, plays his church's pipe organ during concert and sing-along on Dec. 15, 2024.

With many of the pews packed for the concert and sing-along, Sowa was pleased Sheryl Charbonneau, who narrated that so many took time out of their day to the story of 'Silent Night,' said the event focus on the true meaning of the Christmas

"It is always a pleasure to play for a "Thinking about all these beautiful congregation that sings from the bottoms songs, not knowing what they meant when of their hearts. It is one of my greatest joys as an organist," Sowa added. "Hearing words mean, and having the congregation everyone singing together in unison, it is a



APPOINTMENTS

His Excellency, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, announces the following appointments, effective January 8, 2025:

Reverend Benito Hierro Aquino, CSMA, from Parochial Vicar, St. Nicholas-St. Mary Parish, Wilkes-Barre, to Parochial Vicar, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton, and Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton. Father Hierro Aquino will reside at Annunciation Rectory, Hazleton.

Reverend Sergio Leon Pamplona Henao, from Parochial Vicar, Holy Name of esus Parish, West Hazleton and Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton, to Parochial Vicar, St. Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg, and Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco. Father Pamplona Henao will reside at St. Matthew's Rectory, East Stroudsburg.

Reverend Jaime Perez Restrepo, from Parochial Vicar, St. Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg, and Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco, to Senior Priest, St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish, Scranton and Hispanic Ministry Coordinator for Northern Pastoral Region and Western Pastoral Region.



BISHOP BAMBERA'S SCHEDULE

December 22 - Masses for the Fourth Sunday of Advent Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Dingman Township 8:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.

December 23 - Advent Mass for Chancery Staff Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.

December 24 - Nativity of the Lord (Christmas Vigil) Mass Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 4:00 p.m.

December 25 - Nativity of the Lord (Midnight) Mass Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, Midnight, 12:00 a.m.

December 25 - Nativity of the Lord (Christmas Day) Mass Gino J. Merli Veterans Center, Scranton, 9:30 a.m.

December 29 - Mass for the Opening of the Jubilee 2025 Holy Year Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:15 p.m.

January 1 - Our Lady of the Cloud Feast Mass Saint Matthew Church, East Stroudsburg, Noon

January 2 - Mother Teresa Haven Shelter Dedication Wilkes-Barre, 11:00 a.m.

January 5 - Mass for the Epiphany of the Lord Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:15 p.m.

January 6 - Mass at Capuchin Sisters Chapel Tunkhannock, 4:30 p.m.

January 11 - Mass for Filipino Community Immaculate Conception Church, Scranton, 6:00 p.m.

January 12 - Mass for the Baptism of the Lord Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 10:00 a.m.





Opening Mass

Feast of the Holy Family Sunday, December 29, 2024 12:15 p.m.

Join Bishop Joseph C. Bambera and the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton as we begin the Jubilee Year with a solemn Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter



Jubilee Years have been proclaimed by the Holy Father every 25 years since the 13th century and are significant years of grace for the Universal Church.

What is a Jubilee Year?

A Jubilee Year is traditionally proclaimed by the Universal Church every 25 years. It is a particular year set aside to encourage the faithful to embark on pilgrimages, to repent of their sins and forgive the sins of others, and to renew a focus on the spiritual life.

The Jubilee Year 2025 will be centered on the theme "Pilgrims of Hope." As His Holiness, Pope Francis, so beautifully expressed it: "We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision."

When Does Jubilee Year 2025 begin?

The Jubilee begins on December 24, 2024, with the official Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica by Pope Francis, and runs to January 6, 2026, the Feast Day of Epiphany, with the Closing of the Holy Door.

On Sunday, Dec. 29, 2024, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera is inviting the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton to join him for an Opening Mass of Jubilee Year 2025 at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton at 12:15 p.m.

When Did Jubilee Year Celebrations Begin?

Pope Boniface VIII proclaimed the first Holy Year in 1300 and decreed that jubilees would be celebrated every 100 years. But just 50 years later, a more biblical cadence, Pope Clement VI proclaimed another holy year.

Pope Paul II decided in 1470 that holy years should be held every 25 years, which has been the practice ever since – but with the addition of special jubilees, like the Holy Year of Mercy in 2015-16, marking special occasions or needs.

Pope to canonize Acutis and Frassati

during Jubilee Year



Carlo Acutis

(OSV News) - News that canonization dates have been set for Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati, who have become popular patrons for teens and young adults, is being met with joy and gratitude by a number of Catholics in the United States.



Pier Giorgio Frassati

Pope Francis announced Nov. 20 that he will elevate Acutis and Frassati, both currently titled "blessed," to sainthood in 2025, when the universal Catholic Church will mark a jubilee year. Acutis will be canonized April 27, during the April 25-27 Jubilee for Adolescents in Rome. Frassati's canonization will follow amid the July 28-Aug. 3 Jubilee of Young People in Rome.

Born 90 years apart, Frassati and Acutis both lived brief but faith-filled lives that saw them devoted to Christ, particularly in the Eucharist, and to those around them.

"What a wonderful gift to the church militant both of these new saints will be," said Christine Wohar, president of FrassatiUSA, a Nashville-based nonprofit dedicated to promoting Frassati's canonization.

Michael Norton, president of the Malvern Retreat Center in Malvern, Pennsylvania, home to the Blessed Carlo Acutis Shrine and Center for Eucharistic Encounter, has seen firsthand how Acutis offers a relatable vision for holiness to kids and young adults.

"Students are absolutely fascinated and drawn to Carlo," he said. "It's like, 'Wow, he looks like me. I'm just like him. He lived in our lifetime.' He talks their language - he's a computer programmer, he played soccer. And so the kids are really drawn to him."

Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven, may the *faith* you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of *charity* enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed *hope* for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.

May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*, a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever.

Amen.



Five Ways to Celebrate Jubilee Year 2025

Read the Jubilee Document

Issued in May, "Spes Non Confundit" is the papal bull of indiction Pope Francis promulgated for the 2025 Jubilee Year. With the Holy Year's theme being "Pilgrims of Hope," it includes a scriptural reflection on hope, as well as an explanation of the meaning of a jubilee year; ideas and encouragement for Christians living out the Holy Year; appeals for accompaniment, mercy and charity for various people in need; and some of the key events and anniversaries the Holy Year will observe. The document is available to read at dioceseofscranton.org.

2. Go to Reconciliation

The idea of a jubilee or holy year is rooted in the jubilees marked by the Israelites, who saw every 50th year as a special time for forgiveness and reconciliation with God and others. They would leave their fields fallow, replenishing the soil, allow those under slavery to regain their freedom, return land to its former owners, and forgive debts that could not be repaid. Reconciliation and righting relationships are also at the heart of the church's holy years, making the sacrament of reconciliation a key component of this year. In the papal bull announcing the year, Pope Francis called the sacrament of reconciliation "the essential starting-point of any true journey of conversion."

3. Make a Pilgrimage

The jubilee calls for us to set out on a journey and to cross boundaries. When we travel, we do not only change place physically, but we also change ourselves. Hence, it is important to prepare ourselves well, to plan the route, and learn about the destination. Pilgrimages are an experience of conversion, of transforming one's very being to conform it to the holiness of God.

The Diocese of Scranton is offering two pilgrimage opportunities during Jubilee Year 2025:

PILGRIMAGE TO ROME August 31 - September 9, 2025

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will lead a Pilgrimage to Italy and Rome from Aug. 31-Sept. 9, 2025, in celebration of the Holy Year. The trip will include a Papal Audience, Masses celebrated daily at various Basilicas and Cathedrals, a unique opportunity to visit the Scavi, a tour of the necropolis under St. Peter's Basilica culminating at the tomb of St. Peter, and much more. The trip includes private deluxe motorcoach travel throughout, roundtrip (non-stop) airfare and 8-nights, first-class hotel accommodations.

There are only ten spots remaining, so if you are interested, please act fast! The cost of the trip is \$4,995.00 pp/double occupancy. For a detailed brochure, or to reserve your spot, contact Travelworld at (570) 342-5790 or visit asktravelworld.com.

PILGRIMAGE TO THE BASILICA OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION IN WASHINGTON, D.C. Wednesday, October 1, 2025

Faithful from all 106 parishes in the Diocese of Scranton will be invited to participate next fall on a Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception - the largest Roman Catholic Church in North America and one of the ten largest churches in the world. The Basilica is our nation's preeminent Marian shrine, dedicated to the patroness of the United States, and receives nearly one million visits annually.

Details on bus transportation arrangements, cost, and how to register for the October 1, 2025, pilgrimage to Washington, D.C., will be released soon - but save the date now!

4. Visit the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton

Unlike the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy 2015-2016, diocesan cathedrals will not designate Holy Doors to correspond with the traditional Holy Doors in Rome and at the Vatican. However, the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton is where Bishop Bambera will officially open the Holy Year locally with Mass at 12:15 p.m. on Dec. 29, the feast of the Holy Family. It will also be where he will close local Holy Year celebrations Dec. 28, 2025.

The Cathedral of Saint Peter will also be the site for many diocesan Jubilee events. Cathedral staff will also offer several special opportunities for the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton (or parish groups) to make a special pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Saint Peter in the upcoming year.

PILGRIMAGE TO THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PETER IN SCRANTON

Cathedral of Saint Peter 315 Wyoming Avenue Scranton, PA 18503

Any parish or ministry group that would like to make a reservation to visit the Cathedral of Saint Peter in the Jubilee Year, please contact the Cathedral Office at (570) 344-7231.

5. Perform Works of Mercy

In "Spes Non Confundit," Pope Francis asks Catholics "to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind." He specifically mentions prisoners, a group he has highlighted by designating a Jubilee Holy Door at Rome's Rebibbia Prison. He also mentions signs of hope are needed by the sick, the young, migrants, the elderly and grandparents, and the poor. The Holy Year should inspire Catholics to increase their exercise of the corporal works of mercy - feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick, visiting the imprisoned and burying the dead.



Pontifical Masses and Prayer Opportunities During Jubilee Year

Calendar of Major Events in the Diocese of Scranton

Jubilee Year 2025 will be a special time of grace and celebration for the Catholic community. To commemorate this significant occasion, Bishop Bambera will preside over 12 regional deanery Holy Hours during Lent, hosted at various parishes to encourage communal reflection and devotion to the Eucharist. These sacred gatherings, alongside other special Pontifical liturgies throughout the year, will offer the faithful meaningful ways to renew their spiritual lives and celebrate Jubilee Year 2025!

Sunday, December 29, 2024

Opening Mass for the Jubilee Year of Hope, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:15 p.m.

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

Christian Unity Prayer Service, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:10 p.m.

Sunday, February 9, 2025

Mass for Persons with Disabilities, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

World Day of Prayer for the Sick Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:10 p.m.

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Pittston Deanery, Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Pittston, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 9, 2025

Rite of Election, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 2:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Kingston Deanery, Saint Faustina Kowalska Parish, Nanticoke, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Honesdale Deanery, Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Honesdale, 7:00 p.m.

Monday, March 24, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Carbondale Deanery, Christ the King Parish, Archbald, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Williamsport Deanery, Saint Boniface Parish, Williamsport, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Clarks Summit Deanery, Our Lady of the Snows Parish, Clarks Summit, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 27, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Dunmore Deanery, Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Dickson City, 7:00 p.m.

Monday, March 31, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Sayre Deanery, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Dushore, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Hazleton Deanery, Annunciation Parish, Hazleton, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 2, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Scranton Deanery, Saint Ann Basilica, West Scranton, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 3, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Stroudsburg Deanery, Saint Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg, 7:00 p.m.

Monday, April 7, 2025

Lenten Holy Hour for the Wilkes-Barre Deanery, Saint Nicholas-Saint Mary Parish, Wilkes-Barre, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Chrism Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 11, 2025

Mother's Day Adoption Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, May 24, 2025

Diaconate Ordination Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Mass for Priest Jubilarians, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:10 p.m.

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

Rite of Candidacy Mass (held during Quo Vadis Days), Marywood University, 11:00 a.m.

Saturday, June 28, 2025

Priesthood Ordination Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, June 29, 2025

Wedding Anniversary Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 2:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 27, 2025

World Day of Prayer for Grandparents & Elderly Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, September 13, 2025

Hispanic Heritage Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:10 p.m.

Sunday, September 14, 2025

Mass for Suicide Healing and Remembrance, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:15 p.m.

Friday, October 3, 2025

Red Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:10 p.m.

Sunday, October 19, 2025

World Mission Sunday Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:15 p.m.

Sunday, October 26, 2025

Jubilee Mass for Women & Men Religious, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:15 p.m.

Sunday, November 2, 2025

Leave a Mark Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 29, 2025

Permanent Diaconate Ordination Mass, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 28, 2025

Closing Mass for the Jubilee Year of Hope, Cathedral of Saint Peter, 12:15 p.m.



Father Thomas Major, pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Dushore, dies at age 60

Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, was principal celebrant of a Pontifical Mass of Christian Burial for Father Thomas J. Major on Dec. 13 at Saint Benedict Church in Clarks Summit.

currently serving as pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Dushore, died Dec. 6 at the age of 60, having faithfully served as a priest of the Diocese of Scranton for 33 years.

Born in Pittston on April 4, 1964, son of the late Fred and Alma Jean Ardoline Major, Father Major was a graduate of Abington Heights High School in Clarks Summit and attended the NPW Geisinger-Pittston School of Nursing, graduating as a registered nurse in 1985.

studies for the priesthood for the Scranton Diocese at Saint Pius X Bachelor of Science degree from of Saint Ann Parish in Bentley

CLARKS SUMMIT — The University of Scranton as a diocesan seminarian in May 1987.

Father Major completed his theological training and seminary formation at Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University, New Jersey, where he earned his Master of Divinity Father Major, who was Degree. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese on June 29, 1991, in the Cathedral of Saint Peter by Most Rev. James C. Timlin, late Bishop Emeritus of Scranton.

Following ordination, Father Major served as assistant pastor of Annunciation Parish, Williamsport, in July 1991. In 1995, he was assigned to serve in residence at Our Lady of the Snows Parish, Clarks Summit, where he was later appointed assistant pastor. He subsequently was named as assistant pastor at Father Major served as pastor of Epiphany Parish, Sayre, and Saint He began preparatory Aloysius Parish, Wilkes-Barre.

> Father Major received his first pastoral assignment in July 2005,



Father Thomas Major

Creek. The following year, he was appointed as pastor of Saint Ann Parish in Shohola. In July 2009, in addition to his duties as pastor of Saint Ann's, he also assumed the pastoral mantle of Saint John with all of us." Neumann Parish in Lords Valley.

For the past six years, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Dushore, since his appointment there in November 2018.

Seminary, Dalton, and earned a when he was named the pastor ministered in the Diocese priest's teaching, preaching and as chaplain of Penn College, catechizing.

Williamsport; Lycoming College;

the funeral of his dear priestfriend, Father Colin Kay of Seton music." Hall University in New Jersey emphasized that Father Major truly lived Jesus' words, "I am the way..."

words and glimpsed the face of the one who has spoken them," Father Kay related. "In the spiritual practice of iconography, Father 'saw' these words. He caught a glimpse of the face of Christ. He glimpsed the mystery of salvation and the glory of God's holy ones, and he shared what he had seen

Father Kay continued by noting that Father Major's priestly ministry always reflected the he was also preceded in death by words of Jesus in his pastoral care of the sick and dying, the lonely and the poor, in the liturgy and Additionally, Father also the sacraments, and through the

"Above all, in music Thom and Clarks Summit State Hospital. heard 'I am the way...,'" the In delivering the homily for homilist remarked. "His greatest joy, in and out of church, was

"At every funeral Mass, his preaching was the same: it's good to pray for the dead; nothing can stand between us and the love "Father Thom heard these of God; the Lord has prepared a place for all," Father Kay said of his fellow priest, as he concluded, "For Thom, too. May the Lord guide him safely 'to the City,' to the vision of God and the song of the blessed."

> Surviving are a brother, Jeffery Major, and his wife Susan, Bayonne, N.J.; two nieces, Jennifer and Annessa; and one nephew, Chance Van Sickle.

> In addition to his parents, three brothers, Theodore, Charles and Patrick Major; and a sister, Norina Van Sickle.

> Interment was held at Milwaukee Cemetery in Ransom Township.

Father Eugene Gunning, priest of the Scranton Diocese nearly 70 years, dies at age 94

principal celebrant of a Pontifical Concelebrated Mass of Christian Italy. Burial for Father Eugene L. former Saint John the Evangelist Parish in South Scranton, on Nov. 23, in the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

Nov. 18 at the Marywood Heights campus of Marywood University.

Born Sept. 14, 1930, in Scranton, son of the late James and Mary O'Malley Gunning, Scranton Preparatory High School in Maryland.

Arts degree from Mount Saint Lord, Scranton; Annunciation,

SCRANTON — The Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Md., in 1952, after which he Bishop of Scranton, served as continued his seminary formation and theological training in Rome,

Father Gunning completed Gunning, pastor emeritus of the his preparatory studies for the priesthood at the Gregorian University, Rome, where he earned his Pontifical Bachelor of Ordained a priest for the Sacred Theology in July 1954. Diocese of Scranton in 1955, He was ordained a priest in the Father Gunning died at age 94 on Eternal City on Dec. 17, 1955, by Scranton native Archbishop retirement community on the Martin J. O'Connor, rector of Evangelist, Pittston. Rome's North American College from 1946 to 1964, and a former Auxiliary Bishop of Scranton.

Following his ordination, Father Gunning was a graduate of Father Gunning served as an assistant pastor of Saint Peter's and attended Saint Charles College Cathedral, Scranton; and the Assumption Parish, Wyalusing. parishes of Our Lady of Sorrows, He received his Bachelor of West Wyoming; Nativity of Our



Father Eugene Gunning

Williamsport; and Saint John the

In 1969, he was appointed administrator of Saint Aloysius pastor, of Saint Mary of the Deanery.

Parish, Milford, in 1973. Four Father Gunning shared his deep

of Saint Ann Parish, Tobyhanna, Capuchin priest and often offered serving in the assignment until a personal relic of the saint for being named pastor of Saint Mary prayerful intercessions and Parish, Avoca, in 1983.

After serving as pastor of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Scranton, from 1991 to 2000, Father Gunning was assigned to Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Scranton his final pastorate — where he remained until his retirement from pastoral ministry and appointment Gunning's funeral, Monsignor as pastor emeritus in 2005.

In addition to his parochial duties, Father also served as principal of Bishop Neumann Parish, Ralston, where he served High School in Williamsport; on until 1972 when he was assigned the Diocesan School Board; and administrator, and eventually as Dean of the North Scranton

Following a personal Father Gunning received his encounter with Padre Pio (the second pastorate, at Saint Patrick future Saint Pio of Pietrelcina),

years later, he was appointed pastor devotion to the famous Italian veneration.

> In 2016, Father Gunning celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the Holy Priesthood with a Pontifical Mass of Thanksgiving presided over by Bishop Bambera.

> As the homilist for Father John Bergamo cited how his longtime priest-friend was richly endowed with the spiritual gift of administration, referred to by Saint Paul in his letters to the Romans and Corinthians.

> "(Father Gunning) was certainly a very gifted and successful administrator during his priestly ministry," Monsignor Bergamo remarked. "His ability

> > Continued on Page 15

Rosary Rally marks 75 years of Fr. Patrick Peyton's vision for family prayer

SCRANTON - As roughly 400 people - including many families - gathered for a diocesan rosary rally inside the Cathedral of Saint Peter on Nov. 16, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, asked them a question: "What is Mary's appeal?"

The answer was the central focus of the Bishop's homily as he reflected on many of the joys and struggles of her life - and how they connect to our own reality today.

"When we first meet Mary, she is the object of an ugly rumor. She is pregnant without a husband. That she was innocent and touched by the Holy Spirit simply wasn't believed," Bishop Bambera explained. "Isn't Mary a source of comfort for all who have suffered from rumors and have had their reputations tarnished?"

Continuing to reflect on her role as protector, refugee, and witness of her son's death, the Bishop said Mary is revered today as 'Oueen of Heaven' because she walked our world and embraced it fully as a woman of faith and a disciple of her son.

"While each of the mysteries of the Rosary invite us to consider Mary's place at a particular moment in salvation history, every mystery quickly yields to Jesus, through whose life, death and resurrection we are saved," the Bishop continued. "In that movement, we discover Mary's greatest gift to us: her example of faithful discipleship. She was the first to believe. And she is the Peyton as a priest," Father David model of all that the People of Marcham, Vice Postulator and God should be."

The diocesan celebration was put together to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Father Patrick Peyton's first rosary rally in the United States - which occurred in mission of rosary crusades and Scranton in 1949.

"Seventy-five years ago, out conducted 540 of them on five of a disposition of gratitude to the Blessed Mother for miraculous healing he experienced, Father



the Cathedral of Saint Peter Nov. 16, 2024.

Peyton committed and dedicated

his entire priesthood to sharing

the Blessed Mother's most holy

rosary with families to bring

them peace and unity through the

love of her son," Cathy Downes,

Director of Mission Advancement

with Holy Cross Ministries, said.

came to the United States from

Ireland with his brother and

initially stayed in Scranton,

getting a job as a sexton (janitor)

at the Cathedral of Saint Peter. It

was during his work cleaning the

Cathedral that his vocation to the

gratifying to be here where the

Lord spoke to him, where the

Lord encouraged him, and the

great people of the Diocese of

Scranton prayed for him, whether

he was Pat Peyton in the pews

as a layman, or Father Patrick

Guild Director for the Cause of

Venerable Patrick Peyton, stated.

of Scranton, Father Peyton

was launched into a worldwide

rallies throughout the world. He

continents and an estimated 28

million people saw him in person.

Many of his catchphrases

After his time in the Diocese

"For me, it's personally

priesthood was solidified.

At age 19, Patrick Peyton



A young girl prays during the Rosary Rally at Members of the Jones Family, representing Mary, Mother of God Parish in Scranton, lead a decade of the rosary.

- like 'The family that prays kindness, God is patience. Those faithful today.

become part of our lives, God changes the chemistry in our canonization was opened in families because God is love, 2001. Pope Francis declared him God is generosity, God is venerable in December 2017.

together stays together' and 'A are the fruits that we invite in world at prayer is a world at our families when we start this peace' – still resonate with the practice of family prayer," Father Fred Jenga, President of Holv "When we allow God to Cross Families Ministries, said.

Father Peyton's cause for



A man closes his eyes while praying the rosary.

Mary Hallman, Diocesan Secretary for Parish Life, who helped to organize the Nov. 16 event, believes Father Peyton's message of family prayer has never been more important.

"There is so much power in prayer. We underestimate what God can do if we just simply come to him," Hallman said.

Faith and Connection: Parishioners moved by Rosary Rally

SCRANTON - People who attended the rosary rally at the Cathedral of Saint Peter on Nov. 16 say it was more than just a special event; it was a reminder of the power of community

"Everything in society pulls us away from that, so I think it is so important to be able to come together with other faithful, so as families we don't feel struggles," Hayley Michelin, and perfect." a parishioner of Saint Michael Parish in Scranton, said.

Hail Mary, the Our Father, and the the Cathedral, many attendees of peace and hope.

"It's a beautiful celebration



Mary, Mother of God Parish in Scranton, remarked. "We're all one under God and our differences isolated from one another in our are what make us unique, special,

Besides reciting the rosary at the Cathedral, the day also As the rhythmic words of the featured screenings of the movie 'Pray,' which tells the incredible Glory Be reverberated through life story of Father Patrick Peyton, along with book signings, described feeling a tangible sense informational exhibits, talks and

Lorraine Kopa of Holy of families praying together," Cross Parish in Olyphant had Judy Schofield, a parishioner of never heard of Father Peyton, but of what prayer can do."

quickly developed admiration for his desire to spread devotion to the rosary and family prayer.

"The rosary is something that people are shying away from, or don't know of, or don't care about, and we need more rallies like this," Kopa explained. "We need more events to bring the rosary out to people."

Paul Bracey of Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish met Father Peyton many years ago. As a high school student, he also won second prize in a poster contest for Father Peyton's first rosary rally in Scranton in 1949.

"The prize was a letter from Bing Crosby because that was one of Father Peyton's contacts in California," Bracey said. "I think he'd be very gratified to see all these people who came out today. I think most people are not aware

New Catholic-Jewish resource looks to 'translate hate' and counter antisemitism

(OSV News) - Catholic and Jewish leaders have created a new tool to tackle record-high levels of antisemitism through education and awareness.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the American Jewish Committee have teamed up to release "Translate Hate: The Catholic Edition," a resource that confronts antisemitism by cataloging anti-Jewish slurs, while providing Catholic teaching that counters such hatred.

The document was unveiled Dec. 11 by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera of Scranton, Pennsylvania, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, and Rabbi Noam Marans, the AJC's director of interreligious affairs.

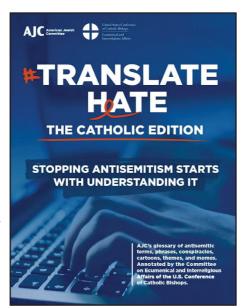
The 61-page glossary of antisemitic terms and commentary builds on the AJC's "Translate Hate" initiative, which was first released in 2019, said Rabbi Marans.

"It began with a few dozen (terms) as part of stopping antisemitism, (which) starts with understanding it," he said. Hate" begins with forewords by both "Now it's up to about 65-70 terms."

The document uses the working definition of antisemitism adopted in 2016 by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, or IHRA. That summation states that "antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish commissions and councils, and the or non-Jewish individuals and/or their USCCB. property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."

Among the contemporary examples of antisemitism listed by the IHRA are calling for the killing or harm of Jews; dehumanizing or demonizing them; accusing them of killing Jesus (known as the "deicide" charge); claims that Jews kill non-Jews for the ritual use of victims' blood (the "blood libel" trope); preferred Hebrew term for the Holocaust); collectivizing them for real or imagined harm; implicating them in conspiratorial theories regarding economic, governmental or other sociocultural control; and accusing them of overriding or blind loyalty to the state of Israel.

The Catholic edition of "Translate reported.



The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the American Jewish Committee have teamed up to release "Translate Hate: The Catholic Edition," a resource that confronts antisemitism by cataloging anti-Jewish slurs.

Bishop Bambera and Rabbi Marans, and includes numerous images of antisemitic tropes culled from recent periodicals and social media posts.

Rounding out the detailed explications of each term is an extensive bibliography of Catholic resources on Catholic-Jewish relations, drawn from the Second Vatican Council, papal documents, pontifical

Rabbi Marans admitted that the process of compiling the glossary was a painful one.

"It's not pleasant to flip through the industry of hating my people," he said.

According to data from the Anti-Defamation League, antisemitism - which has been on the rise in recent years - spiked to historic levels following Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel, when militants denying or minimizing the Shoah (the from the Gaza Strip gunned down more than 1,200 people, most of them civilians, and took over 240 civilians and soldiers hostage. The ensuing Israel-Hamas war, Hate: The Catholic Edition" is "one result the International Council of Christians and which has threatened to become a wider regional conflict, saw numerous campus protests at U.S. colleges and universities during which antisemitic incidents were



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, participated in an event on Dec. 11 in New York City, along officials from the American Jewish Committee, to release the "Translate Hate: The Catholic Edition" document.

"We're dealing with a three-headed monster with antisemitism," Rabbi Marans said.

He listed "the skyrocketing toxicity of hate in the U.S. and in the world," the historical "distance from the reality and the lessons of the Shoah," and "social media."

That last is "an enormous challenge," said Rabbi Marans, since "it feeds on hate."

"It's designed to do so because of its algorithms: keeping customers and sucking people in to escalate," he said. "And secondly, it allows near or complete anonymity."

He said the AJC is working "very closely with social media companies" to ensure "control of the excesses of certain types of hate speech, while assuring freedom of expression."

Rabbi Marans noted the timing of the AJC-USCCB's collaboration was "particularly poignant," given the latter's 2022 launch of an initiative titled "The Fruits of Dialogue: Catholics Confronting Antisemitism."

Bishop Bambera said that "Translate of that" effort.

Rabbi Marans also said the new document's release presages the upcoming 60th anniversary of "Nostra Aetate," the understanding of Judaism. Declaration on the Relationship of the

Church to Non-Christian Religions, which featured the Catholic Church's first formal denunciation of anti-Jewish hatred.

"Nostra Aetate" ("In Our Time"), promulgated in 1965 by St. Paul VI as part of Vatican II, deplored "hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone," while affirming the "spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews."

Specifically, "Nostra Aetate" refuted the historic deicide charge against the Jewish people, stating that while "Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ ... what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without

distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today."

In addition, said the text, "although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures."

"All should see to it, then, that in catechetical work or in the preaching of the word of God they do not teach anything that does not conform to the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ," the document states.

That language marked a seismic shift from centuries of what French historian Jules Isaac had called a "teaching of contempt" toward the Jewish community by Catholic and other Christian theologians.

In 1948, Isaac, a renowned Jewish academic whose wife and daughter were murdered at the Auschwitz Nazi death camp in Poland, published "Jésus et Israel," the first full analysis of Christian anti-Judaism. The year before, Isaac also helped to develop Jews' "Ten Points of Seelisburg," which stressed Christianity's need to recover a historically and theologically accurate

Continued on Page 31

Stroudsburg parish's ecumenical-interfaith ministry keeping busy as a faithful neighbor

STROUDSBURG — During his pontificate marked by an emphasis on inclusion and mutual respect, Pope Francis instructed his Catholic flock that the first step towards finding fraternity with people of other faiths is to "sit down together and listen to each other." (Fratelli Tutti, 48)

In accord with the Holy Father's vision, the Faithful Neighbors Ministry was born in May 2023 at Saint Luke Parish in downtown Stroudsburg, with the pastoral goal of forming meaningful relationships with fellow Christians, Jews, Muslims, Unitarian Universalists, Hindus, and Buddhists in the Pocono Mountains.

Led by the pastoral insight of Saint Luke's spiritual shepherd, Father Michael Quinnan, the ministry soon partnered with the Pocono Interfaith Council. Professor Emeritus Anthony Stevens-Arroyo represents the parish in the organization that fosters ecumenical and interfaith

In response to the call to unite Christians during troubled times around the globe, Father Quinnan announced the Church of Saint Luke will host an ecumenical prayer event on Sunday evening, Jan. 19, 2025, during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

"In a time when faith is often overlooked and our Christian faith is often sidelined, ecumenical prayer is an opportunity for us to pull together and remember our shared belief in Christ," Father Quinnan said. "This prayer is a graced opportunity for the Christian community to stand together in solidarity, remembering Christ our Savior."

The Faithful Neighbors Ministry has established its foundation on the Dialogue in Truth and Charity, a 2014 instruction set forth by the Holy See.

The first dialogue — the dialogue of life — in which people strive to live in an have provided fitting examples. open and neighborly spirit to share their joys and sorrows, as well community challenges, is reflected in the Faithful Neighbors Ministry name.

dialogue with in-person, six-on-six meetings with other faith communities,"



Rabbi Daniel Zucker of Temple Israel (at right) addresses the congregation at the recent Thanksgiving interfaith service hosted at Saint Luke Church in Stroudsburg. Pictured second and third from left are Father Michael Quinnan, pastor of Saint Luke Parish, and Deacon Luis Rivera, a former parishioner who now serves as a permanent deacon at Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg.

Diocese to mark Week of Prayer for Christian Unity with Ecumenical Celebration Jan. 22 at Cathedral

Celebrated each year during Jan. 18-25, the worldwide Week of Prayer for Christian Unity encourages all Christian communities to renew their commitment to pray and work for greater unity among all followers of Jesus Christ.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, invites all faithful of the Diocese to join him, in the midst of the Christian Unity Week of Prayer, for an Ecumenical Celebration of God's Word on Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2025, at 12:10 p.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

their own lives." The final dialogue proposed by the Vatican — the dialogue of religious experience — opens the door for "persons,

grounded in and convinced of their own religious traditions," to share "their spiritual riches of prayer and worship."

Movement at the Chestnut Retreat Center

humanitarian suffering that accompanied

the Israeli campaign in Gaza, we heeded the calls for peace by our Holy Father,

Pope Francis," Father Quinnan shared.

"We reached out to both the Muslim and

Jewish communities in our area to discuss

the impact of the war on their families and

"With the outbreak of war in the Holy Land (in October 2023) and the

in Saylorsburg.

A fitting example of such opportunities was the National Day of Prayer gathering last May at the Monroe County Courthouse Square in Stroudsburg, where Father Quinnan gathered with representatives from various faiths, including Rabbi Daniel Zucker of Temple Israel, Hindu spiritual leader Sri Swami Swatmananda, and Imam Erol Dincer.

"Our hope is that the prayer in the Poconos for Christian unity and interfaith relations will find echo everywhere," Father Quinnan remarked.

Professor Stevens-Arroyo explained. "With these small groups we can sit down with congregation members to listen and engage in a friendly dialogue about what we already share in common and what we can learn from each other."

The communal gatherings led to the "dialogue of action," whereby faith communities work together to help others in need through collaborative ministries of social justice. The traditional Thanksgiving interfaith service and donations to churchrun homeless shelters and food pantries

The dialogue of theological exchange may be the most challenging, but can also be the most rewarding. This was evidenced in June 2023 when Bishop "We have sought to achieve this Joseph C. Bambera joined Father Quinnan and Professor Stevens-Arroyo in meeting with the leadership of the Islamic Hizmet

Father Eugene Gunning, 94, buried from Cathedral

Continued from Page 12

to lead and organize was a great asset and something that benefitted his parishioners and all those he pastored."

priest's sincere interest in the people in the parishes and communities he served. "Father Gunning had a genuine gift of really getting to know his flock and all about their lives, and that really showed homilist noted.

"Along the same lines," Monsignor continued, "he had a great facility for Marblehead, Mass.; and Timothy Dempsey, forming friendships, and maintaining those friendships over the years. He literally had friends all over the country, Carolina and Florida."

The homilist also touched upon his

Pio, whose saintly relic Father Gunning always kept close at hand for impromptu blessings. In his closing comments at the conclusion of the funeral Mass, Bishop Monsignor Bergamo also extolled the Bambera shared that he himself was among those who had been blessed with the Saint Pio relic by the late diocesan priest.

Surviving are two nieces, Dr. Mary Lisa Gunning Meholick, West Chester, and Dr. Mary Jo Gunning MacGregor, through in his ministry as a pastor," the Lake Waynewood; four nephews, Kevin Dempsey, Cape Coral, Fla.; Eugene Dempsey, Bedford, N.H.; Sean Dempsey, Bonita Springs, Fla.; and cousins from the Charles Cleveland family in Scranton.

He was also preceded in death by since he spent years in retirement in North one sister, Agnes Dempsey; and a brother, Michael Gunning.

Interment was held at Saint Joseph's close friend's trademark devotion to Padre Cemetery, Minooka section of Scranton.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast unites parish communities in faith & heritage

WILKES-BARRE -Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, celebrated on Dec. 12, holds profound significance in the Catholic Church, especially within Hispanic communities, where it is marked by a deep sense of reverence, tradition, and cultural pride.

Parishes throughout the Diocese of Scranton once again celebrated this year with special Masses, vibrant processions, and joyful celebrations. The celebrations drew hundreds and sometimes even more than a thousand – of the faithful together in a shared expression of faith.

"The day is so special because no matter where you are, or what you're doing, we all come Scranton, hundreds of people together for her," Giselle Jimenez

Jimenez was among the standing-room only crowd of Nicholas Church in Wilkes-Barre as a special Mass was held Dec. 12 to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe.

"She has always done so many miracles for us. Whenever we are in need, we pray to her. We just grew up with this custom," that our community is so big, Jimenez added.

Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Saint Mary Parish, said.



Saint Nicholas Church in Wilkes-Barre was filled to capacity with more During a Mass celebrating Our Lady of Guadalupe at the Cathedral of than 800 people on Dec. 12, 2024, as the faithful gathered to celebrate Mass for the Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe. (Photos/Mike Melisky)

Saint Peter on Dec. 8, 2024, a parishioner of Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish crowns a statue of the Blessed Mother.

procession throughout the streets of Wilkes-Barre. As they navigated downtown streets in parishioners that filled Saint the cold, parishioners carried a large statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe on a pedestal, throwing rose petals, while singing and dancing and publicly showing love and devotion to the Blessed Mother.

and we come out to these special Prior to the Mass, which events," Azucena Aguilar, a was celebrated by the Most Rev. parishioner of Saint Nicholas-

The origins of the Feast of participated in a beautiful Our Lady of Guadalupe trace back see everyone coming together," to 1531, when the Virgin Mary appeared to a humble indigenous man, Juan Diego, on the hill of Tepeyac, near present-day Mexico City. She requested that a church be built in her honor, and in other cultures and places and Juan Diego brought proof of the surroundings." apparition – his tilma, or cloak, of the Virgin – which serves as "I feel a lot of joy knowing a powerful symbol of faith and identity for many Catholics.

> ancestors about the miraculous apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe," parishioner Nereida Cruz explained. "She brought a message of unity. She is a model of faith to us Catholics, in the path of following our Lord Jesus Christ."

In the days leading up to Dec. 12, Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish in Scranton hosted novenas. with families gathering for prayers, hymns, and reflections in the Blessed Mother's honor. The parish also held traditional 'mananitas,' a serenade at dawn, on Dec. 12, from the Cathedral of Saint Peter to Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Church on Prospect Avenue.

"It is very, very special to Shareny Hernandez, a parishioner of Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish, said. "It's really nice that the devotion keeps growing, not only in the Mexican culture, but

On Dec. 8, Saint Teresa of bearing the miraculous image Calcutta Parish also held a special Mass in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe at the Cathedral of Saint Peter, which like the one in show our culture, our food, and "We were taught from our Wilkes-Barre, was celebrated by our dances. It's very important Bishop Bambera.

> "I think it was fabulous," parishioner Daisy Klem said.

Following Mass, hundreds attended a large celebration with food and dancing at the Diocesan Pastoral Center.

Rufino Cano, who sang in the choir at the Cathedral Mass, said the annual celebration is not merely a celebration of the past, but a living, evolving tradition that resonates deeply within the hearts of those who honor Our Lady of Guadalupe.

"It is very important to to show how the Hispanic community celebrates Catholicism," Cano stated.



Hispanic parishioners from Saint Nicholas-Saint Mary Parish in Wilkes-Barre bring forward gifts of fruit baskets and other items during the offertory procession at the Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass on Dec. 12.



Cultural dancing and music were some of the highlights of a celebration in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe following Mass on Dec. 8 at the **Diocesan Pastoral Center in Scranton.**

La Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe une a las comunidades parroquiales en la fe y la herencia

WILKES-BARRE - El Día de la Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, celebrado el 12 de diciembre, tiene un profundo significado en la Iglesia Católica, especialmente dentro de las comunidades hispanas, donde se marca con un profundo sentido de reverencia, tradición y orgullo cultural.

Las parroquias de toda la Diócesis de Scranton celebraron nuevamente este año con misas especiales, procesiones vibrantes y celebraciones alegres. Las celebraciones reunieron a cientos -y a veces incluso más de mil- de fieles en una expresión compartida de fe.

"El día es tan especial porque no importa dónde estés ni lo que estés haciendo, todos nos unimos por ella," dijo Giselle Jiménez.

Jiménez estaba entre la multitud de feligreses que se quedó de pie en la iglesia de San Nicolás en Wilkes-Barre, llena a capacidad, mientras se celebraba una misa especial el 12 de diciembre en honor a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

"Ella siempre ha hecho tantos milagros por nosotros. Siempre que estamos en necesidad, le oramos. Simplemente adoptamos esta costumbre," añadió Jiménez.



El coro de la Parroquia de Santa Teresa de Calcuta ofrece hermosa música durante una misa para celebrar la Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en la Catedral de San Pedro el 8 de diciembre de 2024. (Fotos/Mike Melisky)

Joseph C. Bambera, Obispo de Scranton, cientos de personas procesión por las calles de Wilkes-Barre. Mientras recorrían las calles del centro en el frío, los feligreses llevaban una gran estatua de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe sobre un pedestal, lanzando pétalos de rosa, mientras cantaban, bailaban y mostraban públicamente su amor y devoción a la Madre Bendita.

"Siento mucha alegría al saber que nuestra comunidad es tan grande, y salimos a estos

Antes de la misa, que fue eventos especiales," dijo Azucena 'mañanitas', una serenata al con comida y baile en el Centro celebrada por el Muy Reverendo Aguilar, feligresa de la Parroquia de San Nicolás-Santa María.

participaron en una hermosa Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe se Corazones de Jesús y María en catedral, dijo que la celebración remontan a 1531, cuando la Virgen Prospect Avenue. María se apareció a un humilde hombre indígena, Juan Diego, ver a todos reunidos," dijo en la colina de Tepeyac, cerca Shareny Hernández, feligresa de la actual Ciudad de México. Ella pidió que se construyera una de Calcuta. "Es realmente iglesia en su honor, y Juan Diego hermoso que la devoción siga trajo una prueba de la aparición creciendo, no solo en la cultura mostrar nuestra cultura, nuestra - su tilma, o capa, que llevaba la mexicana, sino en otras culturas comida y nuestros bailes. Es imagen milagrosa de la Virgen y lugares." - que sirve como un poderoso muchos católicos.

> "Nos enseñaron nuestros antepasados sobre la a Nuestra Señora aparición milagrosa de Nuestra de Guadalupe en Señora de Guadalupe," explicó la la Catedral de San feligresa Nereida Cruz. "Ella trajo Pedro, que al igual un mensaje de unidad. Ella es un que la de Wilkesmodelo de fe para nosotros los Barre, fue celebrada católicos, en el camino de seguir por a nuestro Señor Jesucristo."

En los días previos al 12 de diciembre, la Parroquia de Santa fabuloso," Teresa de Calcuta en Scranton feligresa organizó novenas, con familias Klem. reunidas para rezar, cantar himnos y reflexionar en honor a la la Madre Bendita. La parroquia asistieron también celebró las tradicionales gran



Antes de la misa del Día de la Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en la Iglesia de San Nicolás en Wilkes-Barre, cientos de católicos hispanos recorrieron las calles de la ciudad con una estatua de la Madre Bendita.

amanecer, el 12 de diciembre, Pastoral Diocesano. desde la Catedral de San Pedro Los orígenes de la Fiesta de hasta la Iglesia de los Sagrados en el coro durante la misa en la

> "Es muy, muy especial de la Parroquia de Santa Teresa

símbolo de fe e identidad para Parroquia de Santa Teresa de nuestro Calcuta también celebró una misa Cano.

> desde especial en honor el Obispo Bambera.

> > "Creo que fue dijo la Daisy

Después misa, cientos a una celebración

Rufino Cano, quien cantó anual no es solo una celebración del pasado, sino una tradición viva y en evolución que resuena profundamente en los corazones de aquellos que honran a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

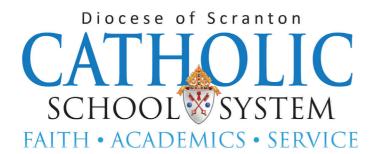
"Es muy importante muy importante mostrar cómo El 8 de diciembre, la la comunidad hispana celebra catolicismo,"



Una muier reza durante la misa de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe el 12 de diciembre en la Iglesia de San Nicolás.



La danza y la música cultural fueron algunos de los aspectos más destacados de una celebración en honor a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe después de la misa del 8 de diciembre en el Centro Pastoral Diocesano en Scranton.



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.



Saint Vincent de Paul Kitchen benefitted greatly thanks to the students and faculty at Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre. Nearly 1,200 non-perishable items were collected so families could use them this holiday season.



The Mock Trial Team from Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg recently competed at the Monroe County Bar Association's Invitational Mock Trial Competition; at the conclusion, freshman Finn Naughton was named Best Witness.



The students and faculty at Saint Jude School in Mountain Top received a special visit from St. Nicholas on his feast day; as he visited the school, he was thrilled to be accompanied by eighth grade elves. Learn more about all the school offers at its open house on Jan. 26 from noon to 2 p.m.



Saint John Neumann Regional Academy, Williamsport The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, recently celebrated Mass with the students, faculty, staff, and community in Lycoming County as part of his mission to say Mass at all 19 schools throughout the academic year. As part of his homily, the Bishop emphasized the miracle that takes place at every Mass - bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. And every time we receive Jesus, we are to become like him to others – feeding the offers at its open house on Jan. 26 poor, befriending new people, forgiving others, and most importantly, from 1 to 3 p.m. loving everyone.



All Saints Academy, Scranton Learn more about all the school



Kindergarten students at Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport learned how to make and enjoy pumpkin pie just in time for Thanksgiving.



Service Club members at Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore proudly show some of the coats they collected this year to be donated to Friends of the Poor. Learn more about all the school offers at its open house on Jan. 26 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.



The eighth grade class at Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter presented "The Nativity" as part of the school's Christmas concert for families.



Students at La Salle Academy in Jessup worked together in their Viking Villages to make ornaments for the school's annual tree lighting event. Learn more about all the school offers at its open house on Jan. 26 from 1 to 3 p.m.



Students at Holy Cross High School in Dunmore celebrated the Feast of the Immaculate Conception with liturgy. During the Mass, seniors Lucas Urban, Emma Woody and Zachary Kovaleski were commissioned to be Eucharistic ministers by school chaplain Father Cyril Edwards.



The community of Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston recently celebrated the school's "Merry & Bright Extravaganza" featuring a Living Nativity, cookie decorating, and a hot chocolate bar. The evening concluded with a Christmas Tree Blessing and the lighting of the Christmas Tree. Learn more about all the school offers at its open house on Jan. 26 from 1:30 to 3 p.m.



The first grade Falcons at Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green celebrated Saint Nicholas Day by experiencing some of the traditions of this special feast day!



Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first graders at Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg sit patiently and listen during the school's annual Advent Wreath ceremony.



'Tis the season at Epiphany School in Sayre as the fifth and sixth graders showcased their musical talents during the school's Christmas concert. Learn more about the school at its open house on Jan. 26 from 12:30 to 2 p.m.



Students in grades K-2 at Saint Clare/ Saint Paul School in Scranton had an introduction to coding and worked through the steps to move their "Fluff" through different mazes by controlling how it moved.



The excitement was contagious as these first graders attended the Santa's Workshop hosted by Holy Family Academy in Hazleton. Learn more about all the school offers at its open house on Jan. 26 from 1 to 3 p.m.



Spreading Christmas Love! Students from Saint Agnes School in Towanda sing to residents at a local personal care home, brightening everyone's day with holiday cheer.



Students at Holy Rosary School in Duryea are spreading holiday cheer through acts of kindness to benefit those in need. Paige Kaminsky and Amelia Cooley helped to stuff over 60 stockings with gifts for the patients at Janet Weis Children's Hospital. Learn more about all the school offers at its open house on Jan. 26 from noon to 2 p.m.

Catholic School celebrates Feast Day of Saint Nicholas with sweet surprises

WILKES-BARRE - On the student explained. morning of December 6, there air at Saint Nicholas-Saint Mary School.

For many years, that particular day on the calendar has been among the most highly anticipated by students of all ages. and he's especially kind to kids,"

The reason?

Each year, Saint Nicholas visits their school - going to each Saint Nicholas has helped to classroom - and leaving candy and treats behind for each student.

Second-grader Timothy Nicholas was in the building hallway.

When Saint Nicholas walked into his classroom, Ellenburg admitted being really excited.

Saint Nicholas did and what our

When Saint Nicholas left was a special excitement in the Ellenburg's classroom, students found KitKats and Sour Patch Kids inside their shoes, which were lined up neatly in the hallway.

> "He is a nice and joyful guy Ellenburg added.

Over the years, the visit of showcase the beloved saint who was known for his generosity and love, especially for children. Ellenburg said he knew Saint On his Feast Day, students are reminded that they can carry that when he heard bells ringing in the spirit of giving and compassion into the world, just as Saint Nicholas did.

"It reminds us to be kind and do things like he does," sixth-"He asked us about what grader Griffin Matusiewicz said. "It reminds us that a lot of people favorite candy was," the young don't have money or houses and have."



Students from Saint Nicholas/ Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre received a visit from their patron, Saint Nicholas on Dec. 6, 2024. reminded them of the importance of sharing. Learn more about all the school offers at its Open House on Jan. 26, 2025, from 2-4 p.m.

we should be grateful for what we

Nicholas-Saint School, said the tradition of Saint tradition," Tigue added. Nicholas visiting the school began many years ago and is a great way to celebrate one of the Church, had the honor of playing patron saints of their school.

"We use the opportunity of any saint feast day to increase someone that the students can our faith, to learn what that saint taught us, and is still teaching incorporate that into our lives," Tigue said.

is one of generosity, compassion and miracles. He was the bishop On his visit to each classroom, he of Myra in Lycia (now Turkey) and used his inheritance to help the needy.

> "Nicholas was very in touch with the needs of his people. He would do many things under the darkness of night, he would use this as cover, so the idea of about," Rose said.

Chris Tigue, principal of leaving a treat in the children's Mary shoes is reflective of that old

> John Rose, a lifelong parishioner of Saint Nicholas the role of Saint Nicholas this year.

> "Saint Nicholas is certainly relate to," Rose said.

As Rose traveled from us through the ages, and to classroom to classroom, he was struck by how much the students knew about their patron saint and The legend of Saint Nicholas he feels they truly understood the primary message of the day.

> "The primary message is, everybody likes to receive gifts. but not everybody does and when there are people that don't have the opportunity to receive gifts, and you have the opportunity to help them, that is what can be heartwarming and what the Catholic faith is all



Peoples Security Bank & Trust supports Catholic education



SCRANTON - On Dec. 10, Peoples Security Bank and Trust made a \$25,000 donation to support Holy Cross High School in Dunmore through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) in Pennsylvania.

Pictured above are, from left: Nancy Jeffers, Vice President and Commercial Loan Officer at Peoples Security Bank & Trust; and Kristen Donohue, Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Education/ Superintendent.

To learn more about how businesses and individuals can participate in the EITC Program, contact the Diocesan Development Office at (570) 207-2250.



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Marian Ministries: New Catholic group unites parishes through devotion to Our Blessed Mother

MANSFIELD - As the end of the year approaches, a new ministry group in north central Pennsylvania has a lot to celebrate.

On Dec. 12, as the Catholic Church celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Marian Ministries group was consecrated to Our Lady of Guadalupe's patronage during a special Mass at Holy Child Church in Mansfield.

Over the last two years, Marian Ministries has been blossoming in Tioga, Lycoming and Bradford counties, uniting parishioners across multiple parishes with a shared mission: helping people grow closer to Jesus Christ through invited to participate. a deeper devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

our faith with other people," Marian Ministries member B.J. Butler said.

Marian Ministries sponsors retreats, brunches, book studies for reflection and dedication to Our Lady. Many members of Marian Ministries also participate in First Saturday devotions, which



Members of the Marian Ministries group hold a social at Saint Mary Church in Blossburg on June 1, 2024, following First Saturday devotions. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

have become a profound moment of spiritual renewal, each month at Saint Mary Church in Blossburg.

Both women and men are

"It's just beautiful to see how the people of these (area) parishes, that you can clearly feel, and it "We're all hungry to share which were once very separate, have come together and we've become friends. It has taken a long time," Marian Ministries member Linda Sampson explained.

Contributions to the Catholic members. and other events, offering a space Ministries Appeal breathed life into the Marian Ministries group through funding from a Parish Faith Formation Grant. That money provided funding for many meaningful experiences to take place.

> "It has meant everything. We could not have done what we've done without that," Marian Ministries member Laurie Coffee

Ministries has been many participants.

does not feel complete unless I've for the latest information.

said my rosary to Mary," Marian Ministries member Danette Kerestes explained.

Marian Ministries members believe that Mary, as the mother of Jesus, is a powerful model of faith, humility, and love. By looking to her example, they believe everyone can strengthen their own relationship with Christ and live out their Catholic faith more fully.

Between all the group's events, Marian Ministries has invited their neighbors to walk in faith and reverence. The ministry group is already making a lasting impact on the lives of many, helping to rekindle a sense of spiritual purpose and unity in an increasingly fragmented world.

"There is a warmth and love continues to grow, and it is such a blessing," Father Bryan Wright, Pastor, Holy Child Parish, stated.

Marian Ministries always looking to welcome new

In the coming year, they already have a pilgrimage planned to visit the Divine Mercy Shrine in Stockbridge, Mass., scheduled for Sept. 23, 2025, and will also be partnering with women from Williamsport on a Lenten retreat that will take place March 29 at Saint Lawrence Church in South Williamsport.

For more information on these events, email marian-Being a part of Marian ministries@outlook.com; or call a Linda Sampson at (570) 404transformative experience for 2180 or Laurie Coffee at (703) 470-2975. Marian Ministries also "I now say a rosary every has a Facebook page, 'Marian day, and my life - or my day - Ministries,' that can be followed

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By Shannon Kowalski Diocesan Director, **Pontifical Mission Societies**



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longer be considered a mission missionary Church, both financially territory, but it remains deeply missionary at its core. Throughout identity of the U.S. Church is tied the 19th and 20th centuries, to the many men and women who Catholic missionaries from this responded to Christ's call and went country went forth to bring the Gospel to distant lands. Their

of aid in its early days, the Church in the United States has become one

continues today.

The United States may no of the greatest contributors to the and spiritually. The missionary forth as missionaries themselves.

The Pontifical Mission Societies USA held its

National Meeting in San Juan, Puerto Rico, during

November 15-18, 2024. The national gathering

brings together the 196 Catholic dioceses of

the United States and its territories. This year's

keynote address was delivered by Archbishop

Emilio Nappa, International President of the

Pontifical Mission Societies. Below is an excerpt

from Archbishop Nappa's speech.

Take for example, Mother efforts were part of a larger, global Frances Xavier Cabrini, who, movement of evangelization that after arriving in the United States in the late 1800s, founded schools, In addition to being a recipient hospitals, and orphanages that helped care for waves of immigrants. Similarly, Saint Elizabeth Ann **Seton**, the first American-born saint, helped build the foundation for Catholic education in the United States. She responded to the needs of the growing Church in America with the same zeal that missionaries abroad carry into territories where the Church is young and struggling.

> And we cannot speak of the missionary work of the Church in the United States without honoring the legacy of one of its greatest advocates: Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. Archbishop Sheen had a remarkable ability to bring the Church's mission to the forefront of Catholic consciousness.

His message was simple, yet profound: "The poor missions of the world need the comfortable to supply roofs for their churches, medicine for their hospitals, and light of Christ continues to shine in clothes for their backs, but the every corner of the world.

comfortable need the poor in order that they may have the blessing of God in their hearts, the charity of Christ in their souls, and the intercession of the poor who are the friends of God."

As we look to the future, we must ask ourselves: Who are the Mother Cabrini, the Mother Seton, the Mother Teresa of today? Who are the silent, often anonymous missionaries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America who are building the Church, brick by brick, life by life? They may not yet be known to us, but they are out there, living out the Gospel in some of the most challenging places in the world. And who but you, missionary advocates in the United States, can help ensure they have the support they need to carry out this vital

We are called to continue this legacy, to ensure that the missionaries of today and tomorrow have the support they need. Just as the universal Church once came to the aid of the United States in its early years, so today I ask you to offer the same support to mission territories around the world, but keeping well in mind that we are still mission territory for proclamation: progressive de-Christianization is leading our society to polarization and psychological and existential loneliness, elements that make society unstable and facilitate evil. Therefore, we need to reevangelize, and through asking others for help, we already have a way to make the Gospel known.

Through our prayers and our generosity, we are invited to walk alongside these modern-day saints. We are called to support them materially and spiritually, just as the early Church once supported the missionary Church in the United States. When each of you contributes to the work of TPMS, you are not just sending funds; you are sending hope. You are empowering those on the frontlines of evangelization, ensuring that the

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Faith, Hope and Hip-Hop: Joe Melendrez urges teens to boldly share their faith

time when young adults face an overwhelming amount of pressure - from academic expectations to social media comparisons finding peace and purpose can these stressors can lead some teenagers to feeling lost or unsure of their path.

adults from parishes across the Diocese of Scranton learned the important roles that hope, faith, and trusting God play in navigating the complexities of modern life.

Nearly teenagers attended the second annual Diocesan Youth Rally at Holy Redeemer High School. The event offered students a day of praise and worship, confession, speakers who focused on ways of the Good News. encountering Christ.

in the world, and I think that learning through Christ, and learning Christ's ways, are the best way to solve these problems," Alec Hattar, an eleventh-grade Shohola, said.

Evangelist and Catholic hiphop artist Joe Melendrez was the keynote speaker at the Diocesan Youth Rally. He also gave his

WILKES-BARRE - At a unique style of music concert, Diocesan Youth Rally had the opportunities like this, I always Saint Jude Parish in Mountain blending praise and worship, encouraging the students to gather around the stage during his performance.

"Music is a super-connector. seem daunting. The weight of It goes beyond language, it goes beyond race, it goes beyond ethnicity, it is something that can connect all people," Melendrez On Nov. 23, 2024, young told *The Catholic Light* before his performance. "To provide music in a way that is not only fun and exciting, but also seasoned with the spirit and baptized in God's word, what better way to share faith together with people."

Melendrez recalled childhood growing up in a Catholic family in Texas, but said it wasn't until a youth retreat that he had a powerful encounter with God and decided to dedicate his Eucharistic Adoration, Mass, and life to following Jesus and sharing

Melendrez, who has released "There are a lot of challenges five studio albums and performed around the world, said he wanted the young people attending the 2024 Diocesan Youth Rally to "be bold" in sharing their faith.

"Do it for God. Don't worry student from Saint Ann Parish in about what other people are going to say or think, but know that God is cheering you on, and the Holy Spirit is leading you every step of the way," Melendrez explained.

Students attending the 2024

opportunity to attend several like to take them, and approach Top, said the event served as a breakout sessions on topics geared them with an open mind," Jesus powerful reminder that no matter specifically to their interests - Hernandez, an eleventh-grade the challenges she faces, she can 'Finding Christ in Film,' Faith in said. "It's important to build our strength, and hope. Sports,' and 'Adventuring with relationship with God." Christ.'

"When there

including 'Gaming and the Faith,' student from Scranton Prep,

are student who attends Mass at whole time," she said.

always turn to God for guidance,

"It is a way to get closer to Jiana Mylet, an eighth-grade God and we're with friends the



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Evangelist and Catholic hip-hop artist Joe Melendrez performs during the 2024 Diocesan Youth Rally, held on Nov. 23, 2024, at Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre.

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"My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, for they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat.

I do not want to send them away hungry, for fear they may collapse on the way." (Matthew 15:32)

Have you ever been hangry? Not hungry, hangry? Merriam-Webster.com defines hangry as a disposition of one who is "irritable or angry because of hunger." Wonderfully informal and clever, I was surprised to learn that the first usage of hangry dates to 1918. Apparently, folks

WE ARE A 'HANGRY' PEOPLE

A Priesthood Perspective by Father Brian T.T. Clarke -Assistant Pastor, Saint Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg

a hangry people. When we are hungry, we get out of sorts. Our headaches may come, we might on the way" (Mt. 15:32). even get woozy or disoriented. Lack of food - true hunger - leads us to a place of simply not being ourselves.

knows- how hungry His children Wednesday of the First Week are. He knows how debilitating of Advent, we prayed over this it can be to lack the sustenance text at Holy Mass. I am always needed to carry on from hour to hour, day to day. As often as Jesus when a text truly comes alive for and serene place to dine and to speaks about physical hunger, me in an unexpected way. Even as

Let's face it, though, since as perilous as physical hunger. the line of our Lord's great the dawn of creation, we've been Hence, in the Gospel passage concern and his "fear" that "they hunger and thirst. We clothe above, Jesus so lovingly says, "I do not want to send them away stomachs growl, we are on edge, hungry, for fear they may collapse this verse anew renewed my own

within the Matthean pericope us from hunger of all sorts. recounting the multiplication Jesus knew well - and of the loaves and fish. On my parish of Saint Matthew, East amazed - humbled, I suppose -

have been hangry for well over a He demonstrates that spiritual I've read this text from Matthew hunger is just as debilitating, just many times, I never quite allowed may collapse" touch me as much as it has this Advent. Hearing sense that Jesus does have His Our Lord's expression of merciful and loving gaze upon us, pity for the hungry crowd appears His children, and wants to protect

> I am so proud of the work Stroudsburg, does to feed the hungry: We host a Community Meal twice a week that welcomes any hungry soul to find a safe socialize. We also sponsor a food pantry that has a particular focus on students of East Stroudsburg University experiencing food insecurity. I firmly believe that as text, the "Sacrum Convivium" we feed our hungry neighbors that it is God who does the "cooking." He's the one that stirs the hearts of volunteers to come and prepare these spaces where the hungry are spared "collapse" and are fed the earthly food that strengthens them to carry on.

As we learn from Psalm 145 in its responsorial text of the 18th Catholics - as disciples of Jesus Sunday in Ordinary Time: "The Christ - is summed up in the Hand of the Lord feeds us; He sacred prose of this prayer. answers all our needs."

to take the concern and "fear" of Jesus only in a literal sense and provide earthly food alone to

indeed, fed the thousands gathered on those green pastures that day of the multiplication. But, He didn't stop there. Jesus fed them with Himself, with the promises of the this food from heaven will lead us coming Kingdom, and ultimately with the Bread from Heaven.



Therein lies the perennial call of our Sacramental Church.

Yes, we feed those who the naked. We visit the sick and imprisoned. If, however, we do not endeavor to lead our brothers and sisters to our Eucharistic Lord in the Blessed Sacrament we risk them going away hungry...we imperil them and risk that they "may collapse on the way."

Sure, the food that we give strengthens and enlivens and protects the physical being of our brothers and sisters. But, there is still another part of their life - of your life and mine - that needs filling so that we do not collapse on the way.

I am reminded of the ancient (cf. 1 Cor. 11:26 and Rom 8:18), used during Vespers on Corpus Christi Sunday each year: "O sacred banquet, in which Christ is received, the memory of His Passion is renewed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us."

Much of what we are as

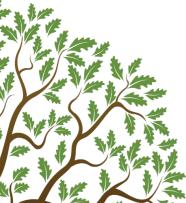
God sees us in our need; What a tragedy it would be He pities us in our hunger. He satisfies our hunger to give us

Above all, he pledges to feed those who are hungry - or hangry! us - not only with earthly food but most especially with Himself - so that we will not collapse on the way and that the pledge of future glory is indeed ours.

> Ultimately, His pledge is that to our eternal home where we will hunger and thirst no more.



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Jesus' crown of thorns returns to Notre Dame Cathedral

PARIS (OSV News) Firefighters and police officers formed a human chain to rescue the crown of thorns from the inferno at Notre Dame on April 15, 2019. On Dec. 13, 2024, this holiest relic of Paris' cathedral was returned to its proper home on the Île de la Cité.

Though temperatures were cold, the facade of Notre Dame was sunny in the late afternoon, as the procession arrived on foot along the cathedral from Palais du Louvre, on the other side of the Seine River, where the treasure had been stored since the fire.

A knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, dressed in a large black cloak trimmed in red, held the crown of thorns, in its crystal circle frame, on a red velvet cushion. Over 400 members of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher, including 200 knights dressed in white coats marked with the red Jerusalem cross, participated in the procession. They have been the crown's honor guard since the archbishop of Paris entrusted it to their care in 1923.

on Jesus' head by his captors to cause him pain and mock his claim of authority, was acquired by St. Louis, then-King Louis IX of France, in Constantinople in 1239 for 135,000 livres - nearly half France's annual expenditure at the time, according to the BBC.



Knights of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre surround the crown of thorns during a procession marking its return to Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris Dec. 13, 2024 - five-and-a-half vears after a fire ravaged the Gothic masterpiece - as part of the ceremonies marking the cathedral's reopening after its restoration. (OSV News photo/ Stephanie Lecocq, Reuters)

It was moved to Notre Dame's treasury from the magnificent Sainte-Chapelle in 1806.

A crowd of faithful and curious onlookers gathered on the forecourt of the cathedral as the relic made its way to Notre Dame. Among them was Bénédicte de Villers, a 50-year-old woman who had come to do some Christmas shopping in central Paris. "I was The crown of thorns, placed not far away, and realizing what was happening, I took the Metro to come," she told OSV News.

"I arrived in front of Notre Dame just as the procession was beginning to enter the cathedral through the central door. Hearing the organ and the singing, I begged the security guards to let me in, Catholic, and that praying in front many events surrounding the of Christ's crown of thorns meant a Cathedral's solemn reopening. lot to me," she said. "I had already during Lent."

The lucky onlooker said that rebirth. the guards let her in, and she was able to witness the ceremony from up close.

Once the crown of thorns had been placed on the main new altar inside the cathedral, Archbishop Laurent Ulrich of Paris addressed

of Advent to the time of the Passion, but that is the way it is all the time in life, and in the Christian life," he humanity, as the Son of God."

explaining that I am a practicing to Notre Dame continued the

On Dec. 7, the archbishop come to venerate it at Notre Dame struck the cathedral's doors three times, marking the moment of its

> Heads of state poured into Paris for the reopening, while outside, illuminated 'Thank You' messages in several languages appeared at the same time on the facade of the cathedral.

Outside, a chilling December the 2,000-strong audience of rain did not prevent thousands from gathering in the famous "We are moving from the time Latin Quarter just across the Seine River to watch the ceremony on giant screens. Among them, student Agnès Boüan told OSV said. "We come to adore the Lord News, "For me, as a Catholic, it in the gift he made of himself to all is also a bit of a symbol of the rebirth of France as the eldest The crown of thorns returning daughter of the church."

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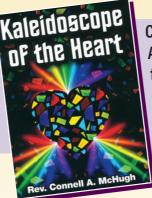
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Notice Regarding Reporting Sexual Abuse of a Minor

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 Respecto 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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Weekly Eucharistic & Benediction — DEC. 20, Adoration — DEC. 20, hosted by hosted by St. Maximilian Kolbe St. Thomas More Parish in Lake Parish at Our Lady of the Lake Ariel; exposition and adoration Church, 5112 Pocono Crest of the Blessed Sacrament is held Road, Pocono Pines: Adoration every Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Chapel of St. Thomas More Church, 105 Gravity Road, morning following the 9:15 a.m. Lake Ariel. Weekly adoration of the Eucharistic Lord includes time in prayer & meditation with recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet during the 3 p.m. hour. evening prayers at 5:30 p.m., concluding with benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 6 p.m. All faithful are welcome.

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Sign Language Interpreted Masses — FEB. 2 & March 2, hosted by The University of Scranton; both signed Masses will be offered on Sunday at 11 a.m. on

Twelve Days of Christmas the university campus at Madonna more information, contact (570) Cash Raffle — DEC. 25-JAN. Della Strada, 415 Monroe Ave., 941-7419 or campusministry@



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Jan. 23: Driving Miss Daisy-Dinner & Show

Feb. 1: Groundhog Festival

Feb. 2: Great Outdoor Show

Feb. 7: The 60s Show

Feb. 16: A Hershey Valentine

Admission included

Feb. 17: American Dream Mall March 12-13: Bally's AC Overnight

March 13: The Irish Show March 21-23: Springtime in DC

March 23: Murder Mystery Dinner

March 29: Peddler's Peeps

April 8: Brooklyn Chocolate Tour

April 9: Noah @ Sight & Sound

April 13: Cape May NJ April 17: Gettysburg

April 21: Murder Mystery

April 23-24 Benny & Jets @ Tropicana

April 24-27: Military Bands in Va. May 7: Fiddler on the Roof

May 12: Finger Lakes Wine Tour

May 14: 911 Museum & Memorial

May 21: Bronx Zoo

May 24: Flavor Fest Wine Event May 27-29: Comedy Center Tour

May 31: Liberty & Ellis Islands

June 1: Lehigh Valley Zoo/ost River Caverns June 7: Noah @ Sight & Sound

June 23: Cape May

June 25-26: Atlantic City Overnight

June 8: Houdini's Whodunnit Mystery

June 15-19: Homes of the Presidents

June 21: Mount Laurel Parade, Wellsboro

June 21: Windmill Farm Market

June 27: Medieval Times

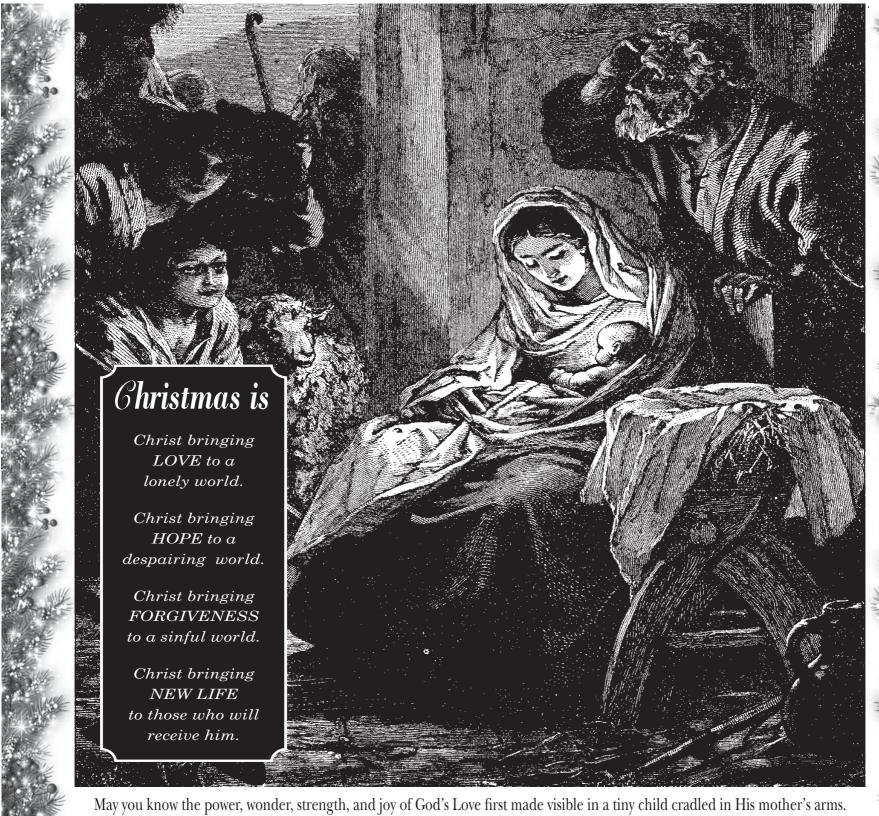
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Prayer Requests for Priests

The Daily Prayer Request for Priests schedule is as follows:

Christian Ekeh; December 20, 4, Holy Cross Father Richard Priestly Fraternity Father Father Joseph Elston; December Gribble; January 5, Monsignor Matthew Kane; January 21, Monsignor John Esseff; Vincent Grimalia; January 6, 20, Father Binesh Joseph December 22, Father Joseph Father Louis Grippe; Evanko, V.E.; December 23, Monsignor William Feldcamp; Gurka; January 8, Father Richard 22, Father Joseph Kearney. December 24, Father Neftali Gyansah-Tabiri; January 9, Feliz-Sena; December 25, Passionist Father Lee Havey; Father Samuel Ferretti.

Richard Fox; December Aquino; January 11, Father 27, Father Martin Gaiardo; Robert Hochreiter; January 12, December 28, Father J. Duane Father Thomas Hudak. Gavitt; December 29, Father Glenn.

Bambera; January 3, Father Father Louis Kaminski.

December 19, Father Joseph Greskiewicz; January

January 10, Saint Michael the December 26, Father Archangel Father Benito Hierro

January 13, Father Andrew Anthony Generose; December Hvozdovic; January 14, Holy 30, Father Richard Ghezzi; Cross Father Daniel Issing; December 31, Father Ryan January 15, Father George Jeffrey; January 16, Monsignor January 1, Pope Francis; John Jordan; January 17, Father January 2, Bishop Joseph C. Joseph Kakareka; January 18,

January 19, Saint Peter Kanjirakattu; January 21, January 7, Father Gerald Father William Karle; January





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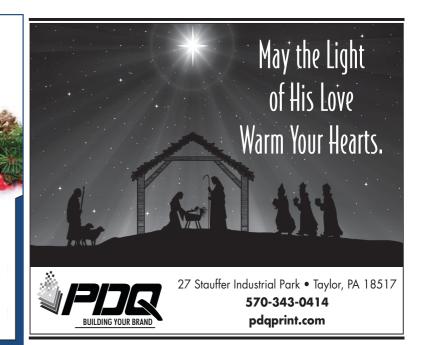
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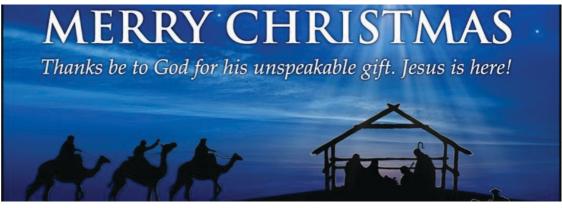
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Catholic and Jewish leaders create tool to fight antisemitism

Continued from Page 14

Scholars have documented and a brief but pivotal June 13, of 1960, meeting between Isaac and St. John XXIII as the major catalyst behind "Nostra Aetate." Promoting Christian Unity - led by Cardinal Augustin Bea, a and Jesuit - was specifically tasked with addressing Catholic-Jewish relations, a project that ultimately led to the secretariat drafting Vatican II's "Nostra Aetate."

Bishop Bambera told OSV "Nostra Aetate" at every level of the Catholic Church remains far from complete.

'Nostra Aetate' ... has resonated part, and with a fair number of the Christian faithful," he said. "I think where we have fallen short is we simply have not communicated and taught well the substance of this document."

Bishop Bambera said that "the only way in which we will ever combat antisemitism is to understand it."

"Part of the problem we face is that people don't even realize at times that the comments that are made, and the attitudes (held). and just common references to the Jewish people in particular, have been passed down from one generation to the next in families and neighborhoods, in various communities," he said. "I think people don't even realize how hurtful those things are."

Some anti-Jewish tropes, said Bishop Bambera, "have the potential to unleash tremendous hatred and destruction to a community of people."

He said that reading through "Translate Hate: The Catholic Edition" highlights the historical sweep of antisemitism.

reflects centuries centuries of hatred, discrimination and persecution," Bishop Bambera.

antisemitism Combating Soon after, the Secretariat for is also part of the church's responsibility to foster ecumenical interreligious dialogue, which is not "an add-on," but "at the core of who we are called to be," said Bishop Bambera.

"We never feign any sense of unity for the sake of the term," he said. "But we (are) true to who News the full reception of we are, and in the process, work with who we are and our partners in dialogue."

Learning and listening are "I think the substance of crucial to that task, said the bishop.

"We have to know who we with church leaders for the most are as Catholic Christians, and what the church teaches about our relationships with other Christian communities, particularly in light of this conversation that we're having with our Jewish brothers and sisters," he said. "They are our partners. We share a patrimony. Our roots as Christians are in the Jewish tradition, and we need to know that. We need to be able to embrace that."

> Healing the centuries-old wounds between the Jewish and Catholic communities will take time and effort, said Bishop Bambera, emphasizing "anything that is worthwhile is worth working for."

> He said, "If we listen with care, if we open our own hearts and minds to what we can learn from one another, I think we're well on the way to achieving a more peaceful coexistence."

"Translate Hate: The Catholic Edition" is available on the **American Jewish Committee's** website at ajc.org/CatholicTranslateHate







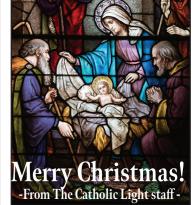




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