



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

April 24, 2025

In first 24 hours, more than 50,000 mourners pay respects to Pope Francis



After the casket bearing Pope Francis' body was placed in St. Peter's Basilica, tens of thousands of mourners lined up to pay their respects.

The open casket was transferred April 23 from the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, where the pope had lived, to the basilica.

As the day progressed, two lines – one to the right of the basilica, the other circling around the left – formed. Moving at a snail's pace, the lines converged at security checkpoints underneath the colonnade around St. Peter's Square before joining as one massive line heading through the Holy Door and turning toward the central nave.

Waiting times varied, with some told to expect a three- or four-hour wait, while some people leaving the basilica had said it had taken nearly five hours.

Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office, said that in the first 24 hours viewing was open to the public, that is as of 11 a.m. April 24, more than 50,000 people paid their respects to Pope Francis, who died April 21.

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

**'Group of the Poor' to welcome
Pope's casket to St. Mary Major
where simple tomb is ready**



Given the late Pope Francis' care and concern for the poor, a representative group of them has been formally invited to welcome his casket to Rome's Basilica of St. Mary Major for burial.

"The poor have a privileged place in the heart of God," the Vatican press office said in a statement April 24. It was the same "in the heart and magisterium of the Holy Father, who had chosen the name Francis to never forget them."

"For this reason, a group of the poor and needy will be present on the steps leading to the papal Basilica of St. Mary Major to pay their last respects to Pope Francis before the burial of his coffin," the statement said.

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

Resources available for 'Novena in Memory of Pope Francis'

Pray

"You are Peter..."

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (16:13-19)

Pause for silent prayer.

Pray one Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord — And let perpetual light shine upon him.

O God, faithful rewarder of souls,
grant that your departed servant Pope Francis,
whom you made successor of Peter
and shepherd of your Church,
may happily enjoy for ever in your presence in heaven
the mysteries of your grace and compassion,
which he faithfully ministered on earth.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



With sorrow and gratitude, the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton unite with the worldwide Church to remember the life and teachings of Pope Francis.

For the nine days following the passing of a pope, the Catholic Church observes a solemn period of mourning known as Novendiales (Latin for "nine days").

This sacred tradition dates back centuries and serves as a time for the faithful to grieve, offer prayers for the repose of the Holy Father's soul and reflect on his leadership and teachings.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has put together resources for a Novena in Memory of Pope Francis that can be used in the coming days. In the coming days - all are welcome to use the graphics and share them on websites and social media.

[Click Here for Daily Resources for the Novena in Memory of Pope Francis](#)

Hundreds attend Remembrance Mass honoring life, legacy of Pope Francis



Faithful of the Diocese of Scranton woke up Easter Monday morning to the news that Pope Francis had passed away during the night at his residence in Vatican City at the age 88 – less than

24 hours after he conferred what would be his final “Urbi et Orbi” blessing on Easter Sunday in Rome.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant and homilist for a Pontifical Mass of Remembrance in the Cathedral of Saint Peter for His Holiness on Tuesday afternoon, April 22, the day after the Vatican announced his passing in the early morning hours (Rome time) following the Easter Sunday celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord.

In welcoming the many faithful who came to the Mother Church of Scranton to attend the special memorial liturgy, Bishop Bambera stated the Eucharistic celebration for the Tuesday of the Octave of Easter offered an opportunity to “remember in a very special way our Holy Father, Pope Francis, who was called home to the Lord just yesterday.”

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

World leaders remember Pope Francis as an important international player



World leaders offered condolences for Pope Francis almost immediately after the pontiff died April 21 — a reflection of popes' importance in diplomacy and geopolitics.

Pope Francis exercised an outsized role in world affairs with his pleas for peace in Ukraine and Gaza, advocacy for the rights of migrants and dealing with hostile regimes persecuting the church such as Nicaragua.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy paid the most viral tribute to the pontiff, saying on his X account: “Millions of people around the world are mourning the tragic news of Pope Francis’s passing. His life was devoted to God, to people, and to the Church.”

In a post accompanied by a picture of him with the pontiff, Zelenskyy said Pope Francis “knew how to give hope, ease suffering through prayer, and foster unity.”

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

Vatican releases unpublished papal reflection on old age



Growing old isn't something to be feared, but rather something to embrace as a time of grace in one's life, Pope Francis wrote in a preface for a book that was not released before he died.

"Yes, we must not fear old age. We should not be afraid to embrace growing old, because life is life, and sugarcoating reality means betraying the truth of things," the pope wrote in the preface for "Waiting for a New Beginning: Reflections on Old Age."

The book, which was written by Cardinal Angelo Scola, retired archbishop of Milan, was set to be released April 24 by the Vatican publishing house. Pope Francis, who had written the preface in early February, died April 21 at the age of 88.

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

Family recalls Pope Francis in 'Miracle on Market Street' blessing of baby girl



Ten years ago, Pope Francis skimmed through cheering crowds at the 2015 World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia — and when he stopped to kiss one baby girl named Gianna, her family's life was changed forever.

“Pope Francis’ compassion and humility has left a mark on the world – and especially in our hearts,” Kristen Masciantonio, Gianna’s mother, told OSV News. “We have always and will always keep him in our hearts and prayers.”

The pope’s visit to the City of Brotherly Love was the final stop on his 2015 apostolic journey to the U.S. and Cuba, with pilgrims thronging Philadelphia’s downtown parkway area for a glimpse of the pontiff.

For the Masciantonios, simply being there that Sept. 26 with their daughter, who days prior had celebrated her first birthday, was a grace.

Shortly after her birth in 2014, Gianna Masciantonio – named for St. Gianna Beretta Molla, the Italian pediatrician who prioritized the life of her unborn child in her battle with cancer – had been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor. Baby Gianna had been given only weeks or at most months to live.

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

**Real Conclaves: They aren't the thrillers
seen in film, professor says**



Novels and films that include or revolve around a conclave often include nefarious plotting, or at least politicking, and attempts to wing it when it comes to the rules for electing a new pope.

But “those rules are set in stone,” Kurt Martens, a professor of canon law at The Catholic University of America in Washington, told Catholic News Service March 12, while at the Vatican to do research.

If something in the rules is unclear, the cardinals can seek to clarify it, “but that hasn’t happened” since St. John Paul II issued his rules for the conclave in the 1996 apostolic constitution, “Universi Dominici Gregis,” Martens said. The document was slightly revised by Pope Benedict XVI in 2007 and again just before he resigned in 2013.

“So, things are very clear,” the professor said, “they have to follow everything by the book.”

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

Pope Francis honored by his favorite soccer club San Lorenzo



Before he was Pope Francis, the first pope from the Americas, he was Jorge Mario Bergoglio – a kid from Buenos Aires cheering for San Lorenzo, going to live games with his dad on Sundays.

In a country where soccer is practically a second religion, little Jorge found his first taste of joy, teamwork and heartbreak not in the sacristy – but on the pitch.

His devotion to San Lorenzo de Almagro isn't just a nostalgic footnote – it's a window into the soul of a pope who knew what it meant to love fiercely, hope deeply and stay loyal – win or lose.

Upon Pope Francis' passing, San Lorenzo issued a poignant statement reflecting on his lifelong bond with the club: "His passion for San Lorenzo always moved us deeply, and unites us in constant prayer for his soul."

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

Follow us on Social Media...



Diocese of Scranton
300 Wyoming Avenue,
Scranton, PA 18503-1279
(570) 207-2238
www.dioceseofscranton.org