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- Remembering -
POPE FRANCIS
1936-2025



- Celebrating -
POPE LEO XIV



267TH SUCCESSOR OF ST. PETER

&

FIRST AMERICAN ELECTED POPE



The Catholic Light

(ISSN 0164-9418)

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE
DIOCESE OF SCRANTON



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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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POPE LEO XIV: A BIOGRAPHICAL TIMELINE

1955: Born Sept. 14 in the Chicago area.

1977: Graduated from Villanova University near Philadelphia and entered the novitiate for the Order of St. Augustine in St. Louis.

1978: Professed first vows as a member of the Order of St. Augustine.

1981: Professed solemn vows as a member of the Order of St. Augustine.

1982: Ordained a priest of the Order of St. Augustine.

1984: Earned a licentiate in canon law from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) in Rome.

1985: Sent to work in the mission of Chulucanas, in Piura, Peru, until 1986.

1987: Elected the vocations director and missions director for his order's Midwest province, Our Mother of Good Counsel.

1988: Moved to Trujillo, Peru, to direct a joint formation project for the region's Augustinian aspirants. Over the course of a decade in Trujillo, he served as the community's prior (1988-1992), formation director (1988-1998) and as an instructor (1992-1998).

1989: Began serving the Archdiocese of Trujillo for nine years as its judicial vicar; was also a professor of canon, patristic and moral law in the San Carlos e San Marcelo Major Seminary.

1999: Elected prior provincial for the Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel in Chicago.

2001: Promoted to his order's prior general, considered its supreme authority that oversees its administration and governance. He was reelected to that role in 2007, holding it for a total of 12 years until 2013.

2013: Served for a year as a "teacher of the professed" and provincial vicar.

2014: Appointed by Pope Francis to be apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Chiclayo, Peru. He was simultaneously named a bishop, but of the titular diocese Sufar, under which title he was ordained a month later on Dec. 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

2015: Appointed bishop of Chiclayo on Sept. 26.

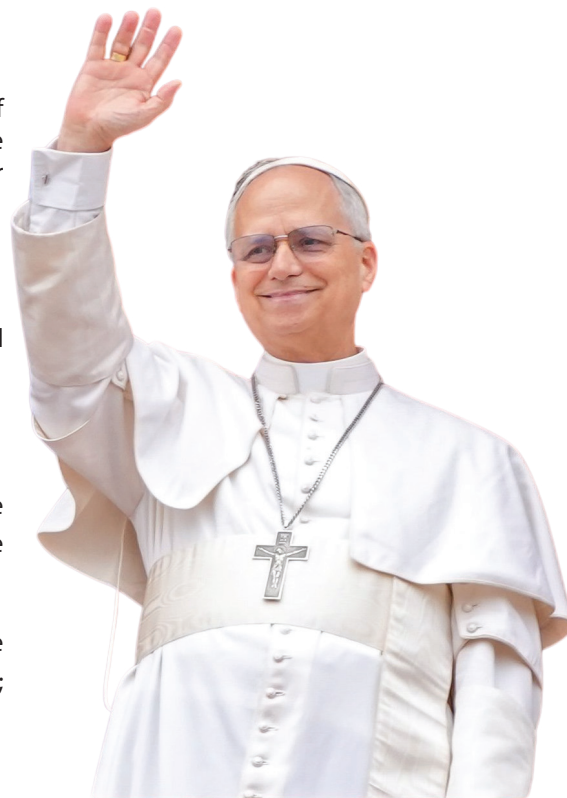
2018: Served as second vice president of the Peruvian Episcopal Conference until 2023.

2019: Appointed a member of the Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy.

2020: While still bishop of Chiclayo, appointed apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Callao, Peru, a role he held until May 2021. He was also appointed to the Congregation for Bishops.

2023: Appointed prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops, named president of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America and granted the title archbishop Jan. 30; installed in those roles April 12. On Sept. 30, elevated to the College of Cardinals.

2025: Elected pope May 8, taking the name Leo XIV.





FIRST AMERICAN POPE: VILLANOVA GRAD, PERU MISSIONARY, VATICAN LEADER

(OSV News) - Standing on loggia of St. Peter's basilica, newly elected Pope Leo XIV smiled, waved and appeared to hold back emotion May 8 as he introduced himself to the world as the 266th successor to St. Peter, the first American to hold that role.

His first words: "Peace be with you!"

Pope Leo, 69, formerly Cardinal Robert F. Prevost, is the first pope from the United States. He assumes the chair of Peter with multifaceted leadership experience: He grew up in the Midwest, graduated from Augustinian-run Villanova University in 1977 with a math degree, ministered as a bishop in Peru, and led the Vatican dicastery that helps appoint, form and retire bishops.

Born in suburban south Chicago in 1955 and ordained a priest for the Order of St. Augustine in 1982, Pope Leo held major leadership roles in his religious community before being ordained a bishop in 2014, ministering in the dioceses of



Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, who has chosen the papal name Leo XIV, appears on the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican May 8, 2025, following his election during the conclave. He is the first American pope in history. (OSV News photo/Guglielmo Mangiapane, Reuters)

Chiclayo and Callao, Peru. He was installed as the prefect of the Holy See's Dicastery for Bishops - the powerful Vatican body responsible for choosing bishops throughout the world - in April 2023 and was elevated that September to the rank of cardinal.

He earned a theology degree at the Catholic Theological

Union in Chicago before going to Rome to study canon law at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, also known as the Angelicum, receiving his licentiate in 1984. Three years later, he completed his doctorate, writing on "The role of the local prior in the Order of Saint Augustine."

At age 69, Pope Leo is seven years younger than Pope Francis was when he was elected in 2013, and nine years younger than Benedict XVI when he was elected in 2005. He is 11 years older than St. John Paul II, who was 58, at his 1978 election.

The conclave that elected Pope Leo was the largest and most geographically diverse conclave known in history, with cardinals representing 69 countries across five continents with greater percentages of participating cardinals from Africa, Asia and Latin America than in other recent conclaves.

By contrast, 115 cardinal electors - half of them from Europe - participated in the 2013 conclave that elected Pope Francis. In the 2025 conclave, 43% of electors were from Europe.

In remarks given from St. Peter's loggia before offering his first "urbi et orbi" blessing, Pope Leo commended Pope Francis' final blessing of the world on Easter morning, the day before he died, saying, "Let me follow

up on that same blessing: God loves us, God loves you all, and evil will not prevail! We are all in God's hands. Therefore, without fear, united hand in hand with God and each other -- let us go forward. We are disciples of Christ. Christ goes before us."

Pope Leo also indicated he would continue the legacy of Pope Francis in developing a synodal style within the Catholic Church for the sake of its Gospel mission.

"We want to be a synodal church," he said. "A church that walks, a church that always seeks peace, that always seeks charity, that always seeks to be close especially to those who suffer."

Pope Leo XIV reportedly enjoys playing tennis; speaks English, Spanish, Italian, French and Portuguese; and reads Latin and German. According to a May 8 interview with his brother John Prevost, Pope Leo is a Chicago White Sox fan - and never cheered for baseball rival Chicago Cubs. "He was never, ever a Cubs fan," the pope's brother emphasized.



FAITHFUL FROM THE SCRANTON DIOCESE IN ROME FOR HISTORIC ELECTION

SCRANTON - The Cardinal-electors were most accommodating to a group from the Diocese of Scranton who just happened to be traveling in Rome and the Vatican when Pope Leo XIV was elected Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church on May 8.

Since the papal electors reached a two-thirds majority to elevate His Eminence, Robert Cardinal Prevost to the papacy-making him the first American pope - on that Thursday evening, members of the TravelWorld

charter group can now exclaim: "We were in Rome when the Pope was elected!"

As the local vacationers were scheduled to return home on Friday, May 9, one more papal vote resulting in "black smoke" would probably have meant missing out on history.

TravelWorld tourists Patrick and Diane Augello Collins of Pittston, where they are members of Saint Joseph Mareello Parish, will forever treasure their serendipitous good fortune.

"Being in Saint Peter's

Square during the conclave was the most beautiful, amazing experience which we will never forget," Diane said, as the couple also had the opportunity to visit Pope Francis' tomb in the nearby Basilica of Saint Mary Major.

"Feeling the faith and excitement of the people from all over the world was simply wonderful," she added. "We are so blessed and grateful to be a part of this historical moment. We never thought that our dream trip to Rome would be part of a global event!"



When the College of Cardinals elected Cardinal Robert Prevost as pope on May 8, a group of 48 tourists from northeastern Pennsylvania were in Rome as part of a trip organized by TravelWorld.



LOCAL PARISHIONERS STUNNED, OVERJOYED AT HISTORY-MAKING AMERICAN POPE

PECKVILLE — As the faithful of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish concluded noon Mass on Thursday, May 8, they knew that white smoke was pouring from the chimney atop the Vatican's Sistine Chapel.

Just 24 hours later, they gathered once again overjoyed at the history-making selection of American Pope Leo XIV.

"I am shocked, but thrilled... I'm excited about the future of our church," Father Andy Kurovsky, pastor, said. "Ever since I was a child, we were told there will never be an American pope, but nothing is impossible with God, and the Holy Spirit was at work!"

Before his parish's Mass on Friday, parishioners also gathered for a special Holy Hour to pray for Pope Leo XIV.

"I think (his election) is going to bring about a renewed enthusiasm, especially among many of our young people," Father Kurovsky added. "Last night, I was doing some confirmation interviews with our eighth graders, and I talked a little about the pope and I could see that they're excited about the fact that he's from the United States."

Patti Dennis of Montdale said she yelled and cried when Cardinal Robert Prevost walked out onto the balcony overlooking



Anthony Beard, who serves as a sacristan at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Peckville, prays intently during a special Holy Hour held in thanksgiving for Pope Leo XIV on May 9, 2025. (Photo/Dan Piazza)

St. Peter's Square.

"It was overwhelming. It gave me such a lift. I've been in such a 'high' since it happened. It's just an overwhelming feeling," Dennis explained.

While certainly proud that the new pope is American, parishioners admit they are simply excited to once again have a spiritual father.

"We're all very excited about Pope Leo being our new pope and we're so happy to celebrate that," sacristan Anthony Beard stated. "I'm sure that Pope Leo will do everything that he can to keep us moving forward."

"I think he'll carry on the work of Pope Francis, and I think the church will welcome it," parishioner Ray Colleran said.

After recognizing Pope

Leo XIV has a connection to Pennsylvania — being an alumnus of Villanova University — parishioners like Colleran were excited.

"My wife and I have a Villanova connection. Our daughter went to Villanova so we're all happy with that," he added.

"I won't hold it against him. I went to Penn State," parishioner Janice Bauman joked.

Moving forward, many parishioners are hopeful that Pope Leo XIV will understand their needs, speak to their hearts and welcome them into the Church. In return, they promise to continue praying for him.

"I wish him the best," parishioner Nadine Greco said. "I will pray every day for him."



BISHOP BAMBERA'S STATEMENT ON THE ELECTION OF POPE LEO XIV

SCRANTON — On May 8, 2025, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, released the following statement on the election of Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, as the new Pope, who has chosen the papal name Leo XIV:

"Today is a day of great joy and thanksgiving in the life of the Church as we welcome a new Successor to the See of Saint Peter. I invite all the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton to join me in fervently praying for our new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, who has been chosen today by the College of Cardinals as the 267th Pope."

"While the election of Pope Leo XIV is historic as the first North American to be elected Pope, his vast missionary experience of walking among the poor and serving those on the margins with humility, will serve him well as he echoes Christ's call of going forth and making disciples of all nations to all people."

"With this selection, I believe the Cardinals have recognized the vibrancy, faithfulness, and strength of the Church in the United States. For generations, American Catholics have sought to embrace the Gospel with compassion — and having a shepherd chosen from among us is both humbling and affirming. It also speaks to the goodness that has grown in the church of North America — a goodness bearing fruit in service and evangelization."

"We entrust Pope Leo XIV to the care of the Holy Spirit. May his heart be open to divine guidance, and may he be filled with strength, wisdom, courage, insight, and compassion for the great responsibility that lies before him."

"This is a beautiful moment for our Church to show its unity. Let us remain united in prayer — and especially hope — in the weeks and months ahead as the 2025 Jubilee Year continues."



POPE LEO'S MOTTO, COAT OF ARMS PAY HOMAGE TO ST. AUGUSTINE

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Leo XIV's devotion to St. Augustine, his life and ministry as a member of the Augustinian order and his focus on the unity of the church are reflected in his episcopal motto and coat of arms.

His episcopal motto is, "In

Illo uno unum," or literally "In the One, we are one."

Vatican News explained that the phrase is taken from St. Augustine's "Exposition on Psalm 127," where he explains that "although we Christians are many, in the one Christ we are one."

**"IN ILLO UNO UNUM"
"IN THE ONE, WE ARE ONE"**

His shield, now topped by a miter instead of the red galero hat on the shield of cardinals, is divided diagonally into two.

The upper half features a

blue background with a white lily or fleur-de-lis, symbolizing the Virgin Mary, but also his French heritage.

The lower half of the shield displays an image common to the religious orders named after and inspired by St. Augustine: a closed book with a heart pierced

by an arrow.

Vatican News said, "This is a direct reference to the conversion experience of St. Augustine himself, who described his personal encounter with God's word using the phrase: 'Vulnerasti cor meum verbo tuo' - 'You have pierced my heart with your Word.'"



POPE LEO: A POPE IS NOTHING MORE THAN A HUMBLE SERVANT

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - The Catholic community is alive, beautiful and strong, and it is up to its pastors to protect and nourish the faithful and to help bring God's hope to the whole world, Pope Leo XIV said.

For that reason, the pope invited the cardinals "to renew together today our complete commitment to the path that the universal church has now followed for decades in the wake of the Second Vatican Council," and that "Pope Francis masterfully and concretely set it forth in the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*" ("The Joy of the Gospel"), he said May 10, in his first speech to the College of Cardinals.

He also said that he chose his name in homage to Pope Leo XIII, recognizing the need to renew Catholic social teaching to face today's new industrial revolution and the developments of artificial intelligence "that pose new challenges for the defense of human dignity, justice and labor."

The pope, who was elected in a conclave of 133 cardinal electors on the fourth ballot May 8, met with members of the college, including non-electors, in the New Synod Hall at the Vatican.

Pope Leo told the cardinals that after his "short talk with some reflections," which the Vatican press office published, they would have "a sort of dialogue," which many of them had asked for, "to hear what advice, suggestions, proposals, concrete things, which have already been discussed in the days leading up to the conclave." Those discussions in the closed-door meeting were not published.

In the text that was released, the pope said the events of the past three weeks, beginning with Pope Francis' final days, his death and funeral, have allowed them "to see the beauty and feel the strength of this immense community, which with such affection and devotion has greeted and mourned its shepherd, accompanying him with faith and prayer at the time of his final



Pope Leo XIV speaks with the College of Cardinals in the New Synod Hall at the Vatican May 10, 2025, during his first formal address to the college since his election May 8. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

encounter with the Lord."

"We have seen the true grandeur of the church, which is alive in the rich variety of her members in union with her one head, Christ," Pope Leo said.

Pope Leo XIV, the first pope from the United States, said that, "beginning with St. Peter and up to myself, his unworthy

successor, the pope has been a humble servant of God and of his brothers and sisters, and nothing more than this."

Many popes, and most recently Pope Francis, demonstrated this with his "complete dedication to service and to sober simplicity of life, his abandonment to God throughout his ministry and his serene trust at the moment of his return to the Father's house," he said.

"Let us take up this precious legacy and continue on the journey, inspired by the same hope that is born of faith," he said, reminding the cardinals that it is "the risen Lord, present among us, who protects and guides the church, and continues to fill her with hope."

"It is up to us to be docile listeners to his voice and faithful ministers of his plan of salvation, mindful that God loves to communicate himself, not in the roar of thunder and earthquakes, but in the 'whisper of a gentle breeze' or, as some translate it, in a 'sound of sheer silence,'" he said.

Pope Leo to inaugurate his papacy May 18



VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Pope Leo XIV will officially inaugurate his papacy with Mass in St. Peter's Square May 18.

Although he was pope from the moment he accepted his election May 8, the inauguration Mass - which replaced the papal coronation after the pontificate of St. Paul VI - formally marks the beginning of his ministry with his reception of the fisherman's ring and his pallium, a wool band worn around his shoulders.

The Vatican said the new pope has asked the heads of the dicasteries of the Roman Curia and the offices of Vatican City State to continue in their posts "on a provisional basis."

Pope Leo stresses call for Christian witnesses



VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Where Christians are "mocked, opposed, despised or at best tolerated and pitied" is where the Catholic Church's "missionary outreach is most desperately needed," Pope Leo XIV said in his first homily as head of the Church.

Today, "there are many settings in which the Christian faith is considered absurd, meant for the weak and unintelligent, settings where other securities are preferred, like technology, money, success, power or pleasure," the new pope said May 9. "This is the world that has been entrusted to us, a world in which ... we are called to bear witness to our joyful faith in Jesus the savior."

Pope visits Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel



VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Less than 48 hours after being elected, Pope Leo XIV got in the front seat of a minivan and traveled 40 miles southeast from the Vatican to pray at a Marian shrine cared for by his Augustinian confreres.

Pope Leo told those gathered at the shrine, "I wanted so much to come here in these first days of the new ministry that the church has given me" to seek Mary's help "to carry out this mission as Successor of Peter."

On his way back to the Vatican May 10, he went to Rome's Basilica of St. Mary Major, stopping to pray at the tomb of Pope Francis and before the icon of Mary "Salus Populi Romani."

Ukrainian president speaks with Pope Leo



VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked Pope Leo XIV for his support of a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, and he invited the newly-elected pontiff to visit the war-torn nation.

"I spoke with Pope Leo XIV. It was our first conversation, but already a very warm and truly substantive one," the president said on his X account May 12.

One day earlier, Pope Leo prayed for the people of Ukraine, saying, "May everything possible be done to achieve as soon as possible an authentic, just and lasting peace," after reciting the "Regina Coeli" prayer in front of 100,000 people.



POOR AND POWERFUL PRAY FOR ETERNAL REPOSE OF A POPE 'WITH AN OPEN HEART'

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Pope Francis was "a pope among the people, with an open heart toward everyone," said Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, dean of the College of Cardinals, as he presided over the funeral of the pope, who died April 21 at the age of 88.

And the people - an estimated 200,000 of them - were present as 14 pallbearers carried Pope Francis' casket into St. Peter's Square and set it on a carpet in front of the altar for the funeral Mass April 26.

His burial took place later the same day in Rome's Basilica of St. Mary Major after being driven in a motorcade through the center of the city where he served as bishop from the day of his election to the papacy March 13, 2013.

Security around the Vatican was tight, not only because of the number of mourners expected but especially because of the presence of kings, queens, presidents - including U.S. President Donald J. Trump - and prime ministers from more than 80 countries and official representatives from scores of other nations.

Also present were the residents of a Vatican palace Pope Francis had turned into a shelter



Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, dean of the College of Cardinals, uses incense to bless the casket of Pope Francis during the pope's funeral in St. Peter's Square April 26, 2025. (CNS Photo/Stefano Spaziani, pool)

for the homeless and the 12 Syrian refugees he brought to Rome with him from a refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos in 2016.

The Gospel reading at the funeral was John 21:15-19 where the Risen Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me?" And when Peter says yes, Jesus tells him, "Feed my sheep."

"Despite his frailty and suffering toward the end, Pope Francis chose to follow this path of self-giving until the last day of his earthly life," Cardinal Re said in his homily. "He followed in the footsteps of his Lord, the Good Shepherd, who loved his sheep to the point of giving his life for them."

The 91-year-old cardinal told the crowd that the image of Pope Francis that "will remain etched in our memory" was his appearance on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica the day before he died to give his Easter blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) and then to ride in the popemobile among the people who had come to celebrate Christ's victory over death.

"The outpouring of affection that we have witnessed in recent days following his passing from this earth into eternity tells us how much the profound pontificate of Pope Francis touched minds and hearts," Cardinal Re said. The Vatican estimated that 250,000 people - many of whom waited in line for three or four hours - filed past the late pope's body in St. Peter's Basilica April 23-25.

Within the church, the cardinal said, "the guiding thread" of Pope Francis' ministry was his "conviction that the church is a home for all, a home with its doors always open."

For Pope Francis, he said, the church was a "field hospital," one "capable of bending down to every person, regardless of their beliefs or condition, and healing



Pope Francis' casket is driven past the Colosseum on its way toward his burial place in the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome April 26, 2025. (CNS photo/Justin McLellan)

their wounds."

With President Trump, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Olga Lyubimova, Russian minister of culture, seated near the altar, Cardinal Re said that "faced with the raging wars of recent years, with their inhuman horrors and countless deaths and destruction, Pope Francis incessantly raised his voice imploring peace and calling for reason and honest negotiation to find possible solutions."

"'Build bridges, not walls' was an exhortation he repeated many times, and his service of faith as successor of the Apostle Peter always was linked to the service of humanity in all its dimensions," the cardinal said.

Cardinal Re also recalled Pope Francis' constant concern for migrants and refugees from his first papal trip outside of Rome to pray for migrants who drowned in the Mediterranean Sea, his visit to Lesbos and his celebration of Mass in 2016 on the U.S.-Mexican border.

At the end of the Mass, Cardinal Baldassare Reina, papal vicar of Rome, offered special prayers for the city's deceased bishop, Pope Francis.

Then Eastern Catholic patriarchs and major archbishops gathered around the casket and led funeral prayers from the Byzantine tradition in honor of the pastor of the universal Catholic Church.

Sister Norma Pimentel, a Missionary of Jesus and director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, was present for the funeral.

"The funeral of Pope Francis is a very important part of who we are as people of faith," she said. "We walk together, we cry together, we work together... doing what we believe is important in our lives as people of faith, and we say farewell together at the end."

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, did not want to believe that the pope had died.

Pope Francis "had played such an important role in my life as a mentor, as a teacher," the cardinal said. "It was really a 20-year friendship."

Cardinal Tobin said he thought Pope Francis' lasting legacy would be the call to be "a synodal church," one where every person takes responsibility for the church's mission and where all members listen to one another.



An estimated 200,000 people gather in St. Peter's Square and the neighboring streets to attend funeral Mass for Pope Francis at the Vatican April 26, 2025. (CNS Photo/Cristian Gennari, pool)



DIOCESAN PRIEST SERVED AT POPE FRANCIS' SIDE FOR FOUR YEARS



Just one day before the death of Pope Francis, Monsignor Christopher Washington is pictured with the Holy Father as he welcomed Vice President J.D. Vance, and his translator, in the papal residence of Domus Santa Marta on Easter Sunday April 20. (Photos/Vatican Media)



Monsignor Washington can be seen behind Pope Francis as he receives a gift of flowers during his Apostolic Journey to Bahrain, in the Middle East, in November 2022.

VATICAN CITY - Monsignor Christopher Washington, a Wilkes-Barre native who was ordained for the Diocese of Scranton in 2006, served as a personal aide and translator for Pope Francis since 2021.

As such, the Scranton Diocesan priest accompanied the Holy Father during his brief meeting with U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance on Easter Sunday, April 20 - the Pontiff's final official private audience before he passed away hours later on Easter Monday morning.

Less than a week later, Monsignor Washington greeted U.S. President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump when they arrived at the Vatican for the funeral Mass of Pope Francis in Saint Peter's Square April 26.

Fluent in the foreign languages of Italian, Spanish and French, Monsignor Washington has served as a member of the Diplomatic Corps of the Holy See for the past ten years.

Pope Francis elevated the Scranton Diocesan priest to the rank of Chaplain of His Holiness (with the title of Monsignor) in 2019.

He previously was in the Apostolic Nunciature (Embassy of the Holy See) in Bolivia and Lithuania.



Monsignor Chris Washington, far right, is pictured after greeting U.S. President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump upon their arrival in Saint Peter's Square for the funeral of Pope Francis April 26. Below, Monsignor stands to the side as the President and first lady pay their respects at the foot of Pope Francis's casket in Saint Peter's Basilica.



VATICAN RELEASES UNPUBLISHED PAPAL REFLECTION ON OLD AGE

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - 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.

Cardinal Scola's reflections on how he was "preparing for his final encounter with Jesus" offered the "consoling certainty" that death was "not the end of everything, but the beginning of something new," the pope had written.

"It is a new beginning, as the title wisely suggests, because eternal life - which those who

love already begin to experience here on earth, in the midst of their daily occupations - is the start of something that will never end. And it is 'new' precisely because we will live something we have never experienced fully before: eternity," he wrote.

Pope Francis said the real issue is not that one grows old but rather "how we grow old" and if it is lived "as a grace, and not with

resentment."

If "we accept this period - which is sometimes long, when our strength wanes, our bodies tire more easily, and our reflexes are not what they once were - with gratitude and appreciation, then even old age becomes a fruitful stage of life, just as Romano Guardini taught us: one that can radiate goodness," he wrote.



HUNDREDS ATTEND DIOCESAN MEMORIAL MASS, HONORING LIFE OF POPE FRANCIS

SCRANTON - 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 of 88 - less than 24 hours after he conferred what would be his final "Urbi et Orbi" blessing on Easter Sunday in Rome.

Though the Holy Father had been hospitalized for a month - beginning in mid-February - for a double lung infection, the news of his death came as somewhat of a surprise, given that since his release from the hospital he continued to make public appearances across Rome up until the day before he died.

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



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera delivers the homily during a Pontifical Mass of Remembrance for Pope Francis April 22 at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. (Photos/Mike Melisky)

Bambera stated the Eucharistic celebration for the Tuesday in 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."

The Bishop continued by inviting the congregation to join him "with gratitude in our hearts for the blessing of (Pope Francis') ministry, for the gift of his life, and for all that he expended on behalf of the Church of Jesus Christ."

In assuming the name Francis for his papal title, the 266th Vicar of Christ set the tone for his papacy by honoring the selfless, simple ministry and way of life of Saint Francis of Assisi.

The beloved Pontiff's characteristic geniality, always evident through his signature servant leadership and as a champion for the downtrodden and those most in need of God's mercy, was also reflected in his papal motto, *Miserando atque eligendo*, simply translated as "lowly but chosen."

Among those mourning the Pope's passing, while honoring his enduring legacy of humble service and welcoming, affable nature - much like a lovable brother, father or grandfather - was Ann Marie Sadowski, a member of Saint Patrick Parish in West Scranton.

"I'm here today because I can't be in Rome to mourn our Pope. This is as close as I can get," she said. "Like everyone, I was praying for his recovery and I was so happy to see him on the balcony at Saint Peter's for Easter Sunday. We all thought he was improving since he was able to be out there to bless the people."

For Donna Wright of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish in Dingmans Ferry, the Mass for Pope Francis was a fortunate coincidence, since she had made the trip to Scranton for her monthly spiritual direction meeting at The University of Scranton.

"I learned about the Mass on



Eighth grade students from St. Clare/St. Paul Catholic School were among the hundreds who attended the Diocesan Memorial Mass in Remembrance of Pope Francis April 22 at the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

the diocesan website and I just happened to be in the area today. It was a great opportunity to honor our Pope," Wright remarked. "He really was a Pope for the people - all the people - especially the less fortunate and disadvantaged."

She continued, "I admired him since he first came out to welcome the people after he became Pope. He was always so humble and down to earth, and I think he was a great example of how to work with those who don't agree with you."

In what proved to be an historic election to determine the Successor to Saint Peter following the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis - then as the 76-year-old Cardinal Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina - was elevated to the papacy in March 2013 to become both the first Jesuit and native of the Americas to lead the Roman Catholic Church.

His 12-year pontificate began and ended with his trademark humility and earthy demeanor, eschewing the traditional pomp, rights and privileges reserved for those elevated to the role of Bishop of Rome.

Saint Peter Cathedral parishioner Pablo Vizcarrondo shared that he usually attends the 6:30 a.m. daily Mass at the Cathedral, but felt it was important

to attend the day's Remembrance Mass for Pope Francis.

"I feel like there are special blessings by being here today for this Mass," he remarked, claiming to be "a big fan" of Pope Francis. "I liked his ideas in supporting equality for all, especially for migrants."

Fellow Cathedral parishioners Burlin and Ann Atanasoff of South Abington Township were "honored to be able to attend the memorial Mass for such a wonderful Pope and man."

"We are here to pray for his soul, and also to pray for his successor," Ann said. "It's a sad day, but also a joyous day because we know that heaven has gained a saint."



A parishioner receives the Precious Blood from Rev. Jeffrey Tudgay, Pastor of the Cathedral of Saint Peter, with a memorial photo of the late Holy Father, Pope Francis, in the background.



A memorial photo of Pope Francis was on display at the Cathedral.



PARISHIONERS REMEMBER POPE FRANCIS AS A 'POPE OF THE PEOPLE' AT PARISH MASSES

CARBONDALE — In the days following his death, parishes across the Diocese of Scranton honored the memory of Pope Francis by holding special Memorial Masses, highlighting the late pontiff's love for Jesus and care for the vulnerable.

From Stroudsburg to Sayre, and Mansfield to Milford, the faithful came together to remember Pope Francis as a "pope of the people" — challenging the faithful to reach out to those on the margins: the poor, elderly, disabled, unborn, refugees, and prisoners.

After tolling their bells on April 21, the date of Pope Francis' death, many parishes also hung purple or black bunting to signify a period of mourning.

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY PARISH

On Monday, April 28, 2025, dozens of parishioners from Our Lady of the Rosary Parish in Carbondale gathered at Saint Rose of Lima Church for a Memorial Mass for Pope Francis.

"We lost a great man. We lost our leader and it's heartbreaking," parishioner Linda Melnick said. "I just hope that his legacy and his example spreads and everyone who was touched by him can continue to touch others."

The Mass was celebrated by Father Seth Wasnock, pastor, who said Pope Francis served as a fitting example to all people.

"Pope Francis really gave us a living example of discipleship. We're not perfect but we live our lives as authentically as possible in Christ, relying on Him for His strength and His help, and Pope Francis exemplified that each and every day of his life," Father Wasnock said.



Father Seth Wasnock, pastor, Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, delivers the homily during a Memorial Mass for Pope Francis April 28, at Saint Rose of Lima Church in Carbondale. (Photo/Dan Piazza)

Parishioner Eileen Aguiar called the Memorial Mass "beautiful" and feels Pope Francis will be missed by many people.

"He was genuine. He was a pope of the people. He reached out to everyone. There were no exclusions. He was just a beautiful man," Aguiar explained.

Following the Mass, Kathy Yaklic reflected on Pope Francis' connection to young people.

"I had the opportunity of meeting him at a Mass in Washington, D.C., and I had my two granddaughters with me, and for them it was exciting because he related to them" Yaklic recalled. "As he passed to heaven, he left the Church in a better place for us."

CHRIST THE KING PARISH

The following evening, Tuesday, April 29, 2025, the faithful of Christ the King Parish had a similar opportunity to gather at Saint Thomas Aquinas Church in Archbald to remember Pope Francis.

"I think that he touched all people because he was a pope for everyone," parishioner Mary Ann Chindemi said. "I think he tapped into the compassionate side of people with his mission to help the poor and indigent in today's world."

"I had the pleasure of seeing him twice when I was in Rome," parishioner Sally Spudis added. "He was a pope of the people. He was just like one of us."

The Mass was celebrated by Father Ryan Glenn, pastor, who emphasized Pope Francis' ministry of mercy.

"He really embodied the shepherd with the smell of the sheep, and I think for many people he demonstrated that through his words and gestures," Father Glenn said. "For me as a priest, Pope Francis really challenged and inspired me to take seriously the Gospel imperative to go and find those who feel lost, who feel forsaken, and to bring them the joy of the Lord, the mercy that we experience in Jesus Christ."

Father Michael Amo Gyau, assistant pastor, also emphasized the mercy shown by Pope Francis.

"As human beings, we have faults and make mistakes, but the duty to judge is not in our hands," Father Michael said. "Pope Francis was a model for us in our modern world, that we should be agents of mercy to one another."

At both Masses, parishioners expressed not only sadness — but shock — at Pope Francis' death because he had briefly appeared in St. Peter's Square only one day before his death.



BISHOP BAMBERA'S STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF POPE FRANCIS

SCRANTON — On Monday, April 21, 2025, the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, released the following statement upon the death of Pope Francis.

"I join with Catholics from the Diocese of Scranton and around the world today in grieving the death of our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis, who returned to the house of our Heavenly Father in the morning hours of Easter Monday, shortly after sharing his blessing upon the world on Easter Sunday.

"While we feel an overwhelming sense of loss, we are comforted by the incredible legacy of love, compassion and mercy that Pope Francis bestowed upon the Church — a legacy that will continue to inspire and guide us well into the future.

"Pope Francis will long be remembered as a shepherd who drew us all closer to the heart of Christ. During his 12 years as pope, and more than 50 years as a priest, Pope Francis made it his mission to share the endless compassion of God. His words, which I have often quoted in my homilies, always pointed us toward the essential truths of our faith — that God is love, that mercy is the cornerstone of our salvation, and that our mission is to reflect that divine mercy in our daily lives.

"During one of the defining moments of Pope Francis' papacy, his proclamation of the Year of Mercy in 2015-2016, he called the entire Church to reflect on the richness of God's mercy, reminding us that we are all invited to experience and share this mercy with one another, especially those most in need. His focus on God's mercy — and that no one can be excluded from it — was not just an abstract teaching. It permeated his words and actions, from his encounters with the poor and marginalized, to his tireless efforts to foster peace and reconciliation around the globe.

"Pope Francis' ministry was a living witness to the Gospel message. By putting Christ at the center of his life, he was able to demonstrate his great love for the poor, was able to use his voice to call for the care of creation, and worked tirelessly to build bridges of understanding among all Christians.

"Like so many people, I will never forget Pope Francis standing alone, delivering a blessing in an empty, rain-slicked Saint Peter's Square in March 2020, during the height of the coronavirus, bringing hope to a desperate world. During those days, while so many were facing fear, isolation, and uncertainty, through his words and actions, Pope Francis reminded the world that Christ — and the Eucharist — are our true signs of hope.

"As we mourn the passing of Pope Francis, I ask the people of the Diocese of Scranton to offer their prayers for the peaceful repose of his soul. May God grant him the gift of eternal life and bring comfort to those who mourn his passing.

"Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen."



LOCAL CLERGY RECALL PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS WITH POPE FRANCIS

SCRANTON — In his Divine Mercy Sunday sermon, during the weekend when Pope Francis was laid to rest in Rome, Deacon Ed Shoener of the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Immaculate Conception parishes in Scranton reflected how appropriate it was that His Holiness was given back to God as the Church he shepherded the Lord's Divine Mercy.

"Pope Francis spoke very often about the mercy of Christ," Deacon Shoener remarked. "(The Pope) always encouraged us to reach out with mercy to welcome the poor, the migrants, those who are stigmatized and marginalized."

The Scranton Deacon knows this full well.

Through his work with the International Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers, Deacon Shoener had the opportunity to meet twice with late Holy Father — most recently in January of this year.

"Pope Francis was the first Pope to offer a monthly prayer centering on a mental health issue (when) in November of 2021 he prayed for people suffering from depression," the Deacon reminded his congregation, referring to the Pope's Apostleship of Prayer Intention for each month.

Deacon Shoener and his wife Ruth became pioneers in Catholic



Scranton Deacon Ed Shoener and his wife Ruth are pictured, above and at right, during their meeting with Pope Francis in January, as Ruth gives the Holy Father a prayer card of their late daughter, Katie. Of the exchange, Deacon Shoener said, "Pope Francis gently listened to (Ruth), looked into her eyes, and blessed Katie's prayer card."

mental health ministry after their daughter, Katie, who suffered from bipolar disorder, died by suicide in 2016.

Reflecting on his encounters with Pope Francis, the Deacon shared, "I realize that (the meetings) changed me profoundly. He encouraged me in my ministry and even consoled my family. Through him, I experienced the love and mercy of Christ in a special way."

Deacon Shoener concluded that "because of my encounters with Pope Francis, who was the Vicar of Christ on Earth, I can say with confidence that Christ understands and has mercy on everyone who faces mental health challenges."



Father Jeffrey Tudgay is greeted by Pope Francis in Rome in 2018.

It was in March 2018 that Scranton Diocesan priest Father Jeffrey Tudgay personally met Pope Francis, when, while studying at the School of Canon Law at The Catholic University of America, he had the opportunity to travel to Rome with his colleagues.

Currently the pastor of the Scranton parishes of the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Immaculate Conception and Judicial Vicar of the Diocese, Father Tudgay was among the group invited to Pope Francis' residence for a private audience with His Holiness.

"The students were able to spend about fifteen minutes with the Holy Father, where he spoke to us about the importance of Canon Law as a ministry of sound governance and reconciliation," Father Tudgay said at the time.

According to the Scranton pastor, Pope Francis encouraged his guests to "study hard" in order to serve the Church well. "It was an incredible opportunity that I will remember forever," he reminisced.

Five months later, on Aug. 31, 2018, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul McDonnell, local superior of the Oblates of Saint Joseph religious congregation and



pastor of Divine Mercy Parish in Scranton, had a brief, private conversation with Pope Francis.

As Father McDonnell related, the occasion was the closing of the XVII General Chapter of the Congregation of the Oblates of Saint Joseph in Rome, when he was among the Chapter members who were granted an audience with His Holiness in the Vatican.

"The Holy Father was greeted by the newly elected (Oblates') Superior General, and Pope Francis responded with his prepared discourse," Father McDonnell explained. "Afterwards, the Pope posed for a group photo and met with each of us individually for a few moments."

The Oblate priest, a native of West Pittston who was ordained

in 1991, recalled approaching the Supreme Pontiff with a customary bow and appropriate reverence, and speaking to him in Italian.

"I said I was currently residing and ministering in Santa Cruz, California, but that I was a native of the Scranton area of Pennsylvania," Father McDonnell said.

He then remembers how Pope Francis smiled and replied, "Oh, so then you are coast to coast in America."

"We both smiled and I asked him for his prayers in the USA, since it was only two weeks after the release of the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report," Father conveyed. "I believe he understood what I was referring to as his look changed from smiling to serious."



Father Paul McDonnell, OSJ, meets with Pope Francis in August 2018.



DEVASTATED BUT GRATEFUL: HISPANIC COMMUNITY MOURNS POPE FRANCIS

HAZLETON – Alberta Perez choked back tears while recalling her initial reaction to the death of Pope Francis.

“It was heartbreaking,” she said. “He was humble. He really cared. He really loved everyone.”

Perez was one of many Hispanic Catholics attending the 12:10 p.m. Mass at Annunciation Parish in Hazleton on April 21, with specific plans to pray for the late Holy Father on the day of his death.

“Our church is sad today. It’s a day that we’re never going to forget,” she added.

Fellow parishioner Martha Rojas said many Hispanics loved Pope Francis because the late Holy Father simply loved all people as human beings.

“He didn’t see color. He didn’t see race,” Rojas stated. “He loved everyone. It didn’t matter if you were rich or poor.”

As the pope of the peripheries, Pope Francis brought the heart, mind, and soul of the Catholic Church in Latin America from what he called the “ends of the earth” to the center of Christendom.



Hispanic parishioners reacted with sadness to the death of Pope Francis April 21 at Annunciation Parish in Hazleton. Many commented on the late Holy Father’s compassion and mourned him as a shepherd who walked with them. (Photo/Dan Piazza)

The late pope’s theology, governance of the church and pastoral practices were steeped in his experience as a pastor during a military dictatorship and subsequent financial crisis in Argentina, and later as a servant of the poorest people of Buenos Aires who were living in “villas miserias,” or shantytowns.

“He was a simple man, and he tried to live out the faith authentically and be a

witness to the world of Christ’s love for all of us,” parishioner Nichole Tranguch added. “We are just thankful for him and his service to the church.”

Pope Francis’ Latin roots were especially important for parishioner Maria Malaga, who also came to the Hazleton area from Latin America.

“We lost such a wonderful person who did so much for the world,” Malaga said.

In 47 trips, Francis drew close to peripheries



VATICAN CITY (CNS) - In his 12 years as head of the universal church, Pope Francis took 47 trips abroad, visiting more than 65 countries and covering more than 270,000 miles, which is equivalent to 11 times around the Earth.

Many of his international trips were to countries where Christians are a minority or where he could draw close to people on the fringes of the world’s attention.

Pope Francis visited some of the poorest countries in the world, such as Mozambique and Madagascar in 2019 and Congo and South Sudan in 2023.

Leaving Holy Door open is a papal first



VATICAN CITY (CNS) - With his death April 21, Pope Francis marked yet another first in the history of the Catholic Church: he became the first pope to open the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica without living to close it.

The pope opened the Holy Door Dec. 24, 2024, marking the beginning of the Holy Year 2025, a tradition normally celebrated in the church every 25 years.

His death four months later means the Holy Door will be sealed by his successor—an unprecedented moment in the modern history of Jubilee celebrations.

Francis is remembered as the pope of the poor



VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Pope Francis’ papacy was defined by his deep focus on the poor, reflecting his belief that caring for those in need is central to the Gospel.

From the start, he transformed the Vatican, welcoming the homeless to Casa Santa Marta and commissioning showers and an outpatient clinic for the poor beneath St. Peter’s colonnade.

In 2019, the Vatican opened Palazzo Migliori, a renovated palace offering a home for the homeless, emphasizing dignity and a new chance at life.

Over the last two decades, the city of Hazleton has experienced a significant demographic transformation, with its Latino population now comprising two-thirds of city residents. Their arrival has brought new cultural vibrancy to Hazleton and many residents are devout Catholics.

Father Kevin Miller, Pastor, Annunciation Parish, said the passing of Pope Francis has deeply affected many parishioners at his parish, who viewed the Pope as a spiritual leader who championed inclusivity, compassion, and social justice.

“He was someone who spoke to the heart of those who were disaffected, those who were pushed to the margins,” Father Miller explained. “We look forward to honoring his memory and carrying forward many of the traditions that he started and upheld.”

Looking to the future, many parishioners plan to keep praying for the soul of Pope Francis.

“We will be saying thank you to God for having him for as long as we did,” Rojas said.

Popemobile will become mobile clinic for kids



JERUSALEM (OSV News) - In a final gesture of compassion, Pope Francis donated his 2014 popemobile to Caritas Jerusalem - repurposing it into a mobile health clinic for children in Gaza.

The vehicle, once used during his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, is being outfitted with medical supplies including vaccines, oxygen, and diagnostic tools.

It will serve as a “Vehicle of Hope,” delivering care amid a collapsing health system and blocked aid corridors. Caritas officials say it could be operational as soon as the humanitarian corridor reopens.

Seminarian Jan Carlo Perez to be ordained a Transitional Deacon May 24

SCRANTON – The faithful of the Diocese of Scranton are invited to attend the Diaconate Ordination Mass for seminarian Jan Carlo Perez on May 24, 2025.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will celebrate the 10:00 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 315 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton.

The celebration will be broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton and livestream on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel, and all over Diocesan social media platforms.

“Ordination to the Diaconate is a very important event in the life of the Diocese,” Bishop Bambera said in announcing the Ordination Mass. “I sincerely hope that your schedule will permit you to attend this special celebration.”

Perez’s home parish is Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg. He has been studying at St. Mary’s Seminary & University in Baltimore.



Jan Carlo Perez

As he prepares for his ordination to the diaconate, Perez has spent a lot of time praying and reflecting on the promises he will make during the Mass. Those promises include celibacy, obedience to the Diocesan Bishop, and increasing his

prayer life by praying the Liturgy of the Hours.

“One of the promises is to continue configuring myself to Christ and that is really all I want,” Perez said. “I want to be more like Jesus. I want to be Jesus for other people.”

On May 24, Perez will be ordained as a transition deacon, which generally occurs after a seminarian has completed at least three years of study in theology and takes place usually one year prior to priestly ordination. A transitional deacon can be an ordinary minister of Baptism, and will be able to preside at weddings, assist the priest at Mass, proclaim the Gospel and preach, as well as preside at wakes and funeral services.

Perez is already looking forward to serving the People of God.

“There’s a need for Hispanic ministry. I think there’s a need for scripture study and I want to help people come to a deeper understanding of their faith, to trust in Jesus more, to trust in God more, and to

live out this mystery that God has given to us,” Perez explained.

Perez said his vocation was “born” on the altar of Saint Matthew’s Parish because he often would attend Eucharistic Adoration after school on weekdays.

“It was only when I was 15 or 16 that I began to come to faith and know Jesus especially through the Scriptures and through His saints. It was through the example of certain saints, like Saint Padre Pio, that I really began to desire the priesthood,” he added.

Perez also points to an eight day silent retreat as being very important to his formation.

“I think I left those eight days a different person. God really revealed himself to be my father that loves me and cares for me,” Perez said about his experience. “The image of God that I had in my mind was a false image. He was a lot more harsh and judgmental, possibly because that is who I am, but that is not who He is. In those eight days, He showed me how wrong I was.”

Bishop Bambera to honor 2025 Priest Jubilarians at June 12 Cathedral Mass

SCRANTON - Twelve priests who are celebrating milestone anniversaries of their ordination year will be recognized during the 2025 Mass for Priest Jubilarians at 12:10 p.m. on Thursday, June 12, 2025, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist. During the Mass,

the Bishop will recognize a combine 565 years of service to the priesthood.

Reverend John J. Turi will be recognized for 70 years of priestly service. Father Turi was ordained a priest on June 4, 1955.

In addition to Rev. Turi, priests who are celebrating 65, 60, 50, and 25 year ordination anniversaries will be honored at the Mass.

The 2025 Mass for Priest Jubilarians will be broadcast live by CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton and will be available for viewing on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel, and links will be made available across all Diocesan social media platforms.

Please join us for this special celebration!

2025 PRIEST JUBILARIANS

70 Years - 1955

Reverend John J. Turi

65 Years - 1960

Reverend William R. Culnane, Ph.D.

60 Years - 1965

Monsignor John A. Bergamo, J.C.L.
Monsignor William J. Feldcamp
Reverend George A. Jeffrey

50 Years - 1975

Reverend John A. Doris
Reverend Francis L. Pauselli
Reverend John S. Terry

25 Years - 2000

Reverend Fidelis Ticona Arocutipa
Reverend Paschal Mbagwu
Reverend Thomas J. Petro, J.C.L.
Reverend Bryan B. Wright

SAVE

the

DATE

JUNE 28, 2025

10:00 A.M.

**PRIESTHOOD ORDINATION
MASS FOR**

**REV. MR. ANDREW
MCCARROLL
&
REV. MR. THOMAS
DZWONCZYK**

Registration open for Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to National Shrine

SCRANTON - With deep joy and great anticipation, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, is inviting all faithful from the Diocese of Scranton to participate in a Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025, in celebration of the ongoing Jubilee Year of Hope.

The 2025 Jubilee Year is a sacred time of renewal, reconciliation, and grace for the entire Church - a time to rediscover the hope that only Christ can give in a world marked by anxiety, division, uncertainty, and fear.

This Pilgrimage will be a visible sign that hope is alive in our hearts, in our families and in the Church of Scranton.

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception - affectionately known as “Mary’s House” to honor Our Blessed Mother - has been designated as a special place of pilgrimage during Jubilee Year 2025 by the Administrative Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

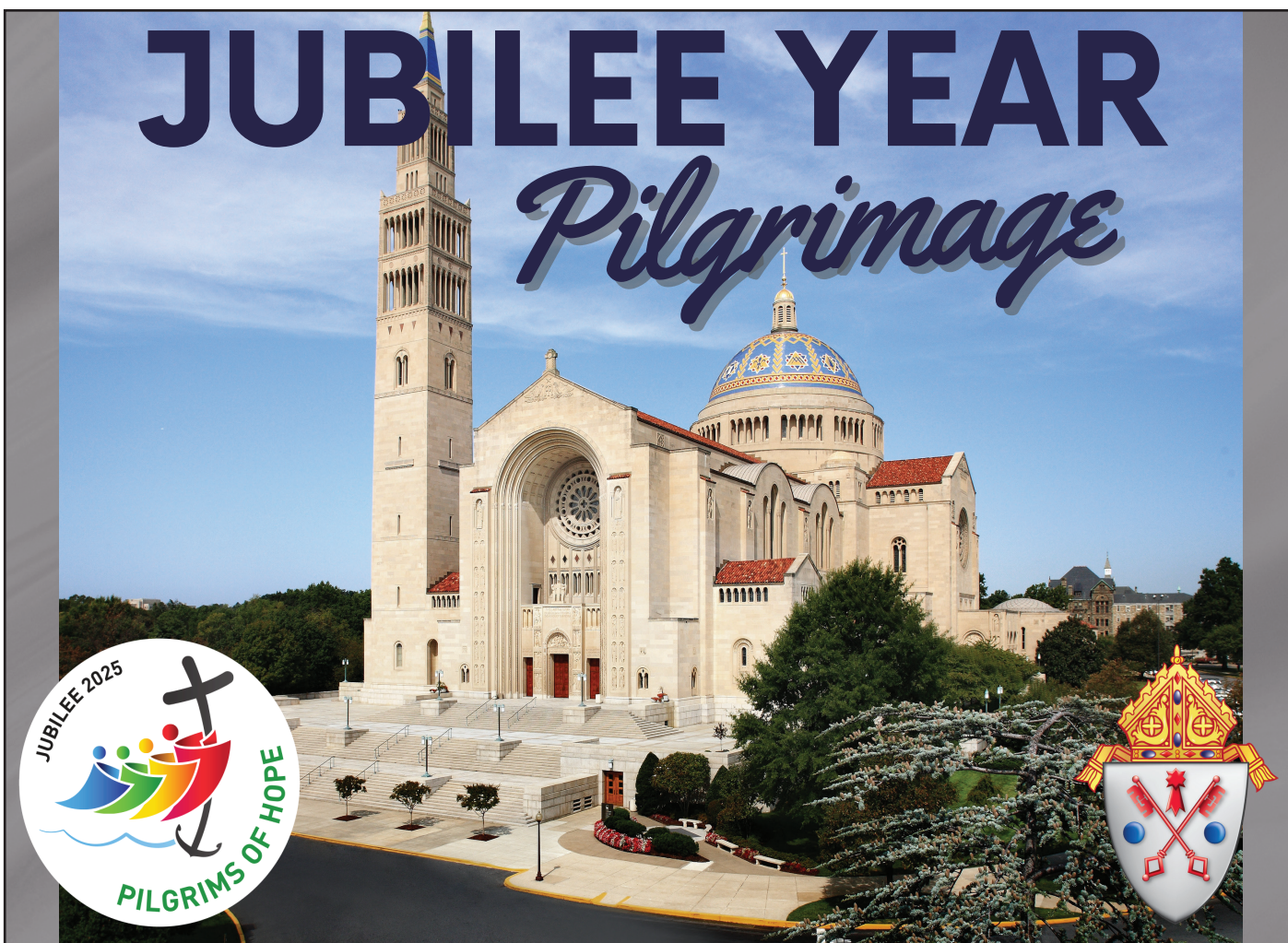
The Pilgrimage will include a welcome by the Vice Rector of the National Shrine, the opportunity for tours, private prayer and Confessions, along with a Eucharistic Holy Hour with Rosary in the Upper Church and a Pontifical Mass celebrated by Bishop Bambera.

Bus transportation is being planned from various communities throughout the Diocese. The cost per participant is \$80.

Registration is open now and will close on Aug. 18.

Parishes are being highly encouraged to work toward filling a bus of their own parishioners - but anyone can register for the pilgrimage by visiting dioceseofscranton.org.

Please save the date - and register early to save your spot - as the Diocese of Scranton “fans the flame of hope that has been given us” during this special Jubilee Year.



BISHOP JOSEPH C. BAMBERA INVITES YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN A SPECIAL DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2025

*Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate
Conception in Washington, D.C.*

**FOR PILGRIMAGE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION VISIT:
dioceseofscranton.org**



Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Montoursville



Epiphany Parish, Sayre



Saint John Neumann Parish, Lords Valley



Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow



Saint Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg



Saint Peter Parish, Wellsboro



Saint Monica Parish, West Wyoming



Queen of Angels Parish, Jessup



Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Duryea



Saint Therese Parish, Shavertown



Saint Paul Parish, Scranton

APPOINTMENTS

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

Reverend Andrew Amankwaa, from Administrator *pro tem*, St. John Vianney Parish, Montdale, to continued service in the Diocese of Scranton, effective July 1, 2025.

Sister Mary Ann Cody, IHM, from Parish Life Coordinator, Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, Pittston, effective July 1, 2025. Sister will transition to Pastoral Associate at Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, Pittston, St. John the Evangelist Parish, Pittston, and St. Joseph Mareello Parish, Pittston.

Reverend Joseph P. Elston, V.F., to Pastor, Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, Pittston, effective July 1, 2025. Father will continue to serve as Pastor, St. John the Evangelist Parish, Pittston, and St. Joseph Mareello Parish, Pittston, and as Dean of the Pittston Deanery.

Reverend Joseph J. Evanko, V.E., from Priest Moderator, Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, Pittston, effective July 1, 2025. Father will continue to serve as Pastor, St. Jude Parish Mountain Top, and Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, Dorrance, and as Episcopal Vicar of the Southern Pastoral Region.

Reverend Walter Jenkins, C.S.C., from Sacramental Minister, Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, Pittston, to Pastor, Prince of Peace Parish, Old Forge, effective July 1, 2025.

Reverend Connell A. McHugh, from Sacramental Minister, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton, effective May 5, 2025. Father will continue to serve as Sacramental Minister, Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton.

Reverend Kevin M. Miller, to Pastor Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton, effective May 5, 2025. Father will continue to serve as Pastor of Annunciation Parish, Hazleton.

Deacon Vincent M. Oberto, from Parish Life Coordinator, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton, effective May 5, 2025. Deacon will continue to serve as Parish Life Coordinator, Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton.

Reverend Thomas J. Petro, J.C.L., to Pastor, Queen of the Apostles Parish, Avoca. Father will continue to serve as Pastor, Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Dupont, and Judge, the Diocesan Tribunal, effective July 1, 2025.

Reverend Michael J. Piccola, V.F., from Priest Moderator, Holy Name of Jesus Parish, West Hazleton, effective May 5, 2025. Father will continue to serve as Priest Moderator, Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton, and Pastor, SS Cyril and Methodius Parish, Hazleton, and as Dean of the Hazleton Deanery.

Reverend Jackson Pinhero, O.S.J., to Parochial Vicar, Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, Pittston, effective July 1, 2025. Father will continue to serve as Parochial Vicar, St. John the Evangelist Parish, Pittston, and St. Joseph Mareello Parish, Pittston.

Reverend August A. Ricciardi, from Pastor, Prince of Peace Parish, Old Forge, to Pastor, St. John Vianney Parish, Montdale, effective July 1, 2025.

Reverend Phillip J. Sladicka, from Pastor, Queen of the Apostles Parish, Avoca, to Pastor Emeritus, Queen of the Apostles Parish, Avoca, effective July 1, 2025.



BISHOP BAMBERA'S SCHEDULE

- May 15** - Confirmation for Saint Jude Parish
Saint Jude Church, Mountain Top, 5:00 p.m.
- May 16** - Commencement for King's College
Mohegan Arena at Casey Plaza, 1:00 p.m.
- May 17** - Commencement for Marywood University
Mohegan Arena at Casey Plaza, 1:00 p.m.
- May 18** - Commencement for The University of Scranton
Mohegan Arena at Casey Plaza, 11:00 a.m.
- May 19** - Confirmation for St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and Holy Family Parishes
Saint Ignatius Loyola Church, Kingston, 5:00 p.m.
- May 21** - Confirmation for Corpus Christi and St. Monica Parishes
Immaculate Conception Church, W. Pittston, 5:00 p.m.
- May 22** - Confirmation for Annunciation, Holy Name of Jesus and Holy Rosary Parishes
Saint Gabriel Church, Hazleton, 5:00 p.m.
- May 24** - Diaconate Ordination for Jan Carlo Perez
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 10:00 a.m.
- May 27** - Saint John Neumann High School Commencement
Penn College - Klumpf Center, Williamsport, 7 p.m.
- May 28** - Holy Redeemer High School Commencement
Kirby Center, Wilkes-Barre, 7:00 p.m.
- May 30** - Holy Cross High School Commencement
Marywood University, Scranton, 7:00 p.m.
- May 31** - Notre Dame High School Commencement
Notre Dame Theater, East Stroudsburg, 11:00 a.m.
- June 1** - Wedding Anniversary Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 2:30 p.m.
- June 2** - Confirmation for Our Lady of Hope and St. Nicholas/St. Mary Parishes
Saint Nicholas Church, Wilkes-Barre, 5:00 p.m.
- June 4** - Confirmation for Cathedral of Saint Peter, Immaculate Conception, St. Catherine of Siena and St. Eulalia Parishes
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 5:00 p.m.
- June 5** - Legatus Mass
Christ the King Chapel, Wilkes-Barre, 6:00 p.m.
- June 7** - Catholic Women's Conference Mass
Marywood University, Scranton, 8:30 a.m.
- June 8** - Confirmation for Our Lady of the Snows Parish
Church of St. Benedict, Clarks Summit, 11:00 a.m.
- June 8** - Confirmation for Saint Gregory Parish
Church of St. Gregory, Clarks Green, 2:00 p.m.
- June 12** - Mass for Priest Jubilarians
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.
- June 15 - 20** - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Special Assembly
San Diego, CA

Diocese of Scranton

CATHOLIC

SCHOOL SYSTEM

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The Diocese of Scranton is committed to educating our students in an environment that is academically excellent and facilitates the development of moral judgment and Christian decision-making. We are proud to share the following successes of our students in the classroom and in their service to others. Each day, our schools are fulfilling their mission of preparing today's youth and young adults to become tomorrow's faith-filled leaders.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, finished his tour of all 19 Diocesan Schools earlier this month by celebrating Masses with the communities of Wyoming Area Catholic School, Epiphany School, and Saint Agnes School. In his message to the students, the Bishop reminded everyone of the miracle we experience every time we attend Mass and how, fortified by the miracle of the Eucharist, we are called to be like Jesus to everyone we meet — befriend the stranger, feed the hungry, help those in need.



Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter



Epiphany School in Sayre



Saint Agnes School in Towanda



The fourth grade class at **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton** recently spent a day in Harrisburg, which included a tour of the Pennsylvania State Capitol.



The school community of **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** honored the Blessed Mother and Queen of Heaven with its annual May Crowning liturgy. Female members of the Class of 2025 served as readers, cantors, gift bearers, Eucharistic ministers, and members of the May Crowning Court.



Eighth grade students from **Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre** led their annual May Crowning ceremony, honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary with prayers and flowers as signs of devotion and love.



Students from **All Saints Academy in Scranton** presented The Living Stations as they prepared for the Triduum and Easter.



Prior to the election of Pope Leo XIV, second grade students at **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** wrote stories about who they thought the new Pope would be and from which country.



Congratulations to seventh and eighth grade students of **La Salle Academy in Jessup** who were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society.



The sixth grade class at **Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg** prays before the Blessed Sacrament for the guidance of the Holy Spirit during the Conclave of Cardinals, before the announcement of the election of Pope Leo XIV.



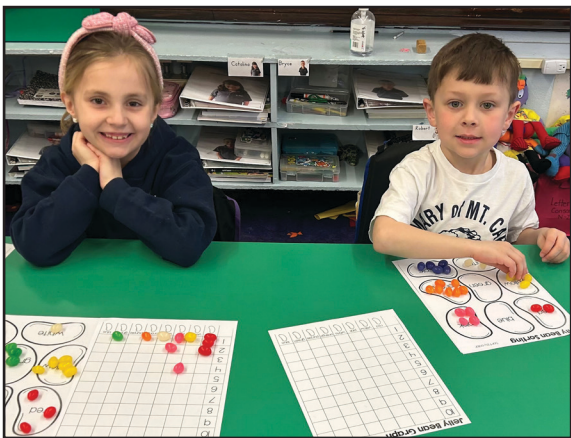
Pre-Kindergarten students at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green** celebrated their May Crowning in the Garden of Remembrance to celebrate Mary, the Mother of Jesus.



Seniors from **Holy Cross High School in Dunmore** gather for their annual "Senior Lunch." Stephen Yurkovic, senior class president, led the students in reciting the Alumni Pledge, and they received pins and pledge cards.



Fifth graders at **Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport** took part in "Step Up Day," where they had the opportunity to experience what life is like in sixth grade at SJN High School. From engaging classes, to meeting new friends, students explored their future with enthusiasm and excitement.



Kindergarten students at **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore** spent their ITime graphing, counting and organizing jelly beans.



Janie Schlude, Eleanor Daderko and Madelyn Craig, students at **Saint Jude School in Mountain Top**, enjoy the Nomad 5K event sponsored by the school's Parent Teacher Group (PTG).



Under the direction of Mrs. Elizabeth Powers, the Drama Club of **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston** performed "Seussical the Musical, Jr." to three different sold-out crowds.



The Knights of Columbus honored the students at **Holy Family Academy in Hazleton** who won their annual Easter coloring contest.

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LIVING THE STREAM: Students shine in faith-fueled innovation challenge

SCRANTON — Catholic school students from across the Diocese of Scranton were honored for their innovation and imagination April 24 as the inaugural ‘Living the STREAM’ competition concluded.

The Diocese of Scranton Catholic School fundraising competition began during Catholic Schools Week in January. It brought together students in grades 6 through 8 daring them to “dream big,” using their STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts and Math) education to combat a “real-world challenge.”

The students could tackle any topic of interest to their team. They then created a video that was posted on a special website, and the public was able to support each team with donations. The final projects focused on varying issues



Troy Miller, left, and Mason Williams of Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston celebrate their LIVING THE STREAM project success April 24. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

that included everything from homelessness to food insecurity.

Between sponsorships and donations, more than \$55,000 was raised.

On the day the competition ended, more than 100 students and parents gathered in the Diocesan Pastoral Center to celebrate the fundraiser. Awards for the top fundraising teams, along with awards for the best overall project, innovation, and faith in action also were distributed.

One team taking home an award was “Team HandiMaps” from Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston.

Mason Williams, Caden Moreck, Nick Pokrifka, Troy Miller, and Daniel Saporito – eighth grade students - focused on creating a website that features maps of regional destinations accessible to disabled people.

Miller said the HandiMaps project was more fun than a traditional school assignment because they could be as creative as they wanted and pick the topic.

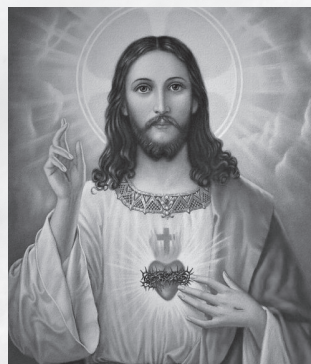
Continued on Page 32

Bishop Bambera to Celebrate the 80th Anniversary

Mass of the Enthronement Guild

FRIDAY, JUNE 27 • 4 P.M.

– Divine Mercy Parish, Minooka –



Concelebrants will include:

FATHER PAUL McDONNELL, O.S.J.,
Pastor of Divine Mercy Parish

FATHER DANIEL TOOMEY,
Spiritual Moderator of the
Sacred Heart Enthronement Guild

FATHER JOSEPH SIBILANO, O.S.J.,
and other priests that may join in the celebration



A musical prelude will begin at 3:45 p.m. in the Church
A dinner reception in the Parish Center will follow the Mass

For reservations or further information contact Maria Pappa,
Coordinator of the Enthronement Guild,
at 570-241-8172 or email: sacredheartenthronement@yahoo.com.



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SCRANTON CHAPTER

PRESENTS



FR. PIO MANDATO, FMHJ
MAIN CELEBRANT & HOMILIST

MSGR. NEIL VAN LOON
MASS CONCELEBRANT &
CHAPLAIN ORDER OF MALTA,
SCRANTON CHAPTER

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Fr. Pio Mandato, FMHJ is a Franciscan priest living as a missionary hermit. He was born in Italy and along with his brother Vincenzo, received his first holy communion from Saint Pio before coming to the USA. He grew up in New Jersey and entered the Capuchin Franciscans at the age of 17, and was ordained in 1985. In 1998 he was accepted in the Diocese of Scranton, Pa., and now lives a life of solitude, prayer and intercession. He is also Chaplain to the Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth and at times is engaged in the preaching apostolate.

SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2025
1:00 PM - CONFESSIONS
1:30 PM - ROSARY
2:00 PM - MASS & ANOINTING OF THE SICK

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Students embrace gratitude during Lenten retreats

SCRANTON – More than 400 Catholic elementary school students in kindergarten through third grade recently participated in a Lenten retreat centered on themes of healing and gratitude.

Liz Devine, elementary school guidance counselor, hosted an interactive Lenten retreat at all five Catholic elementary schools in Lackawanna County: All Saints Academy in Scranton; La Salle Academy in Jessup; Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green; Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton; Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore.

The retreat centered around the bible passage of Jesus healing ten lepers on the way to Jerusalem and only one returning to give gratitude.

"We reflected on Jesus' healing power, how the lepers had faith and acted upon it to implore Jesus' blessings, but how the human tendency is toward ingratitude," Devine said. "We practiced how saying 'thank you' and expressing gratitude nourishes our relationship with God and others."

The students in all five schools participated in small group activities that included writing 'thank you' notes to people in their lives and decorating a rock with a positive message to keep as a reminder that God's blessings are abundant.

As part of the retreat, the students were also asked to donate an item for Saint Joseph's Baby Pantry. A total of 521 items were collected.

"Items collected included diapers, wipes, bottles, wash cloths and towels and pacifiers," Devine said. "It is important for students to see that their donations are needed to support families right here in our community."



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The Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Scranton offers endowment giving opportunities to sustain vital ministries like our Catholic Schools.

You can contribute to the **Catholic Schools Endowment Fund** or create a named fund for a specific Diocesan school.



"I'm proud to establish an endowment for Good Shepherd Academy through the Catholic Foundation," shares board member Mark Sobeck.
"Catholic education shaped my family's future—I want others to have the same opportunity."

To learn more about how you can support the Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Scranton, contact us today.

Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Scranton
300 Wyoming Ave, Scranton, PA 18503

info@catholicfoundationscranton.org | 570-207-2212



Join Your Sisters in Christ at the 2025 Catholic Women's Conference

SCRANTON - The Catholic Women's Conference is just a few weeks away!

There is still time to purchase your tickets for the 2025 Catholic Women's Conference: Refresh Your Faith Heart to Heart Prayer taking place on Saturday, June 7, at Marywood University.

Don't miss out on this inspiring, spirit-filled day designed to strengthen and renew your faith!

The conference will begin with Mass celebrated by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

Keynote speakers include Sister Maria Kateri of the Sisters of Life, Kara Kardell of the Draw Near podcast, award-winning singer and composer Sarah Hart, and Reverend Bryan Wright of Holy Child Parish in Mansfield.

Attendees will also have the opportunity for Reconciliation, a fellowship lunch, and browsing a vibrant marketplace.

In addition, there is a special Friday night dinner and event

available with Kara Kardell for those who want to begin the weekend in community and reflection.

Don't wait - register today and be a part of this joyful

celebration of Catholic sisterhood and spiritual renewal!

For more information or to register, scan the QR code below or visit the Diocese of Scranton website at dioceseofscranton.org!



2025 Catholic Women's Conference

Heart to Heart Prayer



JUNE 6: FRIDAY EVENING
(OPTIONAL) WITH KARA KARDELL
JUNE 7: SATURDAY FULL DAY



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Kara Kardell
"Draw Near" Co-Founder



Sr. Maria Kateri
Sisters of Life



Sarah Hart
Musician/Songwriter



Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera
Bishop of Scranton



Rev. Bryan Wright
Pastor, Holy Child Parish

CONFERENCE MISSION:
TO INVIGORATE AND ENRICH THE FAITH OF OUR SISTERS IN CHRIST

CONFERENCE TICKET OPTIONS

OPTION 1: \$55
Friday Evening Only, June 6: 4:00-8:00 p.m.
(No Accommodations)
Buffet Dinner & Talk by Kara Kardell

OPTION 2: \$70
Saturday, June 7: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
All Day Conference at Marywood University

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☐ Option 1: Friday Evening Only: \$55
☐ Option 2: Saturday Conference: \$70
☐ Option 3: Full Package: (Single) \$165 pp; (Double) \$140 pp
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Make Check Payable to: Diocese of Scranton
Mail to: Refresh Your Faith Conference, PO Box 202, Dunmore,
PA 18512

Mothers by Grace: Cathedral Mass uplifts adoptive and foster moms

SCRANTON – Celebrating Mother’s Day this year was unlike any other for Ashley Reedy.

For the very first time, she was able to celebrate it with her son Paxton.

“It is the first Mother’s Day that I’m able to share it with him, and that is something that I prayed for so long to be able to celebrate,” the Saint Eulalia Parish parishioner said.

With the assistance of Saint Joseph’s Center, Reedy and her husband were able to adopt Paxton last year.

“Even though he wasn’t born from me, I’ve just been waiting for him for so long,” Reedy said.

Reedy and many other mothers participated in the Diocese of Scranton’s annual Mother’s Day Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on May 11, 2025. The liturgy prayerfully recognizes all mothers – but places a special emphasis on foster and adoptive mothers.

“There are families out there that are willing to, and want to, adopt a child because they’ve been praying for it and waiting for it for so long,” Reedy added.

The Mass was celebrated by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, who also served as homilist.

Beckie Samuel, a parishioner of Saint Patrick Parish in West Scranton, also went through the adoption process in 2022. Her son is turning three in August.

“Mother’s Day is very, very special to me,” Samuel explained. “Before him, we had tried for 11 years and had three losses, so this holiday is very sacred to me because it is one I never thought I would be able to celebrate.”

Samuel praised the work of Saint Joseph’s Center in helping to shepherd the adoption process



A mother and daughter share a special moment during the Mother’s Day Adoption Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter on May 11, 2025. (Photo/Mike Melisky)

locally.

“They made it very easy. They communicated with us non-stop. If I had any questions, they were there to respond. They were amazing,” she said.

During the Mass, many adoptive mothers said they prayed for the Saint Joseph’s Center staff, as well as their child’s birth mother, who gave them such an important gift.

“It was so nice to be recognized but more importantly to recognize all the people who helped us come together as a family,” Heather Thomas of Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg said.

For many in attendance, the Mass was deeply personal. At the conclusion of the Mass, Bishop Bambera blessed all the mothers present.

“We’re celebrating adoption and the fact that (my son) came from mommy’s heart and not my belly,” Thomas added.

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“Father, consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth.
As you sent me into the world,
so I sent them into the world,” says the Lord.
cf. John 17:17-18

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MISSION MESSAGE

Pope Leo XIV: A Missionary Pope for a Missionary Church

By Shannon Kowalski
Diocesan Director,
Pontifical Missions Societies



Long before he wore white, Leo XIV — then Father Robert Francis Prevost — was an Augustinian missionary in the prelature of Chulucanas in the remote highlands of Peru. He didn't step into those mountains as a visitor. He lived there and worked alongside the people he was sent to serve. He celebrated Mass under corrugated metal roofs and learned the native Peruvian Quechua language from abuelas who taught him words between Rosary beads. His formation was not only theological, but pastoral, grounded in the grit of human suffering and solidarity.



Now as Pope, Leo XIV brings that same spirit into the heart of the universal Church.

By choosing the name Leo, our new Holy Father gives a nod to another pivotal moment in Church history. In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, Pope Leo XIII spoke up for exploited workers and reshaped Catholic social teaching with the Church's first social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*. Leo XIV seems to be carrying that legacy forward with his words *and* his actions. One of my favorite images of Pope Leo XIV that has surfaced in the media is of him as Bishop of Chiclayo, wearing muck boots, standing in knee-high flood water, accompanying his people after a devastating flood (photo above). The shepherd among his flock

For those of us in dioceses like Scranton, his election is more than symbolic. It's a wake-up call — a reminder that the Church doesn't

grow by maintenance. It grows by mission. And not just mission “over there,” but right here. In our parishes, in our schools, in our homes, and in our streets. Pope Leo XIV reminds us that mission is not a diocesan department or a feel-good project. It's the identity of the Church.

The Pontifical Mission Societies were founded precisely to support this vision: a Church that gives, that goes, and that grows by sharing. Under Pope Leo XIV, that call takes on new urgency and new energy. His words already reflect it — challenging comfort, calling for proximity to the poor, and insisting that evangelization must be driven by witness more than words.

In his first address to the world as the 267th successor to Saint Peter, he said, “*We want to be a synodal Church, a Church that moves forward, a Church that always seeks peace, that always seeks charity, that always seeks to be close above all to those who are suffering.*” That's the voice of someone who's done it.

From Scranton to Chiclayo, from our mission appeals to the missions themselves, this is a moment of renewal. As a missionary Catholic, I see Pope Leo XIV's papacy as both challenge and encouragement. He challenges us to stop talking about mission like it's someone else's job. And he encourages us to get to work, not because we have all the answers, but because we know Who does.

May God bless Pope Leo XIV and may his papacy awaken in us a more profound love for the Gospel, and a renewed commitment to proclaim it — here

Statement of the Diocese of Scranton regarding Rev. Vincent J. Young

SCRANTON - On April 4, 2025, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, imposed the penalty of suspension on Reverend Vincent J. Young, an incardinated priest of the Diocese of Scranton.

The penalty of suspension prohibits Father Young from exercising priestly ministry in any capacity and includes, but is not limited to the following:

- A prohibition on presenting himself publicly as a priest
- A prohibition on wearing any clerical or religious attire
- A prohibition on any public participation in the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist
- A prohibition on the celebration of any sacrament with any member of the Christian Faithful

• A prohibition on being present in the territory of the Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas

The penalty of suspension has been imposed on Father Young due to his persistent disobedience to his bishop of incardination and his continued unlawful and unauthorized exercise of priestly ministry.

The imposition of this penalty follows the conclusion of trial processes found in the Canon Law of the Catholic Church. The imposition of any penalty on a cleric represents a grave rupture of the ecclesial communion in the life of a cleric.

Reverend Vincent J. Young was incardinated into the Diocese of Scranton in 1999 by the late Bishop James C. Timlin.

Since 2004, Father Young has been unlawfully absent from the Diocese of Scranton and has unlawfully exercised ministry with schismatic ecclesial communities that do not enjoy full communion with the Catholic Church.

Most recently, Father Young has been residing and unlawfully

celebrating the sacraments at the former Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity in Arlington, Texas in the Diocese of Fort Worth.

Should anyone become aware of Father Young attempting to exercise priestly ministry, they are to contact the Vicar General of Diocese of Scranton immediately.

Free CSS Program brings together families

WILKES-BARRE - The 'Parents as Teachers' program of Catholic Social Services held a free community event May 3 at King's College.

The program, *It Takes a Village*, brought together community resources and featured a scavenger hunt, story time, along with dance theater and mixed martial arts demonstrations.

Save the date of Aug. 2! That is the next free community event sponsored by the 'Parents as Teachers' program.



Tenth Catholic Men's Conference in October



Planning for the tenth annual Catholic Men's Conference, which will be held on Saturday, Oct. 4, at Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre, is underway.

This year's theme will be "Christ is King." The conference will feature nationally known speakers and conclude with the celebration of Mass with the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

Registration for the conference is available online at BeACatholicMan.com. Cost to attend the conference is \$40 (\$30 if registered by Sept. 15). Students are \$15; Priests, Deacons and Seminarians are free of charge. For more information, call (570) 721-0872.

Members of this year's planning committee are pictured above. First row, from left: Jerome Smith; Walt Blejwas; Dr. Chris Carr; Dr. Louis Guarnieri; Kevin Burleigh; Raphael Micca; and John Leskosky. Second row: Father Brian VanFossen, conference chaplain; Mike Kilmer, conference chairperson; Jim Gerichten; Joe Alinoski; Ralph Marino; and John Witkosky. Third row: Paul Binner; Alex Piechoki; Jim Biondo; Gerard Schmidt; and Tim Pawlik. Committee member Christopher Calore was the photographer.

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Memorial Day Masses will be celebrated at each Diocesan Cemetery on Monday, May 26, 2025. All are welcome to participate in these liturgies to pray for and remember the faithfully departed, especially our veterans.



MEMORIAL DAY MASSES, MONDAY, MAY 26, 2025

CATHEDRAL CEMETERY • 10AM

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Crypt Chapel at rear of cemetery

MOUNT OLIVET CEMETERY • 10AM

612 Mt. Olivet Rd., Carverton
570-696-3636
at St. Frances X. Cabrini Church

HOLY CROSS CEMETERY • 9AM

at St. Mary's Church,
Prince of Peace Parish, Old Forge
570-347-9251

ST. CATHERINE'S CEMETERY • 10AM

Main St., Route 435, Moscow
570-842-8411 • Outside Altar
(if inclement weather will be at
St. Eulalia's Church)

ST. MARY'S CEMETERY • 10AM

1594 S. Main St., Wilkes-Barre
570-822-6941



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Route 309, Drums
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Host-for-a-Day supporters celebrated

PECKVILLE - Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen celebrated the successful culmination of its 2025 Host-for-a-Day campaign with a special event at Fiorelli's on April 30.

Contributors to the 47th annual campaign gathered for food, fellowship and to hear how their support enables the Kitchen to feed and clothe those in need.

Also two members of the Kitchen's Advisory Board were recognized for their service, and three institutions - Empower Financial Services Company, The University of Scranton and Scranton Running Company - were honored for continued support of the Kitchen's mission.

Donations of \$100 or more can still be made by calling the Kitchen at (570) 342-5556, sending a check to Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen, 500 Penn Avenue, Scranton PA 18509, online at: www.stfranciskitchen.org or text SFAK to 26989.



Saint Francis of Assisi Kitchen recognized several individuals and institutions for helping its ministry on April 30, 2025. Pictured, seated from left: Dr. Dan Cossachi, University of Scranton Vice President for Mission and Ministry; Pat Vaccaro, Director, University of Scranton Center for Service and Social Justice; Ellen Farrell, Empower Financial Services Company; and Matt Byrne, Scranton Running Company. Standing from left: The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton; Maria McCool, Kitchen Advisory Board President; Michael Colarusso, Host-for-a-Day Campaign Chair; Rob Williams, Kitchen Executive Director.

Join us on Friday, June 13 at PNC Field in Moosic for a Diocese of Scranton night at the ballpark!
All are invited to an exciting night of baseball and fireworks as the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders take on the Syracuse Mets. Order discounted tickets using the QR code in this flyer.

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Bishop to celebrate Enthronement Guild 80th Anniversary Mass

SCRANTON — The Diocese of Scranton Sacred Heart Enthronement Guild will commemorate its 80th anniversary at the annual Eucharistic celebration on the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus on Friday, June 27, at 4 p.m. at Divine Mercy Parish in the Minooka section of Scranton.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist for the Pontifical Mass, during which he will renew the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the Scranton Diocese.

Catholic Choral spring concerts set

SCRANTON — The annual spring concerts of the Catholic Choral Society of Scranton will open on Friday, May 16, at 7 p.m. in Holy Rosary Church at Mary, Mother of God Parish, 316 William St., North Scranton.

During the performance, the Catholic Choral singers will be joined by the Mary, Mother of God Adult Choir, under the direction of Kimberly Gnall.

A second spring concert event will be held on Sunday, May 18, at 7 p.m. in the Church of Saint Ignatius at Saint Ignatius Loyola Parish, 339 North Maple Ave., Kingston.

The Choral Society will host as guest performers the Good Shepherd Academy of Kingston Middle School Choir directed by Thomas Hanlon.

Currently celebrating its 76th season, the Catholic Choral Society is composed of members from Luzerne, Lackawanna, Wayne, Susquehanna and Wyoming counties.

Admission cost for each concert performance is \$12 for adults; \$8 for seniors and students.

Singers and children 12 years of age and younger are admitted free of charge.



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera

Concelebrants will include Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul McDonnell, pastor of Divine Mercy Parish; Father Daniel Toomey, spiritual moderator of the Sacred Heart Enthronement Guild; Saint Joseph Oblate Father Joseph Sibillano; and other priests serving the Diocese.

Music ministry for the Mass will be provided by the Sacred Heart Singers, Ernie Pappa, Vanessa James and Robert Zito, who will be joined by Maryanne DeMark on keyboard and vocals.

A musical prelude will begin at 3:45 p.m. in the parish's Saint Joseph Church, located at 312 Davis St.

A dinner reception in the Divine Mercy Parish Center will follow the liturgical celebration. Patrick Williams, Enthronement Guild board president, will serve as master of ceremonies.

The Enthronement of the Sacred Heart apostolate enables families and individuals to consecrate their homes to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Homes that are enthroned become an extension of the Mass, whereby faithful can follow up their Eucharistic celebration in church with prayerful devotion in their own private settings.

For reservations or further information on Enthronement of the Sacred Heart, contact Maria Pappa, coordinator of the Enthronement Guild, at (570) 241-8172 or email: sacredheartenthronement@yahoo.

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July 27, Oct. 5
(\$25 Slot & \$15 food credit) **\$63**

Wind Creek Casino • Aug. 30
(\$25 Slotplay) **\$58**

Finger Lakes Luncheon Cruise
June 14 • Live music from the Motown Disco era of the 60's & 70's plus cheese & wine tasting at Magnus Ridge winery. • **\$224**

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July 12-15 • Tour of Castle Noel Christmas Museum & Ohio State Reformatory, an open-air safari ride, show at Ohio Star Theater, 6 meals & more • **\$998**

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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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Parish Bazaar, Picnic & Festival Listing

Immaculate Conception in Bastress — May 18.

Annual Spring Turkey & Ham Dinner will be hosted from noon to 6 p.m. at the parish, 5973 Jacks Hollow Road, Bastress; dine-in and take-out dinners available, featuring turkey, ham, stuffing, mashed potatoes, noodles, gravy, corn, salad & homemade bread. Cost: \$13, adults; \$6, children (ages 4-12). Take-out dinners are adult-portion only. Other refreshments include sandwiches, ice cream, french fries, and soda.

Mary, Mother of God in Scranton — June 13 & 14.

Parish "Block Party" will be held Friday, from 6 to 11 p.m., and Saturday, 5 to 10 p.m., on the grounds of Holy Rosary

Center, corner of Wayne & West Market streets, North Scranton. Event opens with special salute to Veterans ceremony on Friday at 6 p.m. Live musical entertainment: Friday, Picture Perfect, 7 to 11 p.m.; Saturday, Jim Cerminaro, 5 to 6 p.m., followed by The Chatter, 6 to 10 p.m. Festival includes picnic foods, beer tent, wine & spirits, games, and raffle drawings.

Divine Mercy in Scranton — June 20-22.

Annual Parish Picnic held Friday, Saturday & Sunday, beginning each night at 5 p.m. on the parish church grounds, 312 Davis St., Minooka section of Scranton. Three-day summer festival features homemade picnic

foods, beverages, live music, specialty theme baskets, big cash & quilt raffles, games and activities for all ages.

Immaculate Heart of Mary in Dushore — July 6, from noon to 5 p.m.

Annual "Old Time Picnic" is tent-covered on the grounds above Saint Basil Church; featuring light fare, ethnic foods and various refreshments. Attractions include games for all ages, cash & whiskey raffles, and bountiful theme baskets. Shuttle service provided to and from the church parking lot. Knights of Columbus chicken dinner (eat-in or take-out) with homemade side dishes and desserts, precedes the picnic on Friday, June 27, beginning at 11 a.m.

Apostleship of Prayer

Papal Intention for June 2025

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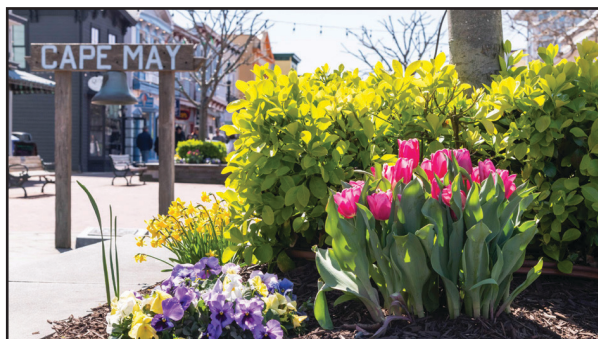
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April 27 & June 19
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Wednesday, May 7
Dutch Apple, Lancaster
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DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY WANTED

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If interested, please call the parish office (570-421-9097) or email pastor@churchofsaintluke.org to receive a full job description.

Habemus Papam!

More info on Pope Leo XIV is available at dioceseofscranton.org



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Marian Devotion Rosary services begin 2025 Fatima Journey

Fostering prayerful devotion to Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary through recitation of the Holy Rosary, Marian Devotion Ministries in the Diocese of Scranton announces its 2025 Fatima Journey, which began on the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima (May 13) and will continue through October, the Month of the Holy Rosary.

Upcoming Marian Devotion gatherings are scheduled as follows:

Rosary Evening of Marian Devotion — May 19, at 6 p.m. at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, Route 315, Laffin.

Saturday Afternoon Rosary Rally — May 24, at 1 p.m. on the grounds of the Marian Prayer Garden at Saint Lucy Church, West Scranton.

Monday Evening of Marian Devotion — June 9, from 6 to 7 p.m., hosted at Saint Mary of the Lake Church, 1872 Dalton Road, Lake Winola.

Saturday Noon Rosary Rally — June 14, on the grounds of the Lourdes Shrine at Saint Anthony of Padua Church, Smith St., Dunmore.

Monday Evening Marian Rosary Devotion — June 16, at 6 p.m. at the Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, Route 315, Laffin.

For information, contact Ernie Pappa at (570) 241-8171, or email: singtomary@aol.com.

Prayer Requests for Priests serving the Scranton Diocese

May 15, Father Daniel Toomey; May 16, Father Rawel Toppo; May 17, Father Sudhir Toppo; May 18, Father Peter Tran; May 19, Monsignor David Tressler; May 20, Father Jeffrey Tudgay, J.V., V.E.; May 21, Father John Turi; May 22, Father Anthony Urban; May 23, Father Brian Van Fossen; May 24, Monsignor Neil Van Loon; May 25, Father Shinu Vazhakkootathil John; May 26, Father Joseph Verespy; May 27, Father John Victoria; May 28, Saint Peter Priestly Fraternity

Father Matthew Vierno; May 29, Father James Walsh; May 30, Passionist Father Mark Ward; May 31, Monsignor William Ward; June 1, Pope Leo XIV; June 2, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; June 3, Monsignor Christopher Washington; June 4, Father Seth Wasnock; June 5, Father Donald Williams; June 6, Father Bryan Wright; June 7, Holy Cross Father Michael Wurtz; June 8, Father Paul Yeboah; June 9, Father Michael Zipay; June 10, Father Joseph Adonizio; June 11, Saint Peter

Priestly Fraternity Father Zachary Akers; June 12, Father Patrick Albert; June 13, Father John Albosta; June 14, Father James Alco; June 15, Father Andrew Amankwaa; June 16, Father Michael Amo Gyau; June 17, Father William Asinari; June 18, Father Thomas Augustine; June 19, Monsignor Thomas Banick; June 20, Father Richard Beck; June 21, Monsignor John Bendik; June 22, Monsignor John Bergamo; June 23, Father Eric Bergman.

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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Monthly Meeting of the Lay Carmelites — **MAY 17**, hosted by Our Lady of the Mountains Lay Carmelite Community on the third Saturday of each month; gatherings are held from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Oblates of St. Joseph seminary/chapel, 1880 Highway 315, Laflin. For more information, contact Chris at (570) 239-8094.

Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition — **MAY 17 & 18**, hosted by Epiphany Parish, 304 S. Elmer Ave., Sayre; offered in conjunction with the National Eucharistic Revival, the public display will be available for viewing on Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the church hall. The exhibit, featuring more than 90

poster panels, is a presentation of principal, Vatican-approved Eucharistic miracle events documented by the Catholic Church throughout the centuries.

Drive-Thru Potato Pancake Fest — **MAY 17 & 18**, sponsored by the Men's Club of Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, 420 Main Road, Hanover Township; held on the parish grounds Saturday and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. (vehicles may enter drive-thru from the Sans Souci Highway). Cost: six potato pancakes for \$10. Cash raffle drawing with \$25,000 in prizes held Sunday at 5:30 p.m. For more information, call (570) 823-6242 or visit www.exhc.org.

"Spring Fling" Flea Market — **MAY 17 & 18**, hosted at St.

John Bosco Parish Center, 573 State Route 93, Sugarloaf; held Saturday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., & Sunday (Box Day), 1 to 3 p.m. Featuring a large variety of flea market items; hot breakfast & lunch available on Saturday. Event includes tricky trays & cash raffle drawings.

St. Joseph Fraternity of Third Order Secular Franciscans — **MAY 18**, Lay Franciscan Canonical Order meets on the third Sunday of each month; meetings hosted from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Oblates of St. Joseph Seminary/Chapel, 1880 Highway 315, Laflin. All interested men and women and visitors are welcome. For more information, contact Michele at (570) 807-7996.

Designer Bag Bingo — **MAY 18**, sponsored by the St. Catherine of Siena Parish Altar & Rosary Society in Moscow; hosted at the parish hall, 220 Church St., Moscow. Doors open

Continued on Page 30

Catholic Social Services
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A Night Under the Stars

An enchanting evening of elegance, music, and community.

Friday, May 30th, 2025

5:45 PM-10:00 PM

Venue-Surprise location

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All proceeds benefit the mission and programs of Catholic Social Services.

Please be advised that your attendance at Catholic Social Services' "A Night Under the Stars" event is contingent upon and constitutes acceptance of a Waiver and Release of Liability Agreement, holding Catholic Social Services and the secret, yet-to-be-named venue owner and company harmless from any and all liability. A more complete Waiver and Release of Liability/Hold Harmless Agreement will be provided at the time of the venue identification on the evening of the event.

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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Continued from Page 29

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

Charismatic Renewal Regional Prayer Meeting — MAY 19, sponsored by the

Scranton Diocesan Catholic Charismatic Renewal; begins at 7:30 p.m. in the social hall at Queen of the Apostles Parish, 715 Hawthorne St., Avoca. Guest witness presented by Marianne Guarnieri, director of discipleship in the Diocesan Office for Parish Life; also includes praise, music, teaching, and prayer ministry. Attendees may provide their own refreshments for fellowship time; coffee & water provided. Food pantry donations will be accepted to support the local food bank.

Tuesday Novena Devotion to Saint Anthony of Padua — MAY 20-JUNE 19, hosted by Our Lady of Hope Parish, 40 Park Ave., Wilkes-Barre; weekly Saint Anthony Novena devotions held on Tuesday evenings, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the parish church. Novena theme: "The Mystery of

Suffering & The Saints." Novena services include blessing with the Saint Anthony relic. All faithful are welcome; for more information, call (570) 824-7832.

Mental Health Workshop: "Eating Disorders & Our Catholic Faith" — MAY 22, hosted at Divine Mercy Parish, 312 Davis St., Minooka, Scranton, beginning at 6:30 p.m.; event sponsored by the NEPA Chapter of Mental Health Ministers and the Mental Health Ministry of Divine Mercy Parish. Guest presenter: Dr. Megan Heeder, of The University of Scranton; workshop offers insight into the Catholic tradition of understanding eating disorders and providing practical tools to those who struggle with them. Time will be allowed for questions and conversation; all are welcome.

Continued on Next Page

Who makes house calls?

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

Based on my practice, which consists of estate planning and administration along with elder law, I find that clients are more comfortable discussing such matters in familiar surroundings. While I know this may seem unconventional to some, I believe I will be able to serve clients much better in this fashion.

If anyone is uncomfortable with home visits, I have a few locations where I can meet in an office setting. I look forward to meeting with my existing clients and especially meeting new clients that are looking for any assistance in estate or elder law matters.

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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Parish Flea Market — MAY 29-31, hosted by St. John the Evangelist Parish, 35 William St., Pittston; held in the Monsignor Bendik Pastoral Center (former Seton Catholic auditorium). Market hours: Thursday & Friday, 5 to 8 p.m.; Saturday (Bag Sale), 9 a.m. to noon. Center entrance on Church Street; area parking available.

Take-Out Pasta Dinner — JUNE 1, sponsored by Prince of Peace Parish in Old Forge; held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Take-Away Kitchen at Arcaro & Genell's restaurant, Main Ave., Old Forge. Cost: \$15 per dinner, includes penne pasta/meatballs, salad, roll & dessert. For tickets, contact the parish rectory (570) 457-5900; tickets also sold at all weekend Masses.

Orpheus Choral Society Concert — JUNE 1, hosted by

St. John the Evangelist Parish in Pittston; concert performance by the Orpheus Choral Society of Northeastern PA begins at 3 p.m. in St. John Church, 35 William St., Pittston. Orpheus is under the direction of Gabriel Jenceleski, with piano accompaniment by Susan Lauer; program will include choral arrangements of many beloved selections. Free-will offering accepted.

Fourth Annual Deacon Cliff Memorial Golf Outing — JUNE 9, annual golf tournament honors late businessman and Permanent Deacon Cliff Jorgenson; Tournament hosted at Lords Valley Country Club (Hemlock Farms). Outing begins with 7:30 a.m. registration/continental breakfast and 9 a.m. shotgun start (scramble format); followed by tournament prizes and buffet awards dinner. Cost: \$150 per golfer. For more

information/registration and sponsorship opportunities, contact Jack Boyle at (908) 451-1206 or Jackb18337@gmail.com.

Parish Cash Bingo — JUNE 29, sponsored by St. John the Evangelist Parish, 35 William St., Pittston; games party hosted from 1 to 4 p.m. in the Monsignor Bendik Pastoral Center Auditorium (entrance on Church Street). Doors open at noon; admission fee: \$25, includes 20 regular games. Special games cost \$5 each. Event includes raffle & cash drawings, door prizes, and food sales; prizes value more than \$4,000. Those attending with a new PA Lottery scratch-off ticket (\$5 or more) eligible for special drawing. For ticket information, contact the parish office at (570) 654-0053.

Summer Youth Music Camp: "Weeklong Treasure Hunt" — JULY 28-AUG. 1, hosted by Gate of Heaven Parish, 40 Machell Ave., Dallas; music camp for children held daily throughout the week from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., concluding with a Youth Liturgy on Sunday, Aug. 3. Camp is open to youth singers ages 8 to 15. For registration, contact the parish office at (570) 675-2121, or parishoffice.goh@goholv.org.



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STREAM fundraiser fuels creativity

Continued from Page 18

“Making the website and generating it was really exciting and fun to do with my classmates,” Miller said.

While all the students in their group brainstormed ideas to tackle, Miller gave credit to Mason Williams for developing the overall ‘HandiMaps’ idea.

After deciding on wanting to help individuals who rely on wheelchairs, the group then needed to research what businesses and locations in their community were handicap accessible and create an overall website and several interactive maps.

“We wanted to make it the best we could to help,” Williams added. “It could get bigger and bigger. We can make it throughout bigger areas and help people know the places they can go.”

Another team that took home an award was ‘Team F.Red’ from

Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore.

Five seventh graders – Tim Polishan, Patrick Burke, Jaxon Urban, Michael Lalli, and Quinn Kelly – created a food redistribution app to cut down on food waste.

“We just brainstormed a lot and thought out all of our ideas,” Polishan said.

“The first idea we had was about food and how much food was wasted so we wanted to build on that idea,” Burke added.

Kelly said being recognized as a top team meant a lot to their group.

“We put in a lot of work for this. It took a lot of time,” he explained.

The students are hopeful the app they created could help connect local stores with food pantries to provide fresh produce for the needy.

“That would be cool if it was turned into a real thing,” Lalli said.

“I’m hoping it becomes a real thing,” Urban added.

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