



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

May 15, 2025

More than 350 Catholic school students participate in Diocesan Mass of Thanksgiving for Pope Leo XIV



Hundreds of people - including more than 350 Catholic school students from around the Diocese of Scranton - participated in a Diocesan Mass of Thanksgiving for the Election of Pope Leo XIV on Wednesday, May 14, 2025.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant and homilist for the 12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Many people attending the Mass, including the students, were celebrating the election of an American pope.

"This unexpected choice to lead our Church through the grace of the Holy Spirit has much to say to us today, brothers and sisters. Pope Leo's selection is a sign to all the world that despite our shortcomings, the Church in the United States is vibrant and strong," Bishop Bambera stated. "It acknowledges that for generations, American Catholics have truly sought to embrace the Gospel with compassion. It also speaks to the goodness that has grown in the church of North America – a goodness bearing fruit in service and evangelization. Finally, it affirms the hope that is ours – especially when I look at so many of you who have joined with me for today's Mass – the young Church of the Diocese of Scranton."

The Bishop has also asked that all parishes in the Diocese of Scranton celebrate Masses of Thanksgiving for the Election of Pope Leo.

[Click Here to Read Bishop Bambera's Full Homily from the Mass of Thanksgiving for Pope Leo](#)

[Click Here to Watch a Short Video with Interviews of Catholic School Students Reflecting on the Election of Pope Leo XIV](#)

[Click Here to View a Photo Album from the Mass of Thanksgiving for the Election of Pope Leo XIV on May 14, 2025](#)

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



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.

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Registration opens for Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to National Shrine

JUBILEE YEAR *Pilgrimage*



**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**

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.

[Click Here for More Information - or to Register - from the Oct. 1 Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to the National Shrine in Washington, D.C.](#)

Mothers by grace: Cathedral Mass uplifts adoptive and foster moms



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.

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Local parishioners stunned, overjoyed at history-making American pope



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.”

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Faithful from the Scranton Diocese in Rome for historic papal election



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.

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Vance, Rubio to attend Pope Leo XIV's Inaugural Mass



Both Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio will attend the inaugural Mass of Pope Leo XIV on May 18, the vice president's office said.

Pope Leo is the first U.S.-born pope.

The two officials, both Catholic, will be joined by their respective spouses, second lady Usha Vance and Jeanette Rubio, in the U.S. delegation to the Mass for the inauguration of the pope's Petrine ministry in St. Peter's Square.

Vance – the second Catholic to hold the vice presidency, preceded only by former President Joe Biden – was in Vatican City in April, where he met with Pope Francis on Easter, the final full day of the late pope's life.

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Pope Leo encourages Christian Brothers to evangelize through education



Teaching should be lived as ministry and mission, Pope Leo XIV told the Brothers of the Christian Schools, also known as the De La Salle Brothers or the Christian Brothers.

He praised and encouraged them to continue to pay attention to teacher training “and the creation of educating communities where teaching is enriched by the contribution of everyone.”

In fact, “an aspect of the Lasallian reality that I consider important is teaching lived as ministry and mission, as consecration in the church,” he said during an audience at the Vatican May 15 with a group of Christian Brothers.

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Meeting Eastern Catholics, Pope pledges to be peacemaker



During a meeting with Eastern Catholics, many of whom come from war-torn regions of the world, Pope Leo XIV pledged the Vatican's full commitment to promoting peace and reconciliation.

"The peoples of our world desire peace, and to their leaders I appeal with all my heart: Let us meet, let us talk, let us negotiate!" the pope said May 14 during an audience in the Paul VI Hall with thousands of Eastern Catholics participating in their Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome.

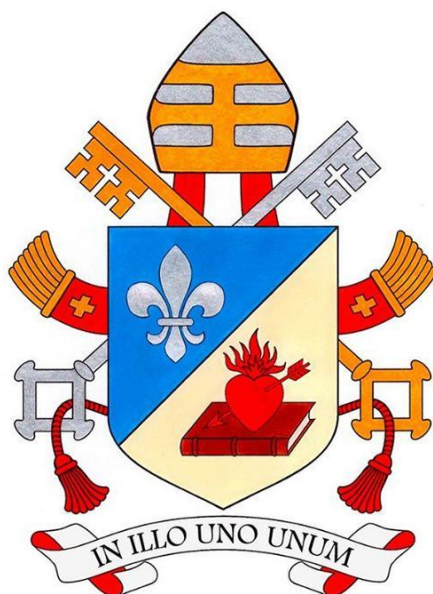
"War is never inevitable," the pope told them. "Weapons can and must be silenced, for they do not resolve problems but only increase them."

The audience was the culmination of a multi-day Jubilee celebration that included liturgies in the diverse rites of the

Eastern Catholic Churches – from the Syro-Malabar and Armenian traditions to the Byzantine and Coptic rites – held in Rome’s major basilicas.

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Pope Leo XIV's motto, Coat of Arms pay homage to Saint Augustine



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.

When he appeared on the balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica shortly after his election May 8, he introduced himself as “an Augustinian, a son of St. Augustine.”

And he explained that the cardinals who elected him “have chosen me to be the Successor of Peter and to walk together with you as a Church, united, ever pursuing peace and justice, ever seeking to

act as men and women faithful to Jesus Christ, in order to proclaim the Gospel without fear, to be missionaries.”

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.”

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Besides Leo XIII, 12 other popes have shared that name with the new pontiff; 5 are Saints



When Catholics heard on May 8 the new pope had chosen the name Leo XIV, the thoughts of many turned immediately to Leo XIII, the last pope to bear the name.

That most recent Leo, who served as pope from 1878 to 1903, is especially remembered for articulating the church's teaching on social justice in a rapidly changing and ever industrialized society. He was also interested in promoting the political, theological and philosophical vision of St. Augustine, the namesake and inspiration of the new pope's religious congregation, and St. Thomas Aquinas.

Leo XIII, was also known as "the Rosary Pope" for his unmatched 11 encyclical letters on Marian devotion.

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**Chicago-style hotdogs, the White Sox just
a few of new pope's Windy City faves**



“In honor of Pope Leo XIV, I’m going to have a thin crust pizza,” said Augustinian seminarian Brother Nathan Fernandes, a former chef at a fine dining Italian restaurant, in a tongue-in-cheek nod to the Chicago-born pope’s now permanent home in Rome.

Best known to this year’s set of seminarians from the Augustinian Midwest Province as Cardinal Robert F. Prevost, the native Chicagoan had just been elected pope the day before, on May 8, and the seminarians were taking a breather from the media frenzy that had descended on their formation house’s quiet block in Chicago’s Hyde Park.

But as details of Pope Leo’s past life come to light one thing, many are struck by his Chicago roots and his Chicago-ness.

Brother Nathan, a Canadian, told OSV News he knows in Chicago he’s swimming against the tide of deep-dish pizza that is a big part of this town’s signature fare.

And it’s a tide that Louis Prevost said he believes his youngest brother, Pope Leo XIV, still rides.

“I think it’s a place like Giordano’s,” Louis Prevost told OSV News. On the phone from his home on the southwest coast of Florida, he referred to what he thought was his brother’s preference, one of the city’s popular deep dish pizza joints. He said, with his brother Rob going off to seminary at 13, at the same time that he was drafted to the military, he remembered more of the pope’s childhood preferences.

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