

The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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With hearts full of hope, hundreds make Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to *'Mary's House'*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025, more than 600 pilgrims from the Diocese of Scranton made a sacred journey to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. as part of a Jubilee Year of Hope pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage brought together faithful from all corners of the Diocese's 11 counties. Twelve buses carried groups from dozens of parishes – ten departing early that morning and two others arriving from overnight trips. Many others traveled by car, all drawn together by a desire to be together in faith, fellowship, and prayer.

The National Shrine – reverently called “Mary’s House” – is the largest Catholic church in North America and among the ten largest in the world.

With more than 80 chapels and oratories honoring



On Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025, more than 600 pilgrims from the Diocese of Scranton participated in a sacred journey to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., as part of the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope. Following Mass, the pilgrims gathered on the steps of the Basilica for a group photo. (Photo/Dan Gallagher)

the Blessed Virgin Mary under various titles, the National Shrine reflects not only the cultural diversity of the United States but the universality of the Catholic Church.

Upon arrival, pilgrims were welcomed by Rev. Monsignor Vito A. Buonanno, Director of Pilgrimages

for the Shrine, who urged the faithful to allow Mary to be their model and guide for the day.

“From the moment you enter this magnificent edifice, the sign of the Blessed Mother is present,” he explained.

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Love for the poor is hallmark of faith, Pope Leo says in first exhortation



Pope Leo XIV signs his first apostolic exhortation, “Dilexi Te” (“I Have Loved You”), in the library of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican Oct. 4, 2025, as Archbishop Edgar Peña Parra, the substitute secretary for general affairs at the Vatican Secretariat of State, looks on. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Many Christians “need to go back and re-read the Gospel” because they have forgotten that faith and love for the poor go hand in hand, Pope Leo XIV said in his first major papal document.

“Love for the poor - whatever the form their poverty may take - is the evangelical hallmark of a Church faithful to the heart of God,” the pope wrote in “Dilexi Te” (“I Have Loved You”), an apostolic exhortation “to all Christians on love for the poor.”

Pope Leo signed the document Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, and the Vatican released the text Oct. 9.

The document was begun by Pope Francis, Pope Leo said, but he added to it and wanted to issue it near the beginning of his papacy “since I share the desire of my beloved predecessor that all Christians come to appreciate the close connection between Christ’s love and his summons to care for the poor.”

The connection is not new or modern and was not a Pope Francis invention, he said. In fact, throughout the Hebrew Scriptures “God’s love is vividly demonstrated by his protection of the weak and the poor, to the extent that he can be said to have a particular fondness for them.”

“I am convinced that the preferential choice for the poor is a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society,” Pope Leo wrote, “if we can only set ourselves free of our self-centeredness and open our ears to their cry.”

As he has done from the beginning of his papacy in May, the pope decried the increasing gap between the world’s wealthiest and poorest citizens and noted how women often are “doubly poor,” struggling to feed their children and doing so with few rights or possibilities.

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OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE
DIOCESE OF SCRANTON



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Catholic community of the Diocese of Scranton, are called through Baptism to imitate the servant leadership of Jesus Christ. In union with Our Holy Father, the Pope, we proclaim the Gospel faithfully, celebrate the sacraments joyfully, and boldly promote life, justice and peace in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.

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Eight men in Diaconate Formation instituted as Lectors

SCRANTON – Eight men in the Diocese of Scranton's Permanent Diaconate Formation Program were instituted as Lectors on Saturday, Oct. 11, 2025, during a special Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter celebrated by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

The men receiving the ministry of Lector were: William Chechel of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville; Daniel B. Cosacchi of Saint Gregory Parish in Clarks Green; Jeffrey R. Kovaleski of Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Dickson City; Thomas J. Krzan of Saint Jude Parish in Mountain Top; Kevin J. Martin of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville; Stephen O. Muntzenberger of Saint Jude Parish in Mountain Top; Justo Paula-Martinez of Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish in Scranton; and Paul M. Zwolan of Saint Therese Parish in Shavertown.

As a part of the Rite, each man knelt before the Bishop and received a Book of Holy Scriptures – a powerful moment marking their call to not just proclaim the Word of God during liturgical celebrations but to live that Word through their daily witness.

In his homily, Bishop Bambera reflected on the Gospel of the Road to Emmaus, reminding those gathered that “the voice of the Lord that we seek speaks powerfully to us through the sacred scriptures.”

He encouraged the new Lectors to embrace their new role not as a mere step on their journey, but as a sacred trust, saying, “You are being called to a special recognition of the Word of God in your lives that is essential to the life of the Church.”

The diaconate candidates say experiencing the Rite was deeply moving and personal.



Eight men were installed in the Ministry of Lector at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Oct. 11, 2025. Shown after the Mass are, from left: Father Mark J. DeCelles, Director of the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program; Daniel B. Cosacchi; Jeffrey R. Kovaleski; Kevin J. Martin; William Chechel; Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; Thomas J. Krzan; Paul M. Zwolan; Justo Paula-Martinez; and Stephen O. Muntzenberger. (Photo/Mike Melisky)

Thomas Krzan, a parishioner of Saint Jude Parish in Mountain Top, reflected on the weight of the responsibility.

“Not only can I now proclaim the Word of God in the liturgy, but I must act it out – be an example of the Word of God in my workplace, in my family, and among my group of friends,” Krzan said. “The Word of God is not just words. It is action.”

Kevin Martin of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brodheadsville echoed the spiritual gravity of the moment.

He described the moment of kneeling in front of the Bishop to receive the Book of Holy Scriptures as “powerful.”

“I tend to get teary-eyed a lot and that is one of those moments where it just hit. Both our hands being on the Book and realizing what I’m getting into,” Martin explained. “But we’re not walking this journey by ourselves. There are a lot of people around us supporting us. The (Diaconate) Formation Program shows us that over and over.”



Kevin Martin of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish described the moment of receiving the Book of Holy Scriptures from Bishop Bambera as being “powerful.”

The Rite of Lector is one of the key milestones in the Diaconate Formation Program. It precedes the Rite of Acolyte and leads toward ordination as a Permanent Deacon. It also marks the Church’s formal recognition of the candidates’ growing commitment to serve.

William Chechel, also from Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, described the day as a powerful affirmation.

“I have been active in my parish for more than 20 years and I’ve watched two of our permanent deacons – what they do and how they serve the community. They go to nursing homes, they do food banks, and I have felt compelled,” Chechel said. “I thought that was something I was being called to do, as a servant leader, more than just the average volunteer.”

Bishop Bambera concluded the celebration with a note of gratitude for the loved ones who are accompanying these men in their formation.

“To the wives and children, parents, family members, and friends – I thank you for your support, your encouragement, your willingness to allow these men to listen to the call of Jesus and to say ‘yes’ to his invitation to serve,” Bishop Bambera stated.

Please continue to keep these eight men in your prayers as they continue their journey in service to the Church and the people of the Diocese of Scranton.

Saint Eulalia Parish marks 75 years with celebration of faith and community

ROARING BROOK TOWNSHIP – With the beautiful colors of the changing autumn season providing a picturesque backdrop outside its church, the community of Saint Eulalia Parish gathered in prayer, thanksgiving, and celebration to mark a milestone 75 years in the making.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, was the principal celebrant and homilist of a special 75th Anniversary Mass at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 12, 2025. The pews of the church were filled with several hundred faithful, including longtime parishioners older than the parish itself and young children who will carry it into the future.

Following Mass, a catered luncheon in the parish hall drew more than 220 guests.

“We have a vibrant parish with a wonderful past and a hopeful future,” Father David Cramer, pastor, said. “Great things are happening here at the parish for worship and service. We have a good number of kids in religious education – more than 200 – and a lot of baptisms and a nice number of weddings.”

Founded as an independent parish in 1950, Saint Eulalia’s roots reach back even further – to its days as a mission church in the late 1920s. The original stone church was dedicated in 1927 on land donated by the Vogelbocker family, and its current home on Blue Shutters Road – built in 1984 – reflects the growth and vision of a parish constantly evolving to meet the needs of its people.

“Today was a nice celebration to bring everybody together,” parishioner Linda Naro explained. “We had a very good turnout.”



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, assisted by Deacon Nick Rocco, blesses a new icon of Saint Eulalia during the parish's 75th Anniversary Mass held in Roaring Brook Township on Sunday, Oct. 12, 2025. (Photos/Eric Deabill)

Naro contributed to the anniversary celebration in a special way by painting a new icon of Saint Eulalia for the occasion.

“We had a small one that I did 11 years ago when I was first learning, so I felt that we needed a new one, since my painting has progressed,” she added. “During the Mass, Bishop Bambera blessed it with incense.”

Naro’s icon was also reproduced on commemorative holy cards distributed to attendees at the luncheon, featuring a prayer to the young saint who continues to inspire the community that bears her name.

Saint Eulalia was a 13-year-old Spanish girl martyred in the third century for refusing to renounce her faith. Her courage and faithfulness remain central to the parish’s identity today.



Saint Eulalia parishioner Linda Naro painted this new icon of Saint Eulalia which was blessed during the anniversary Mass. Saint Eulalia was a 13-year-old Spanish girl martyred for refusing to renounce her faith.

That same spirit of courage, faith, and unity is what 75th anniversary committee member Paulette Nish said makes Saint Eulalia a special place.

“The biggest thing for me is the sense of community that our parish has. We have wonderful families that are part of this community,” Nish stated. “It is just wonderful to have multiple generations celebrating with us this morning.”

The Mass itself was a joyful liturgy – enhanced by the voices of several choirs – including a children’s choir that sang following Holy Communion.

James Muniz, a lifelong parishioner, emphasized the day was not just about the celebration, but about what it represents.

“This is a celebration of the community

that we’ve built here. We have a beautiful building, but it is the people that are really the ‘parish,’” Muniz explained. “I’m proud because of the work that we do ... we come here to gain the energy to go out into the community, and as the deacon said, to proclaim the Gospel with our lives.”

A strong sense of fellowship was a recurring theme mentioned by parishioners.

“Our parish is like a big family,” parishioner Teri Taynton, added, describing the Mass as “absolutely beautiful.”

Father Cramer said he believes the parish’s best days are still to come because its people remain rooted in faith, love, and service.

“The Lord has even greater blessings for us in the future,” Father Cramer said.

Larksville parish celebrates 125+ years of faith

LARKSVILLE – Parishioners of Saint John the Baptist Parish in Larksville came together on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025, for a long-awaited Mass celebrating 125 years of faith, family, and their church community.

Originally planned for 2024, the Anniversary Mass was postponed so the parish could wait for their pastor, Father Gerald J. Gurka, to recover from eye surgery.

“We have some really great seeds of faith planted here and growing,” Father Gurka said.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, was principal celebrant and homilist for the Anniversary Mass. Many parishioners described his homily as especially moving.

“Bishop hit it out of the park for me,” parishioner Paula Yozwiak shared. “I even choked up a little bit sitting there, remembering everything that has gone on in my family – the good, the bad. I’m just grateful to be here.”

Lifelong parishioner Charles Prohaska, 85, is hopeful that young people will continue to be involved in parish life.

“It is a great parish. It’s a very welcoming parish,” he said. “My hope is parishioners, especially the young ones, will take part in everything that we do here.”

The Anniversary Mass brought back a keen sense of tradition and history for parishioners.

Michael Novrocki, a fourth-generation parishioner, said the Anniversary Mass held a lot of personal significance.

“My family history goes back to 1903 so today is a particular moment of pride for me and my family,” he said.

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Parishioners of Saint John the Baptist Parish in Larksville participate in their parish Anniversary Mass on Sept. 20, 2025.

A NEW BEGINNING:

Saint Michael Parish finds new home at historic Saint Lucy Church

SCRANTON – With great excitement and a public procession of faith, Saint Michael Parish in Scranton officially opened a new chapter in its history on Sunday, Sept. 28, 2025.

After several years of growth and increasing needs at their longtime church, Saint Michael Church located at 1703 Jackson Street, parishioners joyfully celebrated a big move. They celebrated the first Traditional Latin Mass at their new parish home – Saint Lucy Church, 949 Scranton Street, a beloved and historic site in Scranton’s West Side neighborhood.

The transition, which came after extensive conversation and consultation, is part of the Diocese of Scranton’s Vision 2030 Pastoral Planning Process. Vision 2030 seeks to address challenges facing parishes – including clergy shortages, aging infrastructure, and shifting parishioner demographics – while also embracing opportunities to grow and strengthen vibrant worshipping communities.

PROCESSION TO NEW HOME

The day began early that Sunday morning with a final 8:00 a.m. Mass at Saint Michael Church. Following the celebration, the church officially closed its doors, and parishioners, altar servers, and clergy formed a Eucharistic Procession that made its way reverently down Jackson Street.

The procession was a public sign of transition and unity.

“We entered gloriously into this beautiful church (Saint Lucy’s) with our



On Sunday, Sept. 28, 2025, parishioners of Saint Michael Parish celebrated Mass inside Saint Lucy Church, the new principal worship site of their parish. (Photos/Dan Piazza)

Lord, greeted by a lot of parishioners,” Father Anthony Dorsa, F.S.S.P., pastor of Saint Michael Parish, said. “It was incredible to see how many people were in this wonderful church.”

In 2023, Saint Lucy Church – long known as the Italian mother church of Scranton – consolidated with Saint Patrick Parish in West Scranton and was being utilized for only one Mass each weekend. Through prayer and collaboration between both Saint Patrick and Saint Michael parishes, a bold idea emerged: Saint Michael Parish would assume responsibility for Saint Lucy Church, revitalizing the space with its growing attendance and liturgical life.

“It is an amazing move. (Saint Lucy) Church is just absolutely gorgeous and it is a lot bigger,” said parishioner Sean Michelin, who has been a member of Saint Michael Parish for more than a decade.

Beyond the practical needs of providing more space and parking, Saint Michael parishioners were struck by the architectural and

spiritual beauty of their new home.

“The frescos on the ceiling are beautiful,” Michelin added. “The choir and the acoustics are absolutely amazing. You hear the organ and everyone singing, and it just comes together as a beautiful symphony.”

VISION BEHIND THE MOVE

According to Diocesan leadership, the relocation was prompted by converging needs.

While Saint Patrick Parish faced ongoing financial strain with caring for Saint Lucy Church, Saint Michael Parish – the only parish in the Diocese that offers the Traditional Latin Mass – had been growing in attendance.

The change was the result of a careful, months-long discernment process, involving parish council meetings, town halls, and input from parishioners. The move was finalized after receiving approval from the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

Father Dorsa called the move a “remarkable opportunity.”

“Saint Michael’s didn’t really have any classroom space, so it was constantly a struggle for us to provide space for



Saint Lucy Church is the new principal worship site for Saint Michael Parish.

our children for catechism and space for hospitality and gathering after Masses,” he said. “This campus provides us a much greater opportunity to grow, to educate, to have more groups, outreach and evangelization in the neighborhood.”

A SHARED FUTURE

Parishioners of Saint Michael Parish are inviting those who attended Mass at Saint Lucy Church to continue to join them.

“This is a very exciting day for us as parishioners of Saint Michael’s (Parish). This is very exciting for everyone,” parishioner Michael Pheasant explained. “It reminds me of a wedding. We’re two families coming together and I think we have a lot to learn from each other, and I think it will be overall a great experience for all of us.”

Parishioner Jennifer Cilia, who moved to northeastern Pennsylvania in 1999, described the moment as surreal.

“As we came up here, just seeing the grandeur, God’s glory approaching Saint Lucy’s, the marble steps and the bells ringing ... it gives you hope that God’s Church is flourishing and we’re very blessed,” Cilia said.

“We’re incredibly blessed,” Father Dorsa ended by saying.



At the conclusion of the final Mass at Saint Michael Church, 1703 Jackson Street, parishioners held a Eucharistic Procession through the streets of Scranton to their new home, Saint Lucy Church.



*Creating Parish Communities
Rooted in the Life of Jesus Christ*



‘Leave a Mark’ Mass to be held Nov. 2 at Cathedral

SCRANTON - Young adults are invited to join the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, and the Diocesan Vocations Office for the tenth annual Leave a Mark Mass on Nov. 2, 2025, to kick off National Vocation Awareness Week!

Mass will take place at 5:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

The Leave a Mark Mass is the Diocese of Scranton’s response to what Pope Francis said at World Youth Day in 2016, “Dear young people, we didn’t come into this world to ‘vegetate,’ to take it easy, to make our lives a comfortable sofa to fall asleep on. No, we came for another reason: to leave a mark. It is very sad to pass through life without leaving a mark.”

Now, every year on the Sunday before National Vocation Awareness Week, young adults from around our diocese come together to worship the Lord, meet one another, and discern how God is calling us to leave a mark in this world through our vocation.

Bishop Bambera will be the principal celebrant of the Mass, and Father Alex Roche, Director of Vocations and Seminarians, and Pastor of Saint Maria Goretti Parish in

Laffin, will be the homilist.

There will be a reception following the Mass at the Diocesan Pastoral Center across the street from the Cathedral of Saint Peter featuring The Greek Shack and All Belgium food trucks!

Several Diocesan priests and religious order priests will also be in attendance to answer any questions that young people may have about vocations or to simply engage in meaningful conversation.

Not only is the annual Leave a Mark Mass an opportunity to worship the Lord and learn more about vocations, it is a wonderful opportunity to meet other young adults from parishes across the Diocese of Scranton’s 11 counties.

For those unable to attend the Mass in person, CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will broadcast the Leave a Mark Mass live on Nov. 2, and make a livestream available that will be available on the Diocese of Scranton website and YouTube channel, with links also available on all Diocesan social media platforms.

Please plan to join us on Nov. 2!



¡Viva Cristo Rey! Diocesan Youth Rally unites more than 200 teens in Christ

EAST STROUDSBURG – The auditorium of Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School was filled with music and energy on Sept. 27, 2025, as more than 200 young Catholics gathered for the third annual Diocesan Youth Rally.

Teens from across the Diocese of Scranton – representing more than 20 parishes – came together for a day packed with powerful speakers, breakout sessions, Eucharistic Adoration, and Mass celebrated by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

The Diocesan Youth Rally, which is open to students in grades 7-12, is quickly becoming a highlight for youth ministry groups. Participants say this year’s event did not disappoint.

“It’s an incredible act of evangelization,” keynote speaker Dan Harms, a dynamic Catholic performer and inspirational speaker, explained. “It is a marker on the map towards changing a culture. It is a marker on the map towards giving all these kids a reference point for what their lived experience of faith can be.”

Harms brought a blend of storytelling, interactive skits, and musical icebreakers to the event. His message? Hope isn’t wishful thinking – it’s rooted in the unshakeable promises of God.

“I always like to emphasize joy and hope. Today, our theme is ‘Anchored in Hope,’ so we’re talking about the hope that we find in our faith,” he added.

Headlining the music for the Youth Rally were the Scally Brothers, a high-energy duo from Ohio known for their deep faith and infectious beats.

“Music is the invitation that invites people to break



More than 200 young Catholics participated in the 2025 Diocesan Youth Rally on Sept. 27, 2025.

down walls,” Jake Scally said. “When you have music, it might relate to someone in a special way – a melody, a bass drop, a guitar lick or a drum solo, and then they start to listen to the lyrics that point to Christ.”

Music has so much power,” Zach Scally added. “When you merge that with the power of the Gospel, you ultimately have the power to change somebody’s life forever.”

For many students, the concert was a highlight of the day.

“The Scally Brothers have a lot of great music, and they just show a great example of how to worship God,” Connor Cinoski, a participant from Saint Jude Parish in



Keynote speaker Dan Harms energized the crowd at Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School. (Photos/Dan Piazza)

Mountain Top, said.

Beyond the music and messages, what made the Diocesan Youth Rally truly impactful was the opportunity for young people to build real relationships – with God and with one another.

“Social media can make young people feel isolated,” Harms said. “To be able to come together and have an experience with a few hundred other Catholic teens is really impactful.”

The Diocese of Scranton is already looking forward to welcoming even more youth for the Fourth Annual Diocesan Youth Rally, scheduled for Nov. 7, 2026. Mark your calendars now and stay anchored in hope!

Thousands gather in Harrisburg for fifth annual Pennsylvania March for Life

HARRISBURG — Under overcast skies and amid heightened security, more than 5,000 pro-life advocates from across the Commonwealth gathered at the State Capitol on Monday, Sept. 22, 2025, for the fifth annual Pennsylvania March for Life.

Among them were hundreds of faithful people from the Diocese of Scranton who were united in their prayerful witness to the sanctity of human life. Many traveled by bus from parishes in Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Hazleton, Poconos, and the Northern Tier.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, was one of several Pennsylvania Bishops who joined the crowds in Harrisburg. His presence was a source of encouragement for many in the crowd, especially first-time participants.

Among those making the trip to Harrisburg for his first Pennsylvania March for Life was Mike Casey of Most Holy Trinity Parish in Cresco.

“It was great. It was very emotional, and I had a great time,” Casey said. “Hopefully, it sends the message for pro-life. We need (to be) pro-life. We have to end the abortion of babies. There are other ways of dealing with that solution.”

Frank Socha, a seasoned marcher from the Northern Tier, echoed that sentiment.

“This is the fifth one I’ve been to and I’m pretty passionate about the fact that abortion is murder,” Socha said. “These unborn babies have the right to live.”

Socha’s group from the Bradford County area has grown steadily in attendance each year, requiring two buses this time.

“The first year of the March we had 29 people on the bus. Then we went to 42. Last year, we went to 70,” he added. “This year, without pushing we had over 70 people, so I said we had to get two buses.”

Cathy Moliski of Sayre said she was touched by many stories she heard while marching around the State Capitol Complex.

“A lady I was walking with, her daughter just told her, ‘I could have had an abortion, and I didn’t.’ She put her child up for adoption at some point and she said to her mom, I was on that line where I could have said I’m going to abort,” Moliski recalled.



More than 5,000 pro-life advocates gathered at the State Capitol in Harrisburg Sept. 22, 2025, for the fifth annual PA March for Life.

STUDENTS MARCH FORWARD

More than a dozen students from Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre made the trip to the Pennsylvania March for Life alongside two chaperones.

Alex Snyder, a junior who plays football for the Luzerne County Catholic School, attended with his classmates at the encouragement of their teacher.

“It’s awesome the amount of people that came out,” Snyder said. “There are thousands of people here supporting the same cause.”

Noting the importance of pro-life activism, Snyder hopes to march again next year.

“One guy on our bus said he’s been coming for 35 years to all different marches, so I think it’s cool to be able to attend one. This is our first ... and hopefully many more to come,” he added.

Maryann Lawhon, CEO, The VOICE of JOHN Ministry, who has been a pro-life champion for decades, found inspiration in seeing all the youth representation at the Pennsylvania March for Life.

“I love seeing our students for life out in number. This is so important,” Lawhon explained.

Lawhon shared the story of how discovering the body of an aborted child changed her life more than four decades ago.

“I found him after he had been aborted. He would be 48 years old this month. I had the privilege of baptizing him. I knew his

name was John and the last words I spoke to John were: ‘I will be your voice,’” Lawhon said.

CALLS TO ACTION

Prior to the march itself, a series of speakers delivered deeply personal, faith-filled testimonies about the pro-life cause.

Dr. Robby Waller, an emergency room physician, told the story of unexpectedly adopting a newborn baby girl after her birth mother asked for her to be placed in a loving home.

“We named this little girl Amanda, which means ‘worthy of love,’” he said. “We are so grateful that her mother gave her to us because Mandi has been a source of joy since the day she came home.”

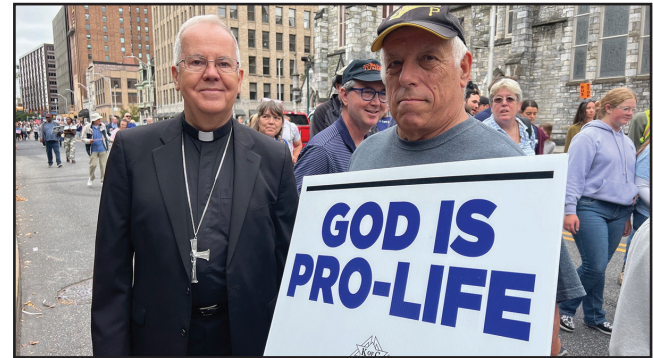
The keynote address was given by Ryan Bomberger, well known pro-life advocate and founder of the Radiance Foundation.

Adopted after being conceived in rape, Bomberger said, “Although my birth mom was a victim of the violence of rape, she did not make me a victim of the violence of abortion. For that, I am forever grateful.”

Sarah Bowen, founding president of the Pennsylvania Pregnancy Wellness Collaborative, delivered a powerful message about supporting women in crisis pregnancies.



A member of the press films the start of the PA March for Life following a rally on the steps of the State Capitol in Harrisburg Sept. 22, 2025. (Photos/Eric Deabill)



Bishop Bambera poses for a photo with Frank Socha, who brought more than 100 people to the PA March for Life on two buses from Bradford County.

“Some mothers desperately want to carry their babies but are overwhelmed by fear. They may be pressured by family or friends to choose abortion, and they look to pregnancy centers to hear that they can do it,” she explained.

Jennie Bradley Lichter, president of March for Life, also energized the crowd.

“Science is on our side,” she declared. “Let us keep marching together for as long as it takes until every woman, and every child, born and unborn, is cherished and protected.”

She highlighted current legislation in the Pennsylvania General Assembly that would require public schools to teach fetal development beginning at conception through computer-generated animation or high-def ultrasound.

“This would ensure that Pennsylvania students learn about the extraordinary journey of life that begins in the womb and open their eyes at a formative age to the humanity of the unborn child in a really powerful way,” Lichter said.

Father George Jeffrey dies at age 85 after serving Scranton Diocese for 56 years

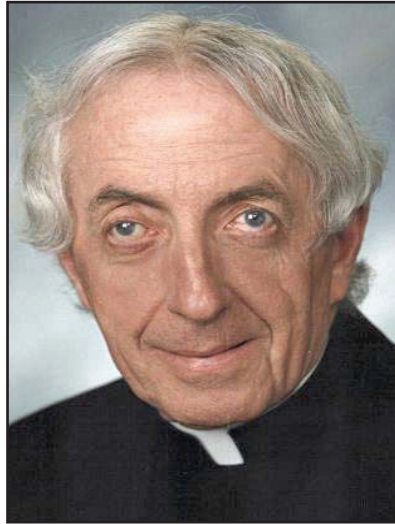
WILKES-BARRE — The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant of a Pontifical Concelebrated Funeral Mass for Father George A. Jeffrey on Oct. 9 at Saint Nicholas-Saint Mary Parish in Wilkes-Barre.

Father Jeffrey, a priest of the Diocese of Scranton for 56 years who was residing in Wilkes-Barre, died Sept. 17 at the age of 85.

Born Sept. 27, 1939, in Pittston, son of the late Raymond Jeffrey and Alma Sharkey Jeffrey, Father Jeffrey was a graduate of Scranton Preparatory School and attended Saint Jerome College in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

He earned his bachelor's degree from Saint Bonaventure University, Olean, N.Y., and completed his seminary training and priestly formation at Christ the King Seminary in Olean.

Father Jeffrey was ordained to the priesthood on May 8, 1965, at the Cathedral of Saint Matthew the Apostle in Washington, D.C., by Scranton native Cardinal Patrick A. O'Boyle, Archbishop of Washington.



Father George A. Jeffrey

He was incardinated into the Diocese of Scranton in 1969.

Father Jeffrey was appointed assistant pastor at Saint Paul Parish in February 1969. He subsequently served as assistant pastor at the parishes of Saint Mary, Avoca, and Saint Matthew, East Stroudsburg.

In May 1976, he was assigned as

chaplain of Saint Joseph's Hospital in Hazleton, where he served until his appointment as administrator *pro tem* at Our Lady of Victory Parish, Harveys Lake, in January 1980. He would assume the parish pastorate there in January 1981.

Father Jeffrey was named pastor of Saint Luke Parish, Jersey Shore, in September 1986, and pastor of Saint Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg, a year later. In January 1991, Father was appointed chaplain of the State Correctional Institution at Dallas, where he served until November 1995. He lived in residence at Saint Therese Church, Wilkes Barre, from 1995 until its closing in June 2011.

Father Jeffrey also held chaplaincies at Mercy Hospital, Wilkes-Barre; Clarks Summit State Hospital; and Marywood University, Scranton. For many years, he celebrated Mass in Latin at Sacred Heart Church in Greeley, where a special Mass and luncheon were held in honor of his 50th anniversary of ordination in June 2015.

Father retired from priestly ministry on July 1, 2018. He resided at Villa Saint Joseph, Dunmore, from 2011 until December 2023, at which time he moved to Allied Services Meade Street Residence in Wilkes-Barre. He celebrated his 60th ordination anniversary on May 8.

Father Joseph Evanko, pastor of Saint Jude Parish in Mountain Top, gave the funeral Mass homily for his priest-friend.

"As I spoke to brother priests, family members and people Father Jeffrey ministered to, I came to realize in many ways he became a wounded healer," Father Evanko remarked. "Father Jeffrey spent his

life and his priesthood accepting his own wounds while having faith to be healed, and the courage to bring healing to others."

The homilist quoted retired diocesan priest Monsignor John Bendik as he offered consolation to Father Jeffrey's family.

"I was often inspired by your uncle's outreach to the neediest of our society," Monsignor Bendik shared. "Many times, early on a snowy morning, he would be driving to meet with someone who yearned to have a listening ear and an open heart to show compassion."

Father Evanko added, "As a person created in God's image and likeness, and as a priest, Father Jeffrey met the compassion and suffering of Christ. It allowed him to help others connect compassion and suffering with Christ, and to be open to Christ our Savior and Redeemer."

Surviving are several nieces and nephews, including Molly McLaughlin Hoegen and husband, Frank, Kingston; Tommy McLaughlin and wife, Katie, Wilkes-Barre; Michael McLaughlin and wife, Debbie, Roswell, Ga.; Erin McLaughlin, Kingston; and Vince Griffin, Kingston. He is also survived by numerous great nieces and nephews, their spouses and children; and cousins.

Father Jeffrey was also preceded in death by two sisters, Mary Elizabeth Jeffrey, M.D., formerly of Haverford, and Christine Jeffrey McLaughlin, Wilkes-Barre; and brother-in-law, Thomas V. McLaughlin, Wilkes-Barre.

Entombment will be in the Resurrection Mausoleum at Saint Mary's Cemetery, Hanover Township.

Respect Life Sunday Mass held Oct. 5



Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, who reflected in his homily on this year's theme, "Life: Our Sign of Hope!" - part of the Church's Jubilee Year of Hope.

"Every human life is a precious gift from God, especially the most vulnerable," Bishop Bambera said, calling the faithful to action in building a culture of life. "We cannot merely speak of our respect for human life ... We must enliven our words with action."

While acknowledging ongoing challenges in defending life - from the unborn to the elderly - Bishop Bambera emphasized that Catholics are called to be "light in the midst of darkness" and to promote mercy, healing, and hope through ministries that serve those in need, like Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton.

The Respect Life Sunday Mass was broadcast by CTV: Catholic Television and is available to view on the Diocese of Scranton YouTube channel and Diocesan website at dioceseofscranton.org.

SCRANTON - Faithful from across the Diocese of Scranton gathered at the Cathedral of Saint Peter on Sunday, Oct. 5, 2025, for the annual Respect Life Mass, marking the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time and the national observance of Respect Life Sunday.

The Mass was celebrated by the

Parishioners reflect on a 125 years of faithful witness

Continued from Page 3

"I wrote the history (of the parish) for the 100th anniversary back in 1999 and I just did an update for the 125th anniversary," Novrocki added.

Novrocki recalled the early sacrifices of the Polish immigrants who founded the parish in 1898, including building a new church after the original was lost to fire.

"The parish really banded together,

rolled up their sleeves and they each contributed \$75 to the construction of the new church," he said.

As the community looks to the future, many say the spirit of Saint John the Baptist Parish remains strong.

"My hope is that people remain faithful and inspire others to be faithful and go to church, and be active in their church and community," Yozwiak said.

Pilgrimage offers powerful witness to Church's unity and vitality

Continued from Page 1

Pilgrims spent the late morning and early afternoon touring the Basilica, praying at its chapels, and taking part in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. At 2:00 p.m., Diocesan pilgrims gathered for a Eucharistic Holy Hour with the Rosary, followed by a Pontifical Mass celebrated by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, in the Upper Church.

‘WE MOVE FORWARD WITH HOPE’

In his homily for the Pilgrimage, Bishop Bambera called pilgrims to deepen their trust in God's promises – especially through the example of the Blessed Mother.

“What a blessed day this has been as we’ve journeyed here, to Mary’s house, in celebration of the great Jubilee Year of Hope. I’m grateful to be with all of you on this pilgrimage,” Bishop Bambera began by saying.

Quoting Pope Francis and Pope Leo XIV, Bishop Bambera reminded the faithful that Christian hope is not naïve optimism, but a living trust in God's love – a hope that “does not disappoint.” He drew from Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans, proclaiming that “our hope rests solely upon God's saving action realized in his Son, Jesus Christ.”

Preaching both in English and Spanish, the Bishop turned often to Mary's example as the “threshold of hope.”

In a world “fraught with suffering and pain,” Bishop Bambera said, it is Mary's posture of trust and openness that shows each believer how to live in hope.

“Her willingness to say ‘yes’ to God's plan to bring salvation to his people is rooted in a faith so strong that it establishes the parameters for authentic discipleship down through the ages, even to our own,” he said.

Looking out at all of the pilgrims, the Bishop invited each one to find their place in God's plan of hope – whether they are young people juggling life and faith, parents forming their children, the elderly, immigrants, or those burdened by regret.

“God uses us as we are,” he said, “when we open our hearts to him and trust.”



More than 20 priests serving in the Diocese of Scranton concelebrated the Closing Mass for the Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025. (Photos/Dan Gallagher)

As he concluded, the Bishop urged pilgrims to move forward with hope, “knowing that God is with us all our days, even until the end of the age.”

PILGRIMS SHARE THEIR JOY

As he toured the Basilica, Edward Facciani of Saint John Vianney Parish in Montdale reflected on the beauty and theological richness of the side chapels.

“They give us a wonderful historical opportunity to view our whole salvific history. I found that really striking,” he said. “And, of course, the Crypt is magnificent. I really love spending time down there.”

His wife and first-time visitor Bernice Facciani felt personally called to come on the pilgrimage.

“The Lord has been trying to teach me a little bit more about Mary and when I heard that the Diocese was coming here, I thought it was a place I needed to come,” Bernice stated.

Bernice found herself thinking about all of the people who built the Basilica out of love for the Lord.

“It’s a gift that they gave to the rest of us,” she said, adding, “You could spend three days here and still not see everything there is to see in the Basilica itself.”

Karen Bernavage of Saint Catherine of Siena Parish in Moscow was also overwhelmed by the beauty of everything she took in during her tour.

“The amount of statues, the prayers on the wall. Everything about it, it just goes on and on,” she stated. “It gives you a feeling of warmth.”

Bernavage said she was happy she toured the Basilica as part of a large group.

“When everybody comes together, it makes it like a family because you’ve all experienced it together,” she added.

‘LET HOPE SPREAD’

Monsignor Walter R. Rossi, Rector of the Basilica and a priest of the Diocese of Scranton, expressed his joy at welcoming the faithful to Washington, D.C.

He noted that the Diocese of Scranton has made pilgrimages to the Basilica since 1973.

“For the past five decades, the Diocese has continued to make pilgrimages to Mary’s Shrine, especially during significant moments in the life of the Diocesan Church as well as the Church universal, as you are today, in celebration of the Jubilee Year of Hope,” he noted.

“I am thrilled that we have over 20 priests joining us this day,” Monsignor Rossi added. “Through the intercession of Mary, may the power of love fill your life this day and all days.”

After taking a group photo on the steps of the Basilica, pilgrims boarded their buses to return home.

Bishop Bambera hopes their pilgrimage serves as a powerful reminder



The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, reverently called ‘Mary’s House,’ is the largest Catholic church in North America and among the ten largest in the world. It contains more than 80 chapels and oratories honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary under various titles, reflecting the universality of the Church.

that the Church is alive – and united – in hope.

“Let us now be drawn to this great hope,” the Bishop said, echoing Pope Leo’s Jubilee message. “And through our witness, may hope spread to all those who anxiously seek it.”

PONTIFICAL MASS CELEBRATED BY BISHOP BAMBERA



Incensation of the Altar



Welcome by Msgr. Walter Rossi, Basilica Rector



Pilgrims Listen to the Gospel (Matthew 28:16-20)



Presentation of the Gifts at Mass



Parishioners Recite the 'Our Father'



The Catholic Choral Society Performs



Distribution of Holy Communion

EUCHARISTIC HOLY HOUR WITH ROSARY



Fr. Andrew S. Hvozdovic begins Holy Hour



Pilgrims Pray the Rosary Together



Pilgrims Kneel During Benediction



Pilgrims Recite the Divine Praises

Christ is King: Hundreds gather for Catholic Men's Conference

WILKES-BARRE – Nearly 400 Catholic men from across the Diocese of Scranton and beyond gathered on Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025, at Holy Redeemer High School for the 10th annual “Be A Catholic Man” Conference.

Participants said the day provided them with a chance for spiritual renewal, brotherhood, and the opportunity to step away from the noise of daily life and step deeper into their identity as followers of Jesus Christ.

The day began with the Rosary and included Eucharistic Adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, food, and fellowship, and more than a dozen exhibitors featuring Catholic organizations and religious artwork.

“They call it a retreat and that is what it is,” Gary Morgiewicz from Warwick, N.Y., said. “God is going to speak to us most clearly and loudly at a place like this, where we put everything aside and concentrate and focus on what is important, family and faith, and that is why I’m here.”

Thaddeus Zielinski, a parishioner of Saint Ann Basilica Parish in Scranton and long-time conference attendee, added, “There is nothing like hearing 400 men say the ‘Our Father’ at one time. It’s very powerful.”

The conference theme, “Christ is King,” was central to each of the speakers’ powerful messages.

Author and theologian Mike Aquilina, a native of nearby Kingston, opened the day with a call to model authentic Christian masculinity through sacrificial love.

“Christ, Our King, laid down his life for the sake of His subjects and so must we. We must live the love that he modeled for us,” Aquilina said, urging men to place Christ above all else – even above family – so that their homes may flourish under God’s reign.



Nearly 400 Catholic men from across the Diocese of Scranton and beyond attended the ‘Be A Catholic Man’ Conference on Oct. 4, 2025.

Through stories of his own father, he painted a vivid picture of love expressed through hard work, service, and presence.

“We need to share our lives with our families. Put away the phones. Put away the games,” he added. “We need to share our lives with others, through friendship and neighborliness.”

Father Charles Connor, Diocesan priest, author, and Church historian, challenged attendees to rediscover the strength and courage of the Catholic man in 2025.

“We have a gift that proportionally few people have been lucky enough to receive in life,” Father Connor said. Quoting Saint John Henry Newman, who will be made a Doctor of the Church on Nov. 1, he added, “The true Catholic, Christian gentleman is a warrior. Not because he loves the fight, but because he loves the truth.”

Drawing from history and saints like Saint Joseph, Father Connor reminded the audience that fidelity to the truth and holiness might be countercultural – but are necessary.

“Saint Joseph shows us the characteristics of authentic fatherhood,” he added. “Every one of us men can learn from him.”

The final speaker was David Bereit, founder of the international 40 Days for Life movement. A convert to Catholicism, Bereit shared how answering God’s call led him from sales into pro-life advocacy.

“The King is calling – the question is, will we answer?” he asked. “The change that is needed in our world today may be sitting in this auditorium here today. Is it you? If it’s not you – then who?”

A deeply moving moment of the conference came when family members of the late Attorney Glenn Yanik was honored with a commemorative plaque. Yanik was one of the original founders of the conference and served as co-chair for several years.

“We honor him as a great Catholic man, husband, father, grandfather, and mentor to many,” Dr. Lou Guarineri said during the presentation. “His legacy will live on in all of us.”

The day concluded with a Pontifical Mass offered by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, who delivered a homily tying the day’s mission to Respect Life Sunday.

Acknowledging the growing secularism in society, the Bishop urged the men to be light in the darkness.

“We must enliven our words



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera celebrated Mass to close out the Men’s Conference at Holy Redeemer High School. (Photos/Mike Melisky)



Above: More than a dozen exhibitors displayed products and artwork in the Holy Redeemer gym during the Men’s Conference.



Left: A man prays silently during the Liturgy of the Eucharist at the Mass which concluded the tenth annual ‘Be A Catholic Man’ conference.

with action. We must both choose and serve life – life in the womb, life that is found on the margins of our world and even life that struggles to respect and reverence others,” Bishop Bambera said.

Citing Jesus’ words in the Gospel and Pope Leo’s call to defend life from the unborn to the elderly, the Bishop concluded by saying, “Christ our King will reign and the vision of his Gospel of life and salvation will continue to be a source of hope for our world when you and I discover and accept our responsibility as Christian men to live, to love, to forgive, and to serve as Christ.”

As the conference concluded, many men said they left with something deeper than they came in with.

“You almost want to run out the door as a warrior for Jesus,” Joseph DeGraba, a first-time attendee from Saint Therese Parish in Shavertown, said. “The speakers have been excellent. There is a brotherhood, a camaraderie, where everybody is feeling the same thing and getting together with one purpose.”

Zielinski summed it up even more succinctly.

“Refreshed ... walking proud to be a Catholic,” he stated.

Jubilee Mass for Women and Men Religious to be celebrated Oct. 26

SCRANTON - Faithful from across the Diocese of Scranton are invited to participate in a joyful celebration as we honor the dedicated contributions of women and men in religious life during the annual Jubilee Mass for Women and Men Religious on Sunday, Oct. 26, 2025, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

The Mass will begin at 12:15 p.m., with the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, serving as the principal celebrant.

This special liturgy offers an opportunity to give thanks for the invaluable witness, service, and commitment of those who have devoted their lives to

God through religious vocations. From teaching in Catholic schools to providing hospital ministry, prayer and pastoral ministry, women and men religious have had a tremendous impact on the life of the Church and the communities they serve.

As we celebrate the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope, this Mass will also be a powerful reminder of the ongoing importance of vocations to religious life - and our shared responsibility to pray for and support those who answer God's call in such generous and selfless ways.

CTV: Catholic Television will broadcast the Mass live and provide a livestream on Diocesan social media platforms.

APPOINTMENTS

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

Reverend Richard W. Beck, to Administrator *pro tem*, Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Hawley, effective October 15, 2025.

Reverend Thomas J. Petro, J.V., J.C.L., to Judicial Vicar, effective October 1, 2025. Father Petro will continue to serve as Pastor, Queen of the Apostles Parish, Avoca, and Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Dupont. As Judicial Vicar, Father Petro will oversee all canonical processes related to marriage law, including marital annulments, dispensations, and permissions.

Reverend Shawn M. Simchock, from Pastor, Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Hawley, to Senior Priest, Our Lady of Peace Parish, Hazleton, effective October 15, 2025.

Reverend Jeffrey D. Tudgay, V.E., J.C.L., from Judicial Vicar, effective October 1, 2025. Father Tudgay will continue to serve as Pastor, Cathedral of Saint Peter Parish, Scranton, and Immaculate Conception Parish, Scranton, and as Episcopal Vicar for Canonical Services, directing all canonical processes related to clergy and to the Vision 2030 modification of parishes and churches.

DEACONS

Deacon Alan Baranski, to Diaconal Ministry, Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish, Pocono Pines, effective October 1, 2025. Deacon Baranski will continue his Diaconal Ministry at Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco.

Deacon José Mendoza, to Diaconal Ministry, Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish, Pocono Pines, effective October 1, 2025. Deacon Mendoza will continue his Diaconal Ministry at Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco.

Deacon Thomas Amoroso, to Diaconal Ministry, Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco, effective October 1, 2025. Deacon Amoroso will continue his Diaconal Ministry at Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish, Pocono Pines.



JUBILEE MASS

FOR WOMEN AND MEN RELIGIOUS



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26 12:15 P.M.
CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PETER, SCRANTON



BISHOP BAMBERA'S SCHEDULE

October 19 - World Mission Sunday Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:15 p.m.

October 26 - Jubilee Mass for Women and Men Religious
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:15 p.m.

October 27-30 - Convocation for Priests

November 1 - Pennsylvanians for Human Life Pro-Life Breakfast
Fiorelli's, Peckville, 9:00 a.m.

November 2 - Leave a Mark Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 5:00 p.m.

November 6 - School Mass for All Saints Academy
Scranton, 9:00 a.m.

November 7-13 - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops General Mtg
Baltimore

November 15 - Hispanic Convocation Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 12:10 p.m.

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.



Sixth grade students in Mrs. Brown's science class at **Saint Agnes School in Towanda** worked with their third grade buddies to dissect owl pellets and identify bone structures that were found.



Students at **Epiphany School in Sayre** celebrated the Feast of Saint Francis with the Blessing of Animals with Father Dan Toomey, pastor of Epiphany Parish, and raised more than \$600 for Saint Francis Kitchen.



Congratulations to the 2025-26 student council elected officers at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green**.



Sixth grade students at **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore** welcomed their parents to their classroom on Back to School Night with self-portraits.



As part of their Homecoming & Spirit Week celebrations, the community at **Holy Cross High School in Dunmore** was "seeing double" on Twin Day.



It's an early morning start for members of the Jr. Spartan Running Club at **Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg**.



On the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, eighth grade students at **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter** led fellow students in prayer while holding a balloon representation of a rosary.



Pre-Kindergarten students at **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton** prepare for fall with pictures they created showing how trees will look in the coming weeks.



Students and faculty at **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg** wear their favorite jerseys during their NFL vs. NBA Dress Down Day, one of their Spirit Week activities.



Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre



Holy Rosary School in Duryea



**Saint John Neumann
Elementary School in Williamsport**



Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School in Williamsport

The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera celebrated Masses at four of our schools just after his return from Rome, where there was much excitement about the canonization of Saint Carlo Acutis, our first millennial saint. He explained to students that Carlo Acutis was an ordinary teenager who was tech savvy, loved to play video games, adored his dog, and played soccer and basketball. But he stood out in a very positive way in his love for Jesus and his dedication to reading & living the Gospel messages. The Bishop reminded students that by promoting peace, harmony, respect, and love to all people, they can become saints themselves.



Third graders at **Holy Family Academy in Hazleton** are learning the engineering process. Working in teams, they created bridges using straws, paper, and tape, trying to build one that would hold the most coins.



The Pre-Kindergarten students at **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston** recently had their stuffed animals blessed by Monsignor David Tressler, pastor of Saint Ignatius/Holy Family Parishes.



It was Fall Festival time at **Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre**. This faculty-hosted event featured s'more making, crafts, face painting, scavenger hunts, bounce houses, and a cornhole tournament. Here are this season's cornhole champs: seventh graders Myles and Lucas, with sixth graders Connor and Mark.



At the start of Fire Prevention Week, members of the Scranton Fire Department visited with students at **All Saints Academy in Scranton** to demonstrate the equipment they use to keep children and adults safe during an emergency.



On a beautiful autumn day, members of the Viking Council at **La Salle Academy in Jessup** pose in front of the school. Similar to a student council, Viking Council brings students together to encourage one another to display good behavior and progress beyond expectations.



Fourth grade students Bradley Farrell and Jacob Dinko are all smiles as they enjoy the Back to School Bash at **Saint Jude School in Mountain Top**.

Educators called to be ‘signs of hope, grace and love’ at Diocesan Teachers’ Institute

WILKES-BARRE – Catholic school educators from across the Diocese of Scranton came together on Monday, Sept. 29, 2025, for the annual Diocesan Teachers’ Institute.

The purpose of the day is two-fold – to both spiritually ground and professionally nourish the educators who serve 4,500 students in our 19 Catholic schools.

Held on the Feasts of Saints Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, the day began with a Mass celebrated by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, at Holy Redeemer High School.

In his homily, Bishop Bambera reminded the educators that just as the archangels are messengers of God’s healing and love, they too are called to be instruments of God’s grace.

“Our primary focus – as educators, administrators, clergy and as Christians – must be centered less upon on our own needs and plans and far more upon the lives that God entrusts to us in the work that



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera thanks Catholic educators for their work at the conclusion of the Diocesan Teachers’ Institute Mass.

we’ve been given to do,” the Bishop said.

Echoing the Diocesan Catholic School System’s mission to educate the whole child spiritually and academically, Bishop Bambera reminded the educators that their work is sacred and transformative.

“Like the angels who engage us along our journey of life, imparting to us healing, meaning and hope through God’s



As part of the Diocesan Teachers’ Institute, educators held breakout sessions to share best practices and gain new insight.

mercy and grace, continue to be signs of hope, grace and love to our children and families,” he added. “We are so grateful and blessed by your dedication.”

Following the Mass, educators were inspired by keynote speaker Sister Mary Persico, IHM, Ed.D., President Emerita, and Director of Special Projects at Marywood University.

Her talk, titled “Catholic School Culture: Neither An Accident Nor an Option,” challenged educators to be intentional about shaping school culture through faith-filled action and storytelling.

“The culture of Catholic Schools in this country is one of the most needed and compelling ideologies in the world today,” Sister Persico said.

She spoke passionately about how today’s students are spiritually hungry – seeking purpose and meaning in a fast-paced world. Teachers, she said, are in a unique position to walk with them in that search.

“They long for the Holy, the sacred, the spiritual,” she added.

After lunch, the afternoon portion of the day featured breakout sessions tailored to grade levels and subject areas. The workshops allowed teachers to collaborate, share best practices, and gain new insights as they returned to their classrooms with renewed focus.

Three Catholic educators honored with Saint John Paul II Award

WILKES-BARRE – With deep gratitude for their decades of faithful service, three long-time educators in the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System were recognized with the Saint John Paul II Award during the Diocesan Teachers’ Institute Mass on Sept. 29, 2025.

This year’s recipients are Colleen Gatrone and Kimberly Kanuik of Holy Cross High School in Dunmore, and Barbara Greenway of Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport.

The Saint John Paul II Award is given annually to educators who have dedicated 25 years of service to Catholic education in the Diocese of Scranton. The award honors the legacy of Saint John Paul II, who inspired generations with his unwavering faith, commitment to young people, and deep love for the Church.

For Gatrone, the award is a milestone in a vocation that has spanned far more than the 25 years she has been in the Diocese of Scranton. In total, she has spent a total of 40 years in Catholic education.

“I appreciate the Diocese, I appreciate the students with whom I’ve worked. I’ve taught at a number of schools in our Diocese, and I really do appreciate the



Three Catholic school educators received the Saint John Paul II Award for 25 years of dedicated service during the Diocesan Teachers’ Institute Mass at Holy Redeemer High School Sept. 29, 2025. Present for the award presentation were, from left: Kristen Donohue, Diocesan Secretary for Catholic Education/Superintendent of Catholic Schools; Christopher Tigue, Assistant Superintendent; Kimberly Kanuik, Holy Cross High School; Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton; Barbara Greenway, Saint John Neumann Elementary School; Colleen Gatrone, Holy Cross High School; Charlene Haggerty, Assistant Superintendent. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

support that we get,” Gatrone said.

Prior to her current position at Holy Cross High School, Gatrone also served at Bishop O’Reilly, Bishop Hoban, and Holy Redeemer. She says the secret to her longevity is simple.

“It’s the students, it’s the parents, it’s the families, and it’s the atmosphere,” she

said. “I absolutely love coming in every single day. They make me feel young and it is the important part of my day – coming in and seeing their faces. It is all the motivation I need for the day.”

For Kanuik, who also teaches at Holy Cross, the award is a humbling reminder of how far her journey has come since first

being at Bishop Hannan High School.

“It means a lot. As a child, I always knew I wanted to be a teacher,” Kanuik said. “Being at Holy Cross – I know I’m blessed. My students have been fantastic.”

Kanuik teaches freshman history, AP History, and AP Government, a schedule she has held for the past decade. She proudly pointed out that one of her former students, Father Tom Dzwonczyk, read the Gospel at the Diocesan Teachers’ Institute Mass.

Reflecting on her decision to stay in Catholic schools, Kanuik said, “I have many friends who teach in public schools and their experiences aren’t the same. They’re counting the days to retirement, whereas I’m blessed to go to work every day.”

Greenway’s journey into Catholic education was born out of personal conversion.

“Saint John Paul II is the reason why I’m Catholic,” she explained.

Greenway, who has worked primarily with elementary students and taught art, is currently serving in Saint John Neumann’s Champions After-Care Program. She said she is inspired daily by all her colleagues.

“I respect all of them,” she said. “I may get this honor, but it is for everybody.”



MISSIONARIES

OF  HOPE

among the Peoples

World Mission
Sunday 2025
October 19th

SHARE:
GIVE NOW



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"MISSIONS25"
TO 53555

YOUR GIFT
HELPS
SUPPORT:



82,498
Seminarians



8,749
Shelters and
Orphanages



11,992
Health
Centers



843,785
Catechists



258,540
Religious
sisters

Leper Colony, Kon Tum, Vietnam, April 7, 2025. (TPMS USA/Margaret Murray)

Pray and Give Generously on **OCTOBER 19, 2025**

World Mission Sunday is a special day that unites Catholics worldwide in prayer, solidarity, and support for the Church's mission efforts.

This year's theme, chosen by the late Pope Francis, is inspired by the Jubilee of Hope: **"Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples."** It is an invitation to bring Christ's light and hope to the world, especially to communities where the Church is young, growing, and often struggling.

A Pontifical Mass in honor of World Mission Sunday will be celebrated at the Cathedral of Saint Peter, 315 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton, on **Sunday, Oct. 19, 2025 at 12:15 p.m.** The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as the principal celebrant, and the homily will be delivered by Bishop Matthew Kwasi Gyamfi of the Diocese of Sunyani, Ghana. All are invited to attend.

Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will provide a live broadcast of the Mass. The Mass will also be livestream on the **Diocese of Scranton website**, YouTube channel and across all Diocesan social media platforms.

Join us in this universal mission to spread the Gospel and share the love of Christ!



Bishop Bambera's Letter for World Mission Sunday

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Each year, **World Mission Sunday** reminds us of something profound: we are not simply individual believers, but members of one family in Christ, called to share the hope that has been given to us. This year's theme, "**Missionaries of Hope Among the Peoples,**" speaks directly to the heart of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. These words take on deeper meaning under Pope Leo XIV, whose own life as a missionary in Peru gives witness to the very hope we are called to share.

It is worth remembering that the Catholic Church here in the United States was itself once mission territory. Just over a century ago, our parishes and schools were taking root through the generosity of Catholics from across the ocean who understood that faith shared is faith multiplied. They gave to families they would never meet, recognizing the urgency of living their faith in service to sisters and brothers beyond their own church walls.

Today, that same call comes to us. We are asked to extend our hands and hearts to the 1,124 mission territories where the Church is still taking root amid poverty, persecution, and tremendous challenges. These communities in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Oceania, and the Middle East depend on our prayers and support.

When we contribute to the **World Mission Sunday** collection, we become part of something beautiful. Our gifts help form seminarians, train catechists, build schools where children discover they are beloved by God, and support hospitals where healing becomes witness to Christ's love.

As Pope Francis reminded us, "We cannot be inactive Christians. To sit on the sidelines as a follower of Jesus makes no sense." The light of Christ we celebrate each Sunday is meant to reach the ends of the earth through our prayers, generosity, and willingness to see ourselves as missionaries right here, right now.

I encourage you to respond with hearts open to the Spirit's call. Your sacrifice joins with thousands of others to ensure the Gospel reaches those who might otherwise never hear it, affirming that we are one Church, one family, united in bringing God's love to all people.

May this **World Mission Sunday** inspire you to live as missionaries of hope in your homes, workplaces, and communities, discovering more fully who we are called to be as disciples of the risen Christ.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

† *Joseph C. Bambera*

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



Bishop Matthew Kwasi Gyamfi of Ghana to Preach at

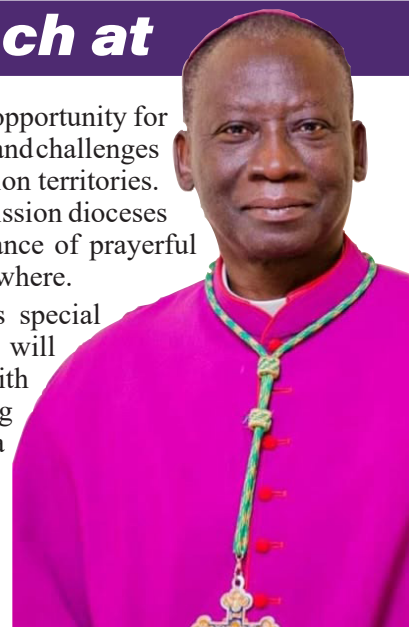
World Mission Sunday Mass AT CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PETER

This year's celebration of World Mission Sunday at the Cathedral of Saint Peter will carry special meaning for the Diocese of Scranton, which has enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with the Diocese of Sunyani. Currently, eight priests from Sunyani serve in the Diocese of Scranton as pastors or assistant pastors, enriching parish life with their faith, energy, and missionary zeal. Their presence is a reminder of the universal nature of the Catholic Church and the bonds of solidarity that connect communities across continents.

Bishop Gyamfi has led the Diocese of Sunyani since 2003, guiding its faithful with a strong emphasis on evangelization, Catholic education, and care

for the poor. His visit to Scranton offers an opportunity for local Catholics to hear directly about the joys and challenges facing the Church in Ghana and other mission territories. His presence highlights the vital role that mission dioceses play in the global Church and the importance of prayerful and financial support from Catholics everywhere.

All are warmly invited to attend this special liturgy. Following Mass, a light reception will be held in the Diocesan Pastoral Center, with displays from religious communities serving in the Diocese. Together, Bishop Bambera and Bishop Gyamfi will remind the faithful that the call to mission is shared by all, and that through generosity and prayer, the Gospel continues to reach the ends of the earth.



Called from Afar: International Priests Bring Missionary Spirit

We may not think of the Diocese of Scranton as “mission territory” but international priests play a vital and growing role here in our Diocese.

Currently, 23 priests from six different countries are serving as pastors, assistant pastors, or administrators across the Diocese's 11 counties. This number does not include those priests who were born, or have completed their seminary studies, in another country and are now incarnated in the Diocese of Scranton. These men bring with them not only their deep faith and pastoral commitment but also a rich diversity of cultural backgrounds

that enhance the life of the Church in northeastern Pennsylvania.

Remarkably, international priests now make up about 25% of all active priests in the Diocese of Scranton. Their presence is more than just helpful - it is essential.

In a time when vocations to the priesthood have declined locally, the willingness of these men to leave their home countries and serve the people of this region is both a blessing and a testament to the global nature of the Catholic Church.

Sunyani, Ghana

Rev. Andrew Amankwaa: Senior Priest
Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, Hanover Twp
St. Robert Bellarmine Parish, Wilkes-Barre

Rev. Michael Amo Gyau: Assistant Pastor
Christ the King Parish, Archbald

Rev. Stephen Bosomafi: Pastor
St. Thomas More Parish, Lake Ariel

Rev. Richard Gyansah-Tabiri: Assistant Pastor
Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco
St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish, Pocono Pines

Rev. Stephen Kwasi Brenyah: Assistant Pastor
Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, Carbondale

Rev. Paul Kwadwo Yeboah: Assistant Pastor
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Hunlock Creek
St. Faustina Kowalska Parish, Nanticoke

Rev. Dominic Sabi: Assistant Pastor
St. John the Evangelist Parish, Honesdale

Rev. Philbert Takyi-Nketiah: Administrator
Holy Spirit Parish, Mocanaqua



Nicaragua

Rev. Rafael O'Farril Bermúdez Gonzalez: Assistant Pastor
Our Lady of Peace Parish, Hazleton



Nigeria

Rev. Christian Ekeh: Assistant Pastor
St. John Bosco Parish, Conyngham

Rev. Paschal Mbagwu: Pastor
Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco
Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish, Pocono Pines



India

Rev. Thomas Augustine: Administrator
St. Brigid Parish, Friendsville

Rev. Binesh Kanjirakattu: Senior Priest
Saint Ann Parish, Shohola
Saint John Neumann Parish, Lords Valley
Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Dingman Township

Rev. Jose Joseph Kuriappilly: Pastor
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Wyalusing
SS. Peter and Paul Parish, Towanda

Rev. Arun Lakra: Pastor
Ascension Parish, Forest City
St. Katharine Drexel Parish, Forest City

Rev. Rawel Toppo: Administrator
St. Elizabeth Parish, Bear Creek
St. Rita Parish, Gouldsboro

Rev. Sudhir Toppo: Administrator
Most Holy Trinity Parish, Susquehanna

Rev. Dias Anthony Valiamarathungal: Assistant Pastor
St. Ann Parish, Williamsport
St. Boniface Parish, Williamsport

Rev. Shinu Vazhakkootathil John: Assistant Pastor
Epiphany Parish, Sayre



Columbia

Rev. Sergio Leon Pamplona Henao: Assistant Pastor
Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco
St. Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg

Rev. Jaime Perez-Restrepo: Senior Priest
St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish, Scranton

Dominican Republic

Rev. Neftalí Félix Sena: Assistant Pastor
St. Pius of Pietrelcina Parish, Hazleton

Reverend Benito Hierro Aquino, CSMA: Assistant Pastor
St. Pius of Pietrelcina Parish, Hazleton



MISSION MESSAGE



By Shannon Kowalski
Diocesan Director,
Pontifical Mission
Societies

One Million for the Missions: Diocese of Scranton Surpasses \$1 Million in Mission Collections

Since 2020, the Diocese of Scranton has raised \$1,016,918.19 to support mission territories around the world! This impressive total comes from participation in three programs of the Pontifical Mission Societies: **World Mission Sunday**, the **Missionary Cooperative Plan**, and the **Missionary Childhood Association**. Each of these offers us a unique way to live out our faith by supporting those who serve in some of the poorest and most remote areas of the world.

World Mission Sunday, celebrated each October, unites Catholics worldwide in prayer and solidarity for the Church's mission efforts. Contributions support over 1,100 mission dioceses in Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, and remote regions of Latin America. These funds help build churches, train seminarians, support religious sisters, and provide education, healthcare, and pastoral outreach.

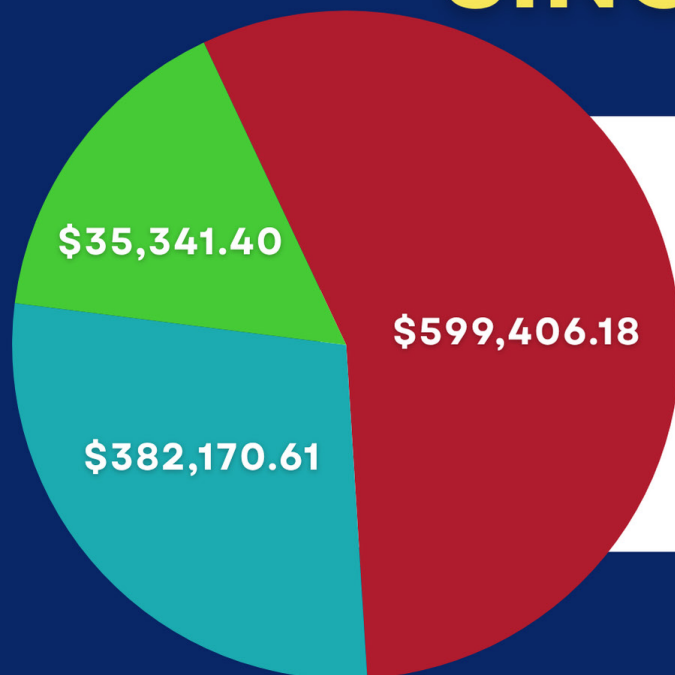
The **Missionary Cooperative Plan** invites missionaries from around the world to visit parishes in our Diocese each summer. Through personal stories and firsthand witness, the parishioners gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced in mission territories. Special collections taken during these visits go directly to the

missionaries' home dioceses or religious communities, supporting essential work in evangelization and humanitarian aid.

The **Missionary Childhood Association** helps form a missionary spirit in young Catholics through education, prayer, and sacrifice. With the motto of "children helping children," many of our Catholic schools and parish religious education programs participate in the Missionary Childhood Association. Their support funds schools, orphanages, clinics, and catechetical programs for children in mission lands.

Crossing the million-dollar mark isn't just a cause for celebration - it's a reminder of who we are. We are a missionary Church, rooted in love and sent to serve. Thank you for saying "yes" to that call, and for being the hands and heart of Christ reaching out to the world.

ONE MILLION FOR THE MISSIONS SINCE 2020



- MISSIONARY COOPERATIVE PLAN
- WORLD MISSION SUNDAY COLLECTIONS
- MISSIONARY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION

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Rooney appointed to Board of Directors of Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Scranton

SCRANTON – The Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Scranton is pleased to announce the appointment of Paul H. Rooney, Jr. to its Board of Directors effective Aug. 20, 2025.

Rooney, a longtime banking executive and community leader from Williamsport, brings nearly four decades of leadership experience and a deep commitment to faith-based service to the Foundation's growing mission.

"I am very honored to have been asked to be a part of the Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Scranton," Rooney said. "I believe the Foundation is the long-term answer to the viability of our Diocese. Our success will depend on strategic planning, commitment and support of board members, parishioners, priests, and administration."

Rooney joins the Board at a pivotal moment, as the Catholic Foundation continues to expand its impact by building and managing endowments that will sustain Catholic ministries across the 11 counties of the Diocese of Scranton.

Established to ensure the long-term support for the spiritual, educational, and charitable needs of the Diocese, the Foundation works to create lasting legacies that will serve the Church of Scranton for generations to come.

Rooney's career in banking spans more than 37 years, with senior leadership roles at institutions including Sovereign Bank, Sun Bank, and Banco Santander. He is currently the principal of Paul H. Rooney Jr. Consulting, L.L.C., helping businesses grow through strategic planning and community engagement. In addition to his professional achievements, Rooney has also served on numerous nonprofit and charitable boards.

For several decades, Rooney has been an active supporter of Catholic education. He has been instrumental in leading



Paul H. Rooney, Jr.

fundraising efforts for Saint John Neumann Regional Academy in Williamsport.

"In order for us to sustain our ministries now and in the future, dollars will be needed," he noted. "I have been involved with promoting and raising money supporting Saint John Neumann for the past 18 years. Dollars raised assisted needy families with the cost of tuition."

As a resident of Lycoming County, Rooney brings vital regional representation to the Catholic Foundation Board, and he is eager to help raise awareness of its mission in the western part of the Diocese.

"The challenge is that every nonprofit, school and public organization has a foundation," Rooney acknowledged. "Everyone is chasing the same dollars. We need to make our Foundation the preferred charity of choice to potential donors. We need to utilize contacts like attorneys, accountants, and insurance agents who could influence those in their estate planning. This is a huge opportunity. We need to involve people who know people, are passionate about their faith, and not afraid to make a referral or ask for money."

Mark DiPippa, the recently appointed Executive Director of the Catholic Foundation, welcomed Rooney's appointment, citing his extensive financial background and grassroots

fundraising experience as strong assets to the Board.

"Paul's ability to combine business expertise with a heart for mission perfectly aligns with the goals of the Foundation," DiPippa said. "His commitment to Catholic education and his leadership in the Williamsport community will help expand our message and mission."

The Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Scranton supports a wide range of ministries through the creation and stewardship of endowment funds. These funds provide lasting financial support for parishes, Catholic schools, seminarian formation, retired priests, Catholic Social Services, and more. As a separately incorporated entity, the Foundation ensures that gifts are managed according to Catholic moral and ethical principles, with professional oversight and donor intent at the forefront.

To learn more about the Catholic Foundation visit catholicfoundationscranton.org or contact Mark DiPippa at (570) 207-2212 or MDiPippa@catholicfoundationscranton.org.

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Faith and Family Night with the WBS Penguins

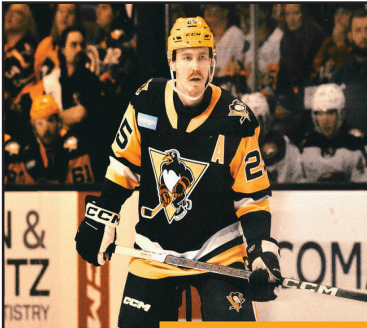
WILKES-BARRE TWP. - Everyone is invited to join the Diocese of Scranton for a night of thrilling hockey at *Faith and Family Night* with the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins at Mohegan Sun Arena at Casey Plaza.

On Friday, Nov. 14, 2025, come out with the Diocese of Scranton to cheer on the Penguins as they take on the Bridgeport Islanders, and enjoy an evening filled with plenty of family fun.

This night is open to people of all ages, so bring your family, friends, and neighbors as we come together as a Diocesan family.

Gates open at 6:00 p.m., puck drops at 7:05 p.m.

To purchase discounted tickets, visit dioceseofscranton.org, or go to www.gofevo.com/event/Dioceasescranton3. You can also scan the QR code on the graphic next to this story.



GROUP NIGHT OUT WITH THE PENS!

November 14 | 7:05PM vs Bridgeport

Diocese of Scranton Group Offer!

Join the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins as they take on the Bridgeport Islanders! Special group pricing is offered to the Diocese of Scranton and their friends and family!

PRICING	THEME NIGHT	Add-on's
Green Zone \$25 Blue Zone \$23	Faith and Family Night!	Food Voucher \$4.25 Due date is 11/7



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Red Mass celebrated Oct. 3



SCRANTON - Members of the legal, judicial, and governmental communities gathered at the Cathedral of Saint Peter on Oct. 3, 2025, for the Diocese of Scranton's annual Red Mass.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant, with Rev. Paul A. McDonnell, O.S.J., delivering the homily. The Red Mass - rooted in a tradition dating back to 13th century Europe - invokes the Holy Spirit's guidance for those who serve in law and public service.

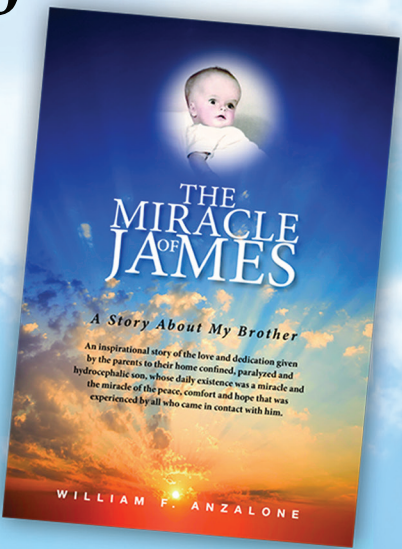
This year's liturgy marked the 52nd celebration of the Red Mass in the Diocese of Scranton. During the Mass, Bar Association members prayed in a special way for local attorneys who have passed away over the last year.

A Must Read for all Catholics

The Miracle of James

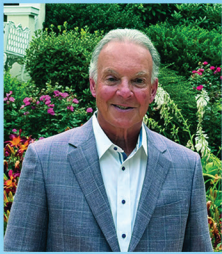
By William F. Anzalone

This is a story of my brother, who was injured at his birth. A story of a hydrocephalic, paralyzed, home confined, bedridden baby who was 100 percent dependent on my mom, dad, my sisters and me for survival. An inspirational story of young parents who were living the American dream, who had the financial means to do what they wanted and to go where they wanted and passed it all up to care for their invalid son for fifty four years. It is a story of love, dedication and sacrifice, and the belief in God, Jesus Christ and the Church, that lead my family and those who came in contact with James to witness The Miracle of James.



About the Author

Bill Anzalone is the managing partner of Anzalone & Doyle Trial Lawyers. In this book, Bill wants to share the special experience that he had living with his hydrocephalic, bedridden, home confined brother. He shares the heartache and also the joy the family experienced living with and caring for James.



Bill Anzalone is donating 100% of the net proceeds from the purchase of this book to charities and organizations associated with special needs of children and adults.

TO ORDER THE BOOK VISIT:
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OR SCAN THE QR CODE



Friends of the Poor, Catherine McAuley Center unite; prepare for Thanksgiving programs for less fortunate

SCRANTON — Two faith-based organizations dedicated to serving individuals and families in need have officially merged, combining their missions, resources, and staff under one unified entity: Friends of the Poor and Catherine McAuley Center (FOTP/CMC).

The merger brings together the complementary strengths of both organizations, sponsored by The Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, respectively.

“Our sponsoring organizations recognized that we share deep similarities in our Catholic missions, values, and service approaches,” said Mercy Sister Mary Ellen Fuhrman, chair of the Corporate Members. “By combining our efforts, we can significantly expand our reach to the most vulnerable members of our community.”

After more than a year of collaborative operations at the Catherine McAuley Center’s administrative offices at 430 Pittston Avenue in South Scranton, both organizations determined that a formal merger would best serve their shared mission.

“While working side by side, we discovered we were stronger together,” Lee Termini, board chair, said. “We were already delivering a unified effort for our funders, partners, and the people we serve — formalizing that relationship was the natural next step.”

Under the merged organization, programs including emergency shelter, clothing assistance, food distribution, furniture provision, and other family-sustaining services now operate under one umbrella, streamlining access for those in need.

“This consolidation allows us to expand our outreach and alleviate the impacts of poverty while fostering human dignity and self-sufficiency for more of



our neighbors,” Meghan Loftus, president & CEO, remarked.

Enhanced Thanksgiving Community Program

The organization is already demonstrating its increased capacity through expanded partnerships for this year’s 49th Annual Thanksgiving Community Program. Through new collaborations with Meals on Wheels NEPA, Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging, and the United Way of Lackawanna, Wayne & Pike Counties, FOTP/CMC will distribute 5,500 meals — an increase of 1,500 from previous years.

The week-long 49th Annual Thanksgiving Community Program includes three signature events:

Interfaith Prayer Service (in collaboration with the Scranton Area Ministerium) — Friday, Nov. 21, at Temple Hesed, 1 Knox Road, Scranton; 6 p.m. potluck supper, followed by prayer service at 7 p.m.

Thanksgiving Community Dinner for Adults and Elderly — Tuesday, Nov. 25, 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. (or until supplies last), at Scranton Cultural Center, 420 N. Washington Ave. at Vine Street. Drive-through or walk-up service available.

Family to Family Thanksgiving Food Basket Distribution — Wednesday, Nov. 26, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (or until supplies last), at Scranton Cultural Center, 420 N. Washington Ave. at Vine Street. Limit of four dinners per vehicle.

(Social service agencies may arrange larger pickups by

contacting Linda Robeson at lindarobeson@comcast.net)

“For 39 years, our Food Basket Program has reached thousands of families during the holidays,” Robeson said, having served as Family to Family Food Basket program director since 2015. “Last Thanksgiving, we served more than 4,000 local families, and with the community’s continued generosity, we hope to meet that goal again this year. From our families to yours — thank you!”

Friends of the Poor & Catherine McAuley Center assists vulnerable individuals and families with housing, basic needs, and pathways to stability.

FOTP/CMC contact information: (570) 342-1342; www.fotpcmc.org; and info@fotpcmc.org

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CNEWA Director: Sense of relief as hostages freed, ceasefire holds - but peace vulnerable

TEL AVIV, Israel (OSV News) - In a historic breakthrough, all Israeli hostages still held in Gaza have been freed, and 250 Palestinian prisoners released as part of a U.S.-brokered ceasefire, with the release of more Palestinian prisoners to follow.

Minutes before President Donald Trump addressed Israel's Knesset on Oct. 13, Joseph Hazboun of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association-Pontifical Mission told OSV News he felt relieved but cautioned he is "not optimistic enough to say" it's "a peace agreement" but "a ceasefire."

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu praised Trump's efforts, calling the agreement "miraculous."

In his address, Trump thanked God and emphasized the chance to build lasting peace in the region.

In Gaza, displaced families are returning to devastation.

Christian communities sheltering in parishes remain unable to return home. Aid is slowly arriving, but infrastructure remains shattered.

Hazboun, regional director for CNEWA-Pontifical Mission's Jerusalem office, warned of a likely exodus of Christians and called on Catholics worldwide to pray - and to help Gaza rebuild with dignity.

As of Oct. 8, parishes in the Diocese of Scranton have raised nearly \$60,000 to help support the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.



Released Israeli hostage, Omri Miran, held in Gaza since the deadly Oct. 7, 2023 attack by Hamas, embraces his father, Dani Miran, after his release as part of a prisoner-hostage swap and a ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas, in Reim, Israel, Oct. 13, 2025. (OSV News photo/Israel Defense Forces handout via Reuters)

Pope will declare St. John Henry Newman doctor of the church

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Pope Leo XIV announced he will proclaim St. John Henry Newman a doctor of the church Nov. 1 during the Jubilee of the World of Education.

The pope said St. Newman "contributed decisively to the renewal of theology and to the understanding of the development of Christian doctrine."

The Dicastery for the Causes of Saints had announced July 31 that Pope Leo "confirmed the affirmative opinion" of the cardinals and bishops who are members of the dicastery "regarding the title of Doctor of the Universal Church which will soon be conferred on Saint John Henry Newman, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, Founder of the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri in England."

St. Newman was born in London Feb. 21, 1801.

Vatican confirms papal trip to Turkey, Lebanon Nov. 27-Dec. 2

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Pope Leo XIV's first papal trip abroad will be to Turkey and Lebanon Nov. 27-Dec. 2, the Vatican press office announced.

The trip was built around Pope Francis' promise to join Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople in celebrating the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea and the beginnings of the Nicene Creed, recited by all mainline Christians.

While not releasing a detailed itinerary, the Vatican said Oct. 7 that Pope Leo would be in Turkey Nov. 27-30, and his visit would "include a pilgrimage to Iznik," the modern site of the ancient Nicaea.

The Vatican also said that "in response to the invitation of the Head of State and Ecclesiastical Authorities of Lebanon," Pope Leo would go from Turkey to Lebanon Nov. 30-Dec. 2.

USCCB President begs Americans to see Christ 'in every person'

WASHINGTON (OSV News) - Five years after the release of Pope Francis' encyclical on fraternal love, and amid a rise in political violence, the leader of the nation's Catholic bishops is pleading for a rediscovery of - and respect for - a common humanity.

"I ask every American to reflect on the value of every human life. I beg you to see Christ in every person, even those whose politics you oppose," said Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and head of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services.

The archbishop shared his thoughts in an Oct. 1 pastoral invitation for reflection ahead of the fifth anniversary of "Fratelli Tutti," which Pope Francis penned in 2020 as an exploration and exhortation on the issues of human fraternity and social friendship.

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2026 TRIPS

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Pope Leo: Church must 'walk poor with the poor' to serve Christ

Continued from Page 1

Pope Leo also affirmed church teaching since at least the 1960s that there are “structures of sin” that keep the poor in poverty and lead those who have sufficient resources to ignore the poor or think they are better than them.

When the church speaks of God’s preferential option for the poor, he said, it does not exclude or discriminate against others, something “which would be impossible for God.”

But the phrase is “meant to emphasize God’s actions, which are moved by compassion toward the poverty and weakness of all humanity,” he wrote.

“Wanting to inaugurate a kingdom of justice, fraternity and solidarity,” Pope Leo said, “God has a special place in his heart for those who are discriminated

against and oppressed, and he asks us, his Church, to make a decisive and radical choice in favor of the weakest.”

That choice, he said, must include pastoral and spiritual care as well as education, health care, jobs training and charity - all of which the church has provided for centuries.

The document includes a separate section on migrants with the pope writing, “The Church has always recognized in migrants a living presence of the Lord who, on the day of judgment, will say to those on his right: ‘I was a stranger, and you welcomed me.’”

The quotation is from the Gospel of Matthew 25:35, which is part of the “Judgment of the Nations” in which Jesus clearly states that his followers will be judged on how they care for the poor, the sick, the imprisoned and the foreigner.

“The Church, like a mother, accompanies those who are walking” in search of a better, safer life for themselves and their families, Pope Leo wrote.

“Where the world sees threats, she (the church) sees children; where walls are built, she builds bridges,” he continued. “She knows that her proclamation of the Gospel is credible only when it is translated into gestures of closeness and welcome.”

The church knows, he said, “that in every rejected migrant, it is Christ himself who knocks at the door of the community.”

In his exhortation, Pope Leo went through biblical references to the obligation to love and care for the poor and cited saints and religious orders throughout history that have dedicated themselves to living with the poor and assisting them.

A section of the document focuses on the “fathers of the church,” the early theologians, who, he said, “recognized in the poor a privileged way to reach God, a special way to meet him. Charity shown to those in need was not only seen as a moral virtue, but a concrete expression of faith in the incarnate Word,” Jesus.

Of course, for Pope Leo, an Augustinian, St. Augustine of Hippo was included in the document. The saint, “The Doctor of Grace, saw caring for the poor as concrete proof of the sincerity of faith,” the pope wrote. For Augustine, “anyone who says they love God and has no compassion for the needy is lying.”

The pope wrote that “the most important way to help the disadvantaged is to assist them in finding a good job,” he insisted.

Parish women’s ‘dress ministry’ serves girls in need



A small group of dedicated women from Corpus Christi Parish in West Pittston has banded together to create 70 dresses to be distributed to underprivileged girls, through the “Dress A Girl Around the World” ministry. According to organizers, the dresses are simple and colorful, and quite easy to sew. The original Corpus Christi group began their mission in June, and the number of participants has since doubled. Ministry members meet monthly to make the kits containing everything necessary to create a dress. Lady sewers shown displaying their clothing creations are, from left: Michelle Cassetori, Lenore Reggie, Dianne Smith, Camille Lenza, Fran Fumanti, Mary Beth Tabit, Lisa Falcone, Laure Healy and Debbie Walsh. All are welcome to join the group, and donations of cotton fabric are most welcome. The next gathering is Saturday, Oct. 18, in the school building behind the parish’s Immaculate Conception Church, 605 Luzerne Ave., West Pittston. For more information, call Michelle Cassetori (570) 357-3276.



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Sacred Hearts Enthronement Mass Nov. 16 at OSJ chapel

LAFLIN — The Diocesan Enthronement Guild of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary will host a special Mass of Enthronement on Sunday, Nov. 16.

The Mass will be celebrated at 4 p.m. in the chapel of the Oblates of Saint Joseph Seminary, Route 315, Laffin.

Father Dan Toomey, spiritual moderator of the Enthronement Guild, will serve as principal celebrant.



Father Dan Toomey

Music ministry for the liturgical celebration will be provided by Sacred Heart Singers.

A prelude of contemporary music will be offered prior to the Mass, beginning at 3:45 p.m. Refreshments will follow the Mass.

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.

Anyone interested in enthroning their home to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary may register to receive

an Enthronement packet by contacting Maria Pappa, coordinator of the Enthronement Guild, at (570) 241-8171.

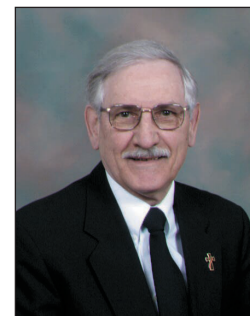
Enthronement renewals are also available.

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Entered Eternal Life:
September 18, 2025



Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Maureen Cryan

Entered Life:
January 26, 1927

Entered Eternal Life:
September 25, 2025



Sister of Christian Charity Immacolata Scarogni

Entered Life:
March 23, 1968

Entered Eternal Life:
October 7, 2025



Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Miriam Joseph Reinhardt

Entered Life:
August 8, 1929

Entered Eternal Life:
October 9, 2025

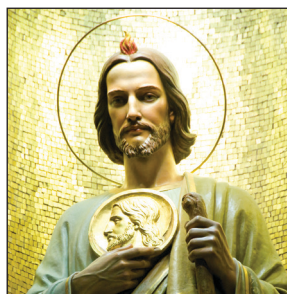


Pittston parish's 68th Saint Jude Novena to begin Oct. 19

PITSTON — Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish will host its 68th annual Novena to Saint Jude — patron saint of hopeless cases and things despaired of — at Saint Mary, Help of Christians Church, 535 North Main St., Pittston.

The well-known and time-honored Saint Jude Novena begins Sunday, Oct. 19, and concludes on the Feast of Saint Jude, Tuesday, Oct. 28.

Mass, homily, Novena prayers and veneration of the relic of Saint Jude will be held Monday through Saturday at noon & 5:30 p.m.;



and on Sunday at 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.

Recitation of the Rosary and sacramental confessions (except Sunday) precede all Novena devotions.

This year's scheduled celebrants/homilists for the Saint Jude Novena include:

Father Joseph Elston, host pastor of Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish; Saint Joseph Oblate Father Jackson Pinhero, parochial vicar; Holy Cross Father Richard Bevington; Father Thomas Dzwonczyk; Father Sam Ferretti; Holy Cross Father Walter Jenkins; Saint Joseph Oblate Father Paul McDonnell; Father Ric Polmounter; Father Kenneth Seegar; and Father Joseph Verespy.

The celebrant/homilist schedule is available on the parish website: www.eucharist-pittston.org.

Novena prayer programs are provided at all services. For more information, contact the parish office at (570) 654-0263.

Saint Jude Parish plans mission retreat to honor patron

MOUNTAIN TOP — Saint Jude Parish will host a special three-day mission retreat to prepare for the upcoming Feast of Saint Jude later this month.

The theme for the parish mission honoring its patronal saint is "Hope in The Body of Christ," coinciding with the Jubilee Year of

Hope and the Eucharistic Revival movement.

The mission schedule planned for Saint Jude Church, with each day's theme, is as follows:

Sunday, Oct. 26 — "It is the Body of Christ," with opening Mass presided over by newly ordained Scranton Diocesan priest

Father Tom Dzwonczyk, who served Saint Jude Parish as a transitional deacon.

Monday, Oct. 27 — "You are the Body of Christ," night of adoration, music, and sacramental confessions, with guest talk by Father Stephen Robbins, associate vocation director for the Diocese of Camden, N.J.

Tuesday, Oct. 28 (Saint Jude Feast Day) — "We are the Body of Christ," with Mass celebrated by Father Joe Evanko, host pastor, followed by a potluck dinner social.

Secular Franciscans' retreat to celebrate 800th anniversary of Saint Francis canticle

CONYNGHAM — Holy Dormition/Saint Clare Secular Franciscan Fraternity will hold its annual spiritual retreat on Sunday, Nov. 2, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Saint John Bosco Church, 573 PA State Route 93, Conyngham.

The retreat celebrates the 800th anniversary of the "Cantic of Creation," written by Saint Francis of Assisi in 1225 as a poetic hymn praising God through nature's beauty.

Serving as guest retreat master will be Franciscan Father James Carroll, pastor of Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Mahanoy City.

The retreat is free and open to the public; no pre-registration is required.

For more information, contact Ed Pane, OFS, minister of Holy Dormition/Saint Clare Fraternity, at (570) 401-7517 or ofc.franciscan@gmail.com.

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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 Respetto 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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'Voice of John' Christmas Card contest underway

HAZLETON — John Frank, chairperson of the "Voice of John" (VOJ) annual Christmas Card youth event, announces this year's friendly competition is open to all high school students in grades 9 thru 12.

A parishioner of Holy Rosary Church in Hazleton, Frank serves on the board of directors of the Voice of John pro-life ministry and is official spokesperson for its Down Syndrome Education and Support program.

The 2025 VOJ Christmas Card is the second in the "Lamb of God" series. Rich in symbolism, the card's cover features the Christ Child laying in the manger in Bethlehem, with Blessed Mother Mary by His side.

The artwork was prayerfully designed by local artist Linda Ross, a Scranton native and art graduate of Marywood University. She currently resides



in East Stroudsburg, where she is a member of Saint Matthew Parish.

Words above the scene read, "Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord" (John 12:13)

"I paused when I read these 'Palm Sunday words' on the Christmas card," MaryAnn Lawhon, VOJ founding executive director, said. "I further

contemplated the depth of the artist in choosing these words."

Area students are now challenged to meditate on the profound Christmas message and compose an appropriate verse for the inside of the card.

Deadline for entries is Tuesday, Oct. 21, and should be forwarded to: thevoiceofjohn1977@gmail.com. The winning writer will receive a cash prize of \$250.

Taizé Prayer service Oct. 23 in Laflin

LAFLIN — A Taizé Prayer service will be held Thursday, Oct. 23, from 7 to 8 p.m. at Saint Maria Goretti Church, 42 Redwood Drive, Laflin.

Taizé Prayer is a meditative style of communal prayer with sung repetitive refrains.

All are invited to the evening of candlelit, contemplative prayer.

Prayer Requests for Priests

The Daily Prayer Request for Priests schedule is as follows:

October 16, Father Connell McHugh; October 17, Jesuit Father Bernard McIlhenny; October 18, Jesuit Father Ronald McKinney; October 19, Jesuit Father Joseph McShane; October 20, Father Edward Michelini; October 21, Father Kevin Miller; October 22, Father Joseph Mosley; October 23, Father Joseph Motsay; October 24, Father Thomas Muldowney; October 25, Father Kevin Mulhern; October 26, Father Paul Mullen; October 27, Holy Cross Father Frank Murphy; October 28, Father James Nash; October 29, Father Theodore Obaza; October 30, Holy Cross Father Thomas O'Hara; October 31, Father Peter O'Rourke; November 1, Pope Leo XIV; November 2, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; November 3, Father James Paisley; November 4, Father Sergio Leon Pamplona Henao; November 5, Father Francis Pauselli; November 6, Father Jaime Perez Restrepo; November 7, Father Carmen Perry; November 8, Father Thomas Petro, J.V.; November 9, Father William Petruska; November 10, Father Michael Piccola; November 11, Father William Pickard; November 12, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Jackson Pinhero; November 13, Father Joseph Pisaneschi; November 14, Father John Polednak; November 15, Father Richard Polmounter; November 16, Father John Poplawski; November 17, Monsignor Patrick Pratico; November 18, Monsignor Joseph Quinn; November 19, Father Michael Quinnan; November 20, Father Philip Rayappan; November 21, Jesuit Father James Redington; November 22, Father Gregory Reichlen; November 23, Father August Ricciardi; November 24, Father Frederick Riegler; November 25, Jesuit Father Angelo Rizzo; November 26, Father Alex Roche; November 27, Monsignor Walter Rossi.

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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese of Scranton

Scripture Series: "The Last Things" — OCT. 16 & 23, presented by Father Connell McHugh; final two series sessions offered on Thursday morning at 10 a.m. in Holy Rosary Parish Hall in Hazleton. Series theme: "The Last Things," explored through the treatment of death, final judgment, heaven, hell, limbo, purgatory, near

death experiences and spiritual beings; other topics include the Anti-Christ, Revelation and the end times. Sessions are no longer than 90 minutes. Reservations requested; contact the parish office (570) 454-6693.

Final "40 Days for Life" Pro-Life Rosary Gatherings — OCT. 16-31, offered for the special

intentions of an end to abortion and closure of the Planned Parenthood location in Wilkes-Barre; Rosary is prayed each weekday, Monday to Friday, at 10 a.m. in front of the Planned Parenthood offices at 101 North Main St., Wilkes-Barre. The pro-life campaign draws attention to the evil of abortion through prayer & fasting, constant vigil, and community outreach.

Artisan Craft Show — OCT. 18, sponsored by Our Lady of Victory Parish, Cherry Lane Road, Tannersville; held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Showcase event features handmade arts & crafts from numerous artisans, including candles, wooden bowls, decorative wreathes & ceramics; homemade foods, tricky tray and cash drawings also available. Admission fee: \$2 donation to aid the Pocono Twp. Fire Company; sit-down or take-out lunch offered. For more information, contact Fran Prebish at fransbottles@hotmail.com or (973) 809-3184.

Monthly Meeting of the Lay Carmelites — OCT. 18 & NOV. 15, 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.

"All Hallows Eve" Organ Concert — OCT. 19, hosted at St. John the Evangelist Church, 35 William St., Pittston; program begins at 2 p.m., led by parish organist and music director Michael Sowa. Concert features inspirational organ music, providing peaceful meditations for the upcoming celebrations of All Saints Day and All Souls Day. Free-will offering will be accepted.

Craft Fair & Home Showcase — OCT. 19, sponsored by the Parent Club of Holy Cross High School in Dunmore; held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the school, 501 East Drinker St., Dunmore. Event features more than 50 vendors showcasing handmade arts & crafts; includes basket raffles, door prizes, and homemade foods for sale. General admission: \$3 per person; \$2 for seniors and students (ages 12 & older). Coupon available for \$1 off admission. For information, contact Krista Rossi (570) 862-8478, or Holy Cross High School (570) 346-7541.

Cash Bingo Bonanza — OCT. 19, hosted by Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Dickson City; doors open at noon and games begin at 2 p.m. Admission cost: \$30, in advance; \$35, at door. Games party includes 17 bingo games, each with a minimum prize of \$300, and special games. Event also features bonus gift card & basket raffles and cash drawings; food and beverages for sale. For advance tickets and more information, contact the parish office (570) 489-2091.

Bingo Spectacular — OCT. 19, hosted by Mother, Mary of God Parish in Scranton; doors open at 12 noon and games begin at 1 p.m. in Holy Rosary Center, 300 W. Market St., North Scranton. Admission fee: \$30, includes 16 regular games; more available for \$10. Featuring guest callers, mystery specials, and scratch-off lottery tickets prize. Advance reservations only; for tickets, call the parish rectory (570) 342-4881.

"Cancer Walk" Fundraiser — OCT. 19, sponsored by the Service Committee of Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish, 420 Main Road, Hanover Twp.; registration starts at 1 p.m. on the church grounds and walk begins at 2 p.m. Registration fee: \$10; ribbons, food and other items available for a free-will donation. Event also includes music and basket raffle; all proceeds benefit local cancer-related charities and the parish's cancer ministry outreach. For more information and to register, call Joan at (570) 814-6444.

Parish Cash Bingo — OCT. 19, sponsored by St. Therese Parish in Shavertown; hosted at Dallas High School Commons, 2030 Conyngham Ave., Dallas, starting at 1 p.m. Admission cost: \$25, includes 20 regular bingo games. Five special games available for \$5 each. Advance reservations suggested; call the parish office (570) 696-1144.

LGBTQ Spiritual Support Group Gathering — OCT. 19, sponsored by Mary, Mother of God Parish in Scranton; support group meeting for the spiritual needs of LGBTQ community held at 7 p.m. in the former Holy Rosary School, 312 William St., North Scranton. Group plans to provide support & fellowship, including information on speakers and other community resources. All are welcome to attend; refreshments will be served. For more information, call (570) 342-4881.



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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese of Scranton

St. Joseph Fraternity of Third Order Secular Franciscans — **OCT. 19 & NOV. 16**, 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.

Weekly Bereavement Support Group Sessions — **OCT. 20-NOV. 17**, sponsored by St. John Neumann Parish in Lords Valley; bereavement support group meets on consecutive Monday afternoons from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in St. John parish hall, 705 Route 739, Lords Valley. Weekly gatherings address topics dealing with the grief process, enabling participants to find healing following the loss of a loved one. All are welcome; advance registration required at stvgriefgroup@att.net or by calling the parish office (570) 775-6791.

Annual Take-Out Pasta Dinner — **OCT. 22**, sponsored by the Women's Society of St. Joseph Melkite Greek-Catholic Church, North St. Frances Cabrini Ave., Scranton; pasta dinners, including penne & meatballs,

salad, bread and dessert, are take-out only from 4 to 6 p.m. Cost: adults, \$12; children (ages six to 10), \$7. Tickets available at the door; for advance orders, call (570) 343-6092.

Knights' Unborn Memorial Ceremony/Community Dinner — **OCT. 26**, hosted by Knights of Columbus John Paul II Council 13935 and St. Patrick Parish in Milford; event begins at 3:30 p.m. with the unveiling of a new memorial for unborn victims of abortion. Ceremony followed by a free community meal at St. Patrick Community Hall, with special guest Elvia Toombs of Tri-State Family & Pregnancy Center.

Annual Parish Pasta Dinner — **OCT. 26**, hosted by Divine Mercy Parish, 312 Davis St., Scranton (Minooka); held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the parish hall. Dinner includes pasta w/meatballs, salad, dessert & coffee/water; eat-in and takeout service offered. Cost: \$15 per person. Patrons may provide own beverages. Event also includes live musical entertainment by Frank Gervasi & Toby Naro; specialty theme baskets & raffle drawings. Tickets available after weekend Masses or at the parish office (570) 344-1724. No tickets sold at the door.

Drive-Thru Pasta Dinner — **OCT. 26**, sponsored by Queen of Angels Parish, Jessup; take-out only dinner held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Parish Pastoral Center on Church Street. Cost: adults, \$15; children (under age 12), \$5. Menu includes rigatoni pasta w/ meatballs in sauce, roll, salad and dessert. Event offers \$25 gift card raffle.

Car Cruise & Fall Raffle — **OCT. 26**, hosted by St. Ann Basilica Parish in West Scranton; held from noon to 4 p.m. Featuring classic cars and refreshments.

University of Scranton Fall Open Houses — **OCT. 26 & NOV. 9**, for prospective students and their families; both Sunday open house events begin at 9 a.m. at the John J. Long, S.J., Center, followed by student-led tours across campus. The programs will conclude about 1 p.m. and provide opportunities to interact with students, faculty and staff. Complimentary brunch

and lunch included. For more information and registration, visit the admissions webpage.

November Lottery Raffle — held daily throughout the month; sponsored by the Ladies of Mary Society of Exaltation of the Holy Cross Parish in Hanover

Twp. Winning numbers based on the PA Lottery Pick 3 evening drawing; each calendar includes two numbers for \$20. Cash prizes range from \$100 to \$500. For more information and calendar orders, visit www.exhc.org or call (570) 823-6242.



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New guardians sought to continue 'Eucharistic Miracles' exhibit ministry

Gloria Calabro, longtime custodian of the International Eucharistic Miracle Exhibition, which is based on the original design and creativity of newly canonized Saint Carlo Acutis and has been traveling throughout the Diocese of Scranton for some 20 years, announces she is seeking new caretakers for the inspiring display, as she plans to step away from the ministry.

"It is now time to pass this ministry on to the next generation," Calabro said, indicating she wishes to hand over her responsibilities to at least two devotees in the Diocese, "who have a strong desire to promote the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and may be inspired to take on this ministry."

Anyone interested in assuming the duties of guardianship of the exhibit and its visitation to Catholic parishes, churches, schools and other apostolates is asked to contact Gloria Calabro at (570) 479-1175.

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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

41st Annual Prayer Breakfast for Life — NOV.

1, sponsored by the Scranton Chapter of Pennsylvanians for Human Life (PHL); annual celebration held from 9 to 11 a.m. (doors open 8 a.m.) at Fiorelli's Catering, 1501 Main St., Peckville. Keynote speaker: Bobbie Schindler, president of the Terri Schiavo Life & Hope Network, a pro-life advocacy network for the medically vulnerable, honoring his late sister; breakfast buffet event also features basket raffles. Breakfast

cost: \$25 for adults; all children & students admitted free of charge. For more information and reservations, call the Scranton PHL office at (570) 343-5099, or email: pahumanlife@yahoo.com.

Parish Cash Bingo — NOV.

2, to benefit Prince of Peace Parish in Old Forge; hosted at the Old Forge Fire Department, 375 Milwaukee Ave., Old Forge. Doors open at 11 a.m.; bingo games start 1 p.m. Event includes 20 regular games with \$100 cash prizes; three specials, \$250 jackpots; and one special game, \$1,000 jackpot. Basket & cash raffles and snack bar also available. Admission cost: \$25; additional game booklets \$10 each. Advance tickets available at weekend Masses or by contacting the parish office (570) 457-5900.

'Respect Life' Presentation

— NOV. 2, hosted by the Pro-Life Ministry of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Hughes Street, Swoyersville; held in the church hall following the 11 a.m. Sunday Mass. Featured guest speaker: MaryAnn Lawhon, founder of the "Voice of John" pro-life ministry based in the Greater Hazleton area. All are welcome; refreshments will be served.

Annual Election Day Pasta

Dinner — NOV. 4, hosted by St. John Bosco Parish in Conyngham; sit-down dinners and takeout orders served from 3 to 7 p.m. in the parish center. Dinners include pasta with meatballs, salad, Italian bread, homemade dessert, beverage & complimentary wine. Cost: adults, \$15; children (ten years & younger), \$7. Tickets available after all weekend Masses, at the door and the parish office (570) 788-1997.

Venerable Father Patrick

Peyton Monthly Rosary — NOV. 5, hosted by the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton; Rosary devotion is held on the first Wednesday of each month following the

12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral. Recitation of Rosary prayers is offered for the special intention of furthering the cause for canonization of Venerable Father Patrick Peyton.

Annual Catholic Charismatic

Retreat — NOV. 8, sponsored by the Scranton Catholic Charismatic Renewal; hosted at Holy Family Spiritual Renewal Center, 151 Old Newport St., Nanticoke. "Intercessory Prayer Ministry" theme presented by Consuelo Corrales and Karen McLain. For reservations, call (570) 344-2214 or visit: ccrscranton.org.

Fall Craft Fair — NOV.

8, sponsored by the Altar & Rosary Society of St. Joseph Mareello Parish, 237 William St., Pittston; held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the parish center. Featuring a variety of specialty vendors and on-site assortment of homemade and craft goods; food and beverages available for purchase. For vendor registration and more information, contact Pattie Gregorio at craftypattiecf@gmail.com.

"Nazareth Group" Days for

High School Girls — NOV. 8, hosted by the Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth in Tunkhannock and Williamsport; Saturday programs are presented by the Nazareth Group. Open to all girls in grades 9-12; the experience is offered from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Capuchin Sisters' two convent locations: Mother of God Convent, 215 Wellwood Drive, Tunkhannock; and Mother of the Eucharist Convent, 6100 Jacks Hollow Road, Williamsport. Day's program fosters faith, friendship, and increased love of Jesus through prayer and inspirational talks. Reservations are required. For Tunkhannock, contact Sister Angela of the Capuchin Sisters at (570) 836-2737; for Williamsport, contact Sister Clare at (570) 745-3334.

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 Bingo — NOV. 9, sponsored by the Altar & Rosary Society of Saint Carlo Acutis Parish at St. Anthony Church, Rebecca St., Throop; doors open at noon and games start 1 p.m. Admission cost: \$5, in advance; \$7, at door. Extra playing sheet awarded to players donating \$3 or more to purchase grocery gift cards for community residents in need. Bingo tickets available before the Sunday Mass; or call Debbie (570) 540-1154.

Annual Turkey Bingo — NOV. 9, hosted by St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, 700 Oak St., Taylor; doors open at noon and bingo games start at 1 p.m. in the church hall. Admission fee: \$5; extra cards are \$3 each. Event includes door prizes, cash & basket raffles, and bake sale; food and refreshments also available.

Grief Journey Ministry: "Surviving the Holidays" — NOV. 16, hosted by Our Lady

of Mount Carmel Parish at Lake Silkworth, 2011 State Route 29, Hunlock Creek; faith-based bereavement support group gathering held from 2 to 4:30 p.m. Open to anyone grieving the loss of a loved one and having to cope with the upcoming holidays. Registration is encouraged; contact the parish office at (570) 477-5040.

Charismatic Prayer Meeting — NOV. 17, sponsored by the Scranton Diocesan Catholic Charismatic Renewal; begins 7:30 p.m. in the social hall at Queen of the Apostles Parish, 715 Hawthorne St., Avoca. Gathering includes exultant songs of prayer and praise, and teaching/witness. All are welcome; food pantry items and donations for personal care needs requested.



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I certify that the statements made by me are correct and complete.

Eric M. Deabill, Editor-in-Chief

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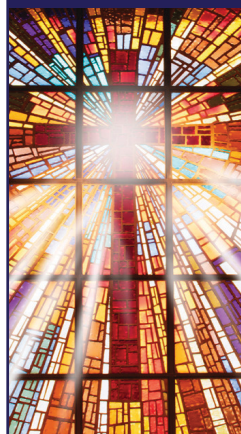
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Knights of Columbus sponsor pro-life billboard campaign



With the month of October always celebrated as Respect Life Month, Knights of Columbus Council 13752 has an ongoing pro-life educational billboard campaign underway in northeastern Pennsylvania.

The Council began running one billboard campaign on July 1, and as of Sept. 1, has extended it to 25 billboards around the region, especially in areas near high schools and colleges.

The goal is to educate young people on the importance of respecting life, especially the unborn.

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Milford parish holds inaugural Blue Mass

MILFORD - Saint Patrick Parish in Milford recently held its inaugural Blue Mass, where the sacrifice of the Mass was offered for the safety, well-being, and intention of all first responders.

The Knights of Columbus John Paul II Council and Our Lady of Guadalupe Assembly were integral in organizing and sponsoring of the event, and having the color corps escort the more than 40 first responders to their seats, gifting them with blessed medals, and offering lunch and refreshments after the Mass.

Deacon Tom Spataro, who served as the homilist, and himself



is a retired court officer, spoke on the importance of law and order in God's will, the sanctification of first responders careers, and personal notes of seeing God's actions in his own life.

At the end of Mass, Father Joseph Manarchuck, pastor of Saint Patrick Parish, blessed all the first responders present and thanked them for their continued service.

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