

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



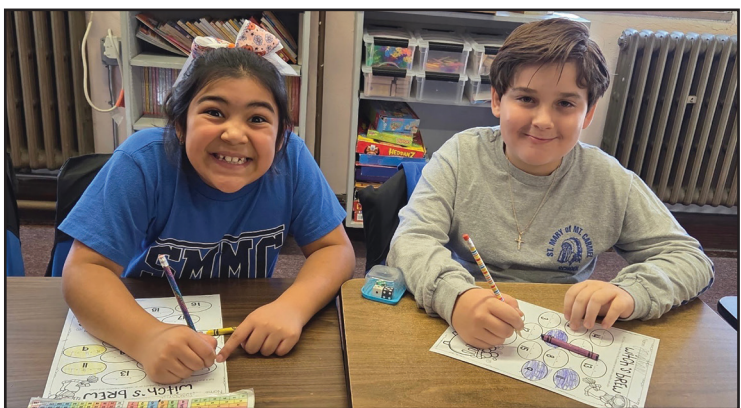
The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, celebrated Mass with the students and faculty at **All Saints Academy in Scranton**. In his homily, the Bishop reminded students that everyone can be a saint — just like teenager Saint Carlo Acutis. The first step is that we must love Jesus and then we must share His love and the gifts we have with others.



Students at **Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg** spent quality time in quiet prayer during the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with guidance from school chaplain, Father Brian J.T. Clarke.



First graders and their seventh grade buddies at **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** created “Fall Into Kindness” wreaths. Older students helped their buddies write different ways we can spread kindness.



Fourth grade students at **Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore** remind all of us that math is fun! On “Fun Fact Friday,” students were practicing their multiplication facts by playing a variety of dice games such as Pop Its, Dominoes, and Tetra Tower.



In this season of giving, students at **Epiphany School in Sayre** lent a hand peeling apples to make homemade applesauce for the school-wide Thanksgiving lunch.



The winners of the Halloween coloring contest from **Holy Family Academy in Hazleton** proudly show their special artwork. Special thanks to the school cafeteria staff for sponsoring this contest!



The Kiwanis Club students at **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter** have put together a Blessing Box for the local community. The Blessing Box, which was generously donated by the Klinefelter family, is a community-supported outdoor pantry filled with non-perishable food items, personal care products, and other essential supplies for those in need.



The National Junior Honor Society at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green** sponsored a service venture in which every Falcon made a card of thanks and appreciation for a veteran. Connor and Joey, eighth grade Falcons and officers of the NJHS, personally delivered the cards to the Veterans Center.



The Key Club at **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** hosted a “Howl-O-Ween” Party - a Halloween puppy social to raise funds and awareness for Blue Chip Animal Shelter. Pictured are Key Club president Reese Woytowich with her dog, Chloe, Officer Benson of the W-B Area Police Department, and Mrs. Cassandra Miller, Director of School Counseling, and her dog, Yupi.



Students at **Saint Agnes School in Towanda** honored local military members, past and present, at their annual Veterans Day celebration.



Members of the junior class at **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg** show their spirit during the school's Halloween dress down day.



The fourth grade class at **Saint Nicholas/Saint Mary School in Wilkes-Barre** celebrated All Saints' Day with a very special Mass. In preparation, students researched various saints and wrote reports with a variety of saints represented from St. Cecelia to St. Francis of Assisi.



From painting sugar skull rocks in Spanish III to building La Ofrenda with the World Language Club, students from **Holy Cross High School in Dunmore** came together to celebrate and honor Día de los Muertos.



Karly Welgosh, Sophie Medico and Mia Morgan, fifth grade students at **Saint Jude School in Mountain Top**, along with their classmates had a “sweet” science lab where they created ice cream in a bag.



It's Turkey Time! Maila, Makayla, and Ivy, Kindergarten students at **Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport**, practiced writing their names while creating these cute turkey crafts.



The students and faculty of **Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston** were thrilled to welcome GSA alum Father Michael Boris for their All Saints' liturgy. Father Michael is a 2010 graduate of GSA and is also assistant pastor of Saint Ignatius and Holy Family Parishes. What a blessing!

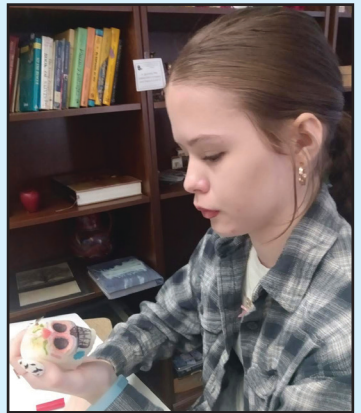


Students at **La Salle Academy in Jessup** show a small portion of their annual collection for Veterans' Promise, a local organization that supports former military members and their families.



Captain Anthony Williamson stopped by the primary campus at **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton** to speak to the PK and Kindergarten students in anticipation of Veterans Day. Williamson, who is a parent of one of the SCSP students and currently serves at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, taught the students how to correctly salute and explained why we celebrate Veterans Day each year.

Alison Crosby, a freshman at **Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School in Williamsport**, paints a candy skull in Spanish class as part of the school's All Souls Day celebration.



Diocese of Scranton welcomes three new Echo Apprentices

SCRANTON – The Diocese of Scranton has welcomed three new Echo Apprentices as part of its ongoing collaboration with the University of Notre Dame.

Now entering its third cohort in the Diocese, this unique two-year program allows the graduate-level students to combine academic studies with actual parish-based ministry, helping to prepare the young adult Catholics for leadership roles in the church.

In August, Veronica Hill, Kim Berning, and Katie James all arrived in northeastern Pennsylvania from various parts of the country, bringing their faith and enthusiasm.

Each of the new Echo Apprentices will be working in a parish or ministry setting and will be mentored by local clergy.

VERONICA HILL

Placement: *Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Pittston*
Hometown: *Glendale, AZ*
Home Diocese: *Tucson*

With a background in biology and biochemistry, Veronica Hill brings a scientific mind and a missionary heart to her ministry.

A graduate of the University of Arizona, Veronica has experience leading weekly Bible study programs and even spent last summer as a summer missionary in Philadelphia where she cultivated relationships with the homeless.

She was drawn to the Echo Program for its unique combination of theology coursework and hands-on parish experience.

"It is meaningful to listen and learn in the classroom," she shared, "but to have the opportunity to teach in schools and work in parishes as part of our formation takes this degree to the next level."



In an ongoing collaboration with the University of Notre Dame, three new Echo Apprentices began working in parish and ministry settings in the Diocese of Scranton in August. They include, from left: Kim Berning, who is working with King's College Campus Ministry; Katie James, who is working at Christ the King Parish in Archbald; and Veronia Hill, who is working at Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Pittston. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

At Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Veronica is eager to explore many facets of ministry – from senior outreach and religious education to social justice projects.

"The parish community has already made me feel so welcome and I cannot wait to see what the Lord has prepared for these next two years," she added.

KIM BERNING

Placement: *King's College Campus Ministry, Wilkes-Barre*
Hometown: *Lenexa, KS*
Home Diocese: *Kansas City*

Kim Berning arrives in the Diocese of Scranton with a robust background in ministry, accounting, and leadership.

A graduate of Creighton University with degrees in accounting and management and a theology minor, Kim spent time with the Apostles of the Interior Life in Texas and Italy and has worked extensively with youth and family RCIA.

"I chose the Echo Program because it offers an opportunity for in-depth study and challenge, enabling Echo students to actively share what they learn," she said. "I believe this program prepares students for a career in ministry, but more importantly it prepares students to embrace the vocation of ministry."

At King's College, Kim is diving into a vibrant community of students and will be involved in guiding OCIA, leading retreats, assisting with liturgies, and mentoring through faith-sharing groups like Sisters in Faith.

"Working with college students is a unique experience that I'm enjoying," she said. "The King's community has been incredibly welcoming and it's exciting to join the campus ministry team as they move into a new space."

Though she's new to Pennsylvania, Kim is already making the most of it.

"I've loved exploring the culture, even taking a coal mining tour and discovering the area through hikes," she explained.

KATIE JAMES

Placement: *Christ the King Parish, Archbald*
Hometown: *Webster, MA*
Home Diocese: *Worcester*

With a degree in computer science and a minor in mathematics from Champlain College in Vermont, Katie James is no stranger to logic and systems. But it is her heart for ministry and formation that led her to say "yes" to being an ECHO Apprentice.

"After serving as a Totus Tuus missionary – a Catholic summer catechetical youth program – I discovered a deep desire to grow in my knowledge of God through the study of theology," Katie explained. "Echo stood out to me because it combines rigorous theological study with hands-on ministry experience."

At Christ the King Parish in Archbald, Katie will be focused on catechesis, youth ministry, and family faith formation. She is particularly passionate about meeting people where they are and helping them to encounter Christ in daily life.

"I am incredibly excited to be serving at Christ the King Parish," Katie explained. "As an early admit to the Echo Program, I spent over a year waiting to receive my diocesan and parish placement. During that time, I prayed intentionally each day for my future community members, mentor, and parish ... I've already seen so many of those prayers beautifully answered."

Having driven past Scranton countless times on family road trips, Katie now finds herself happily settled in the very place she once simply passed by.

"It's a bit surreal," she joked. "I had no idea I'd one day get to call this place home!"

Changing world calls for new commitment to Catholic schools, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Catholic education, which has changed over the centuries, must continue to evolve to help young people face the challenges not only of technology but of confusion about the meaning and purpose of life, Pope Leo XIV said.

"I call upon all educational institutions to inaugurate a new season that speaks to the hearts of the younger generations, reuniting knowledge and meaning, competence and responsibility, faith and life," he wrote in an apostolic letter.

Titled "Disegnare Nuove Mappe Di Speranza" ("Drawing New Maps of Hope"), the letter was issued only in Italian Oct. 28.

It marked the 60th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on Catholic Education.

In the letter, Pope Leo formally declared St. John Henry Newman "patron of the church's educational mission alongside St. Thomas Aquinas."

The pope formally proclaimed St. Newman a "doctor of the church" Nov. 1 in recognition of his contribution to "the renewal of theology and to the understanding of the development of Christian doctrine."

Even in the face of the digital revolution and the advent of artificial intelligence, Pope Leo said, Catholic schools and universities show "a surprising resilience."

When they are "guided by the word of Christ, they do not retreat but press forward; they do not raise walls but build bridges. They respond creatively, opening new possibilities for the transmission of knowledge and meaning," he wrote.