



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

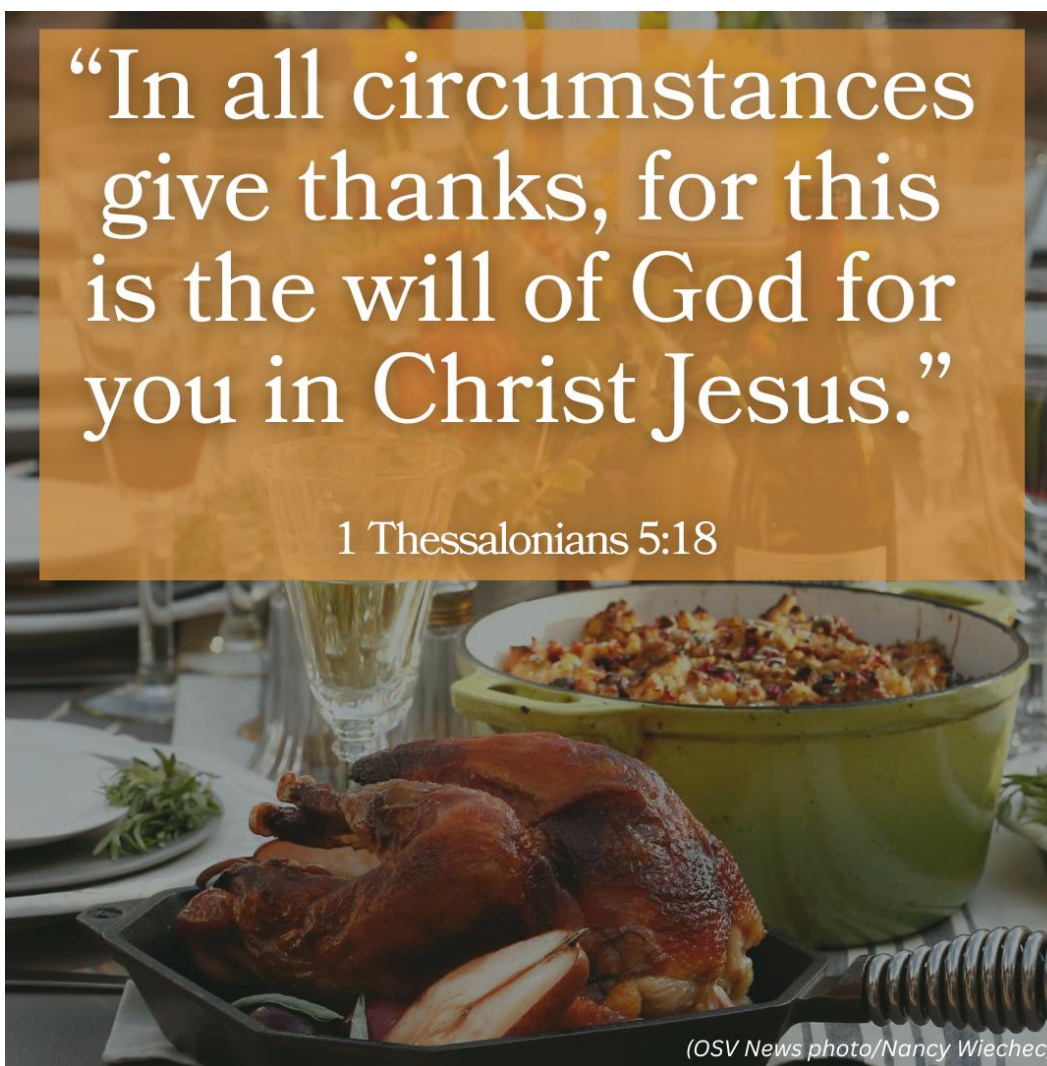
Weekly E-Newsletter

November 27, 2025

Happy Thanksgiving!

“In all circumstances
give thanks, for this
is the will of God for
you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18



(OSV News photo/Nancy Wiechec)

Gratitude should accompany your turkey and pie, Pope Leo XIV says



Thanksgiving is a “beautiful feast” that reminds everyone to be grateful for the gifts they have been given, Pope Leo XIV said.

“Say thank you to someone,” the pope suggested two days before the U.S. holiday when he met reporters outside his residence in Castel Gandolfo before returning to the Vatican after a day off.

Pope Leo, the first U.S.-born pope, was scheduled to spend his Thanksgiving Nov. 27 in Ankara and Istanbul, Turkey, the first stops on his first foreign trip as pope.

A reporter asked the pope what he was thankful for this year.

“Many things I’m thankful for,” he responded.

He described Thanksgiving as “this beautiful feast that we have in the United States, which unites all people, people of different faiths, people who perhaps do not have the gift of faith.”

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

Saint Monica Parish draws families into parish life by creating Advent wreaths together



The scent of fresh evergreens filled the hall at Saint Monica Parish recently as parents, kids, and visitors all worked to build an Advent wreath for their respective families.

On Sunday, Nov. 23, 2025, the parish invited all parishioners to gather for a special family Advent wreath making event – focused on preparing both their homes, and hearts, for the coming of Christ.

As they gathered around long tables, tucking in branches and arranging candles, people engaged in friendly conversation, getting to know each other on a deeper level.

“We invited all our families, singles, anybody who wants to come and make their own individual wreath,” Father Peter Tomczak, pastor, said. “Advent is a very special time of preparation. We want to celebrate what is coming and not just jump right to Christmas as people do too often. These four weeks are very important to us.”

For Saint Monica Parish, the wreath making is more than a craft project – it is one of the parish’s intentional community building events.

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

Lackawanna, Luzerne parishes collaborating for Advent service



Four regional Catholic parishes in the Diocese of Scranton are continuing their annual tradition of collaboration in presenting two devotional programs during the Advent season.

“Welcome the Light,” an Advent service of word and song, will be presented at churches in Lackawanna and Luzerne counties

during the Second Week of Advent. Both services are open to the public free of charge.

The performances mark the 16th year for the collaborative effort among the parishes in the two neighboring counties, which join together to enhance the joyful anticipation of Christmas.

The first service will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 6:30 p.m., hosted at Saint Anthony of Padua Church, 208 Smith St., Dunmore.

The second program will be presented on Thursday, Dec. 11, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at Holy Family Church, 574 Bennett St., Luzerne.

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

Bishop blesses new sensory room at Good Shepherd Academy to support students' learning and well-being



An LED bubble tube and a musical touch wall are just two of many items that students can interact with while visiting a new sensory room at Good Shepherd Academy in Kingston.

The calming space is designed to help children relax, refocus, and build coping skills so they can return to class ready to learn.

The new space – the first sensory room in the Diocese of Scranton’s Catholic School System – was made possible through a generous grant from the William G. McGowan Charitable Fund.

After celebrating an all-school Mass on Tuesday, Nov. 25, 2025, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, visited the room, prayed a special blessing, and sprinkled the space with holy water.

“Allow me to offer my words of thanks to all of you, the McGowan Foundation and all of you who had a hand in making this space possible,” Bishop Bambera said. “It’s incredible. We read more

and more about opportunities like this in many schools. I'm so proud that we have one here at Good Shepherd Academy. It's an incredible space and it is a calming space, isn't it?"

For Good Shepherd Academy principal Jim Jones, the sensory room represents the fulfillment of a long-held hope for his school, the largest Catholic elementary school in the Diocese of Scranton.

[Click Here to Watch a Short Video from CTV: Catholic Television on the Dedication of the New Sensory Room](#)

Pope tells U.S. high school students their voice, ideas, faith matter



Pope Leo XIV urged U.S. high school students to be “intentional” with their screen time, their prayer time and their involvement in a local parish.

“One of my own personal heroes, one of my favorite saints, is St. Augustine of Hippo,” the pope told 16,000 young Catholics meeting in Indianapolis. “He searched everywhere for happiness, but nothing satisfied him until he opened his heart to God. That is why he wrote, ‘You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.’”

With a livestream connection, Pope Leo spoke for close to an hour Nov. 21 with participants at the National Catholic Youth Conference meeting at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

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

Jesus is the 'King of our Hearts,' Archbishop shares at NCYC Closing Mass



Philadelphia Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez looked out from a sanctuary built on the floor of Lucas Oil Stadium on the 16,000 youths from across the country who came to Indianapolis for the National Catholic Youth Conference.

He shared with them a message of hope he wanted them to nurture in their hearts as they returned to their homes.

“When you feel lost, Jesus is your shepherd,” Archbishop Pérez said in his homily during the conference’s closing Mass on Nov. 22. “Remember that. When you feel you’re in darkness, Jesus is your light. When you feel you’re absolutely hungry and your soul is weighed down, Jesus is your bread.”

Jesus, he returned to again and again in his homily on the feast of Christ the King, is the “king of our hearts.”

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

Pope issues Apostolic Letter on The Creed, marking anniversary of Nicaea



When Christians recite the Creed, it should prompt an examination of conscience about what they truly believe and what kind of example of faith in God they give to others, Pope Leo XIV wrote.

“Wars have been fought, and people have been killed, persecuted and discriminated against in the name of God,” he wrote. “Instead of proclaiming a merciful God, a vengeful God has been presented who instills terror and punishes.”

Publishing “In Unitate Fidei” (“In the Unity of Faith”) Nov. 23, Pope Leo marked the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea and its Creed. He said he wanted it released in anticipation of his visit to Turkey Nov. 27-30 to celebrate with Orthodox and Protestant leaders the anniversary of the Creed Christians share.

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

175 lawmakers demand 'robust' investigation on risks of abortion pill



Congressional Republicans are demanding a “robust” investigation of federal safety standards and health risks connected to mifepristone, a pill commonly, but not exclusively, used for early abortion.

The letter, dated Nov. 20 and co-signed by 175 Republican lawmakers, asks Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Martin Makary to investigate the “deleterious and grossly underreported effects” of mifepristone on women, prohibit mail shipment of the drug, and immediately “reinstate the in-person dispensing requirement.”

Released Nov. 24, the letter also condemned the Biden administration’s “egregious action to remove critical safeguards that once applied to abortion drugs.” In addition to urging an end to the mailing of the drugs, the letter objected to “the FDA’s

approval” in September of a new generic form of mifepristone and urged the Trump administration to provide more information about that approval.

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

Sharing 'The Little Way,' St. Thérèse of Lisieux relics come to Washington



A lot has happened to the United States since the last visit of the relics of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, during 1999-2000.

The collective national shock of the 9-11 terrorist attacks and ensuing War on Terror; disbelief when the Space Shuttle Columbia broke into pieces as it streaked across the Texas sky in 2003; the devastation of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina in 2005; the 2008 financial crisis amid the 2007-2009 Great

Recession; the stunned national mourning after the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, a scenario repeated many times since then; the world coming to a halt in the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic; the near assassination of President Donald Trump in 2024 and the assassination of conservative activist Charlie Kirk the following year are just some of the events that have left their mark on the country.

As St. Thérèse's relics return to the U.S. Oct. 1 – Dec. 8, 2025, the country is in many ways changed. What do the plexiglass-enclosed bones of a 24-year-old French Carmelite nun who died in 1897 from tuberculosis have to say to a country that has been through so much?

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

Pope Leo urges 'immediately release' of kidnapped children and teachers after gunmen abduct over 300 in a Nigerian Catholic School



During the Nov. 23 Angelus prayer, Pope Leo XIV appealed for the release of over 300 children and teachers abducted from a Catholic school in central Nigeria.

He said he was “deeply saddened to learn of the kidnapping,” mentioning not only Nigeria, but also Cameroon, where six Catholic priests from the Archdiocese of Bamenda were kidnapped in Ndop, Cameroon.

“I feel great pain, above all for the many young men and women who have been abducted and for their distressed families,” Pope Leo said.

“I make a heartfelt appeal for the immediate release of the hostages and urge the competent authorities to take appropriate and timely decisions to ensure their release.”

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

YOUR GIFTS MATTER

Support the 2025 Catholic Ministries Appeal!

*As we enter Advent
and prepare to
welcome Christ, we
remember that He
comes to us in the
poor, the suffering, and
the vulnerable.*

*Your gift to the
Catholic Ministries
Appeal is a concrete
way of serving Christ
Himself in our brothers
and sisters.*



**As we light the first candle of Advent, let your
generosity be a light through the Catholic
Ministries Appeal.**

Support the 2025 Appeal at AnnualAppeal.org

[Click Here to Learn More about or Donate to the 2025 Catholic
Ministries Appeal](#)

Follow us on Social Media...



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