



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

February 5, 2026

Diocese of Scranton parishes announce Ash Wednesday Mass and Liturgy of the Word Schedules



With Ash Wednesday now less than two weeks away, parishes across the Diocese of Scranton are preparing for the beginning of Lent, a sacred season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving leading up to Easter.

To help the faithful prepare to enter Lent, all parishes were asked to submit their Mass times and ash distribution schedules for Feb. 18, 2026, to the Diocesan Communications Office so we could publish a full list so that individuals and families can plan ahead to attend services throughout the day.

Ashes will be blessed and imposed during Mass and Liturgy of the Word Services at each parish's listed times, marking the start of this penitential journey.

[Click Here for the Full Schedule of Ash Wednesday Masses & Liturgy of the Word Services Across the Diocese of Scranton](#)

Bishop to celebrate Ash Wednesday Mass on Feb. 18 at Cathedral of Saint Peter



On Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2026, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will be principal celebrant and homilist for the 12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Ash Wednesday marks the start of Lent, a 40-day season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving that ends at sundown on Holy Thursday. It is a period of preparation to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection at Easter.

During Lent, fasting and abstinence regulations are observed. Fasting and abstinence are church-imposed penitential practices that deny us food and drink during certain seasons and on certain days. These acts of self-denial dispose us to free ourselves from worldly distractions, to express our longing for Jesus, to somehow imitate His suffering.

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Bishop Bambera to hold Lenten Holy Hours across Diocese; focus on message of finding peace in challenging times



2026 Lenten Holy Hours with Bishop Bambera

February 19

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Wyalusing

February 24

Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Brodheadsville

February 25

Saint Ann Parish, Williamsport

February 26

Divine Mercy Parish, Scranton

March 2

Saint Thomas More Parish, Lake Ariel

March 3

Saint Carlo Acutis Parish, Olyphant

March 5

Saint John Bosco Parish, Conyngham

March 12

Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Duryea

March 16

Saint Therese Parish, Shavertown

March 19

Saint John Vianney Parish, Montdale

March 23

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Peckville

March 24

SS. Peter & Paul Parish, Plains

All Holy Hours to
begin at 7 p.m.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will once again travel throughout the Diocese of Scranton during Lent 2026 to lead Holy Hours in each of the Diocese's 12 deaneries, continuing a tradition that began several years ago.

The 2026 Lenten Holy Hours will begin on Thursday, Feb. 19 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Wyalusing, Bradford County, and continue through Tuesday, March 24, at SS. Peter and Paul Parish in Plains, Luzerne County.

Each Holy Hour will offer Catholics the opportunity to gather for prayer, reflection, and Eucharistic devotion during the Lenten season.

This year's theme that Bishop Bambera will preach on is: Finding Peace in Challenging Times.

First launched several years ago as part of the National Eucharistic Revival, the Lenten Holy Hours with Bishop Bambera have drawn strong participation and elicited positive responses from parishioners. Many attendees return year after year, finding the evenings to be a moment of quiet encounter with Christ.

Each Holy Hour includes Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, time for silent prayer and adoration, a homily offered by Bishop Bambera, and sacred music that enhances the reverent atmosphere.

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Mass for Persons with Disabilities to be held on Sunday



MASS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Sunday, Feb. 8, 2026
12:15 p.m.

Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton

In advance of National Disability Awareness Month in March, the Diocese of Scranton will hold its annual Mass for Persons with Disabilities on Sunday, Feb. 8, 2026, at 12:15 p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

All people, including those with special abilities, have gifts to contribute to the life of the Church. The Diocese of Scranton embraces and welcomes the talents of all individuals in building up the Kingdom of God.

The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist at this special Mass on the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The Mass is open to everyone. It will be broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton. The Mass will also be livestream on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel and links will be provided on all Diocesan social media platforms.

Partners in the annual Mass for Persons with Disabilities include Saint Joseph's Center in Scranton and the Order of the Alhambra.

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**World Day of the Sick Mass to be
celebrated at Cathedral on Feb. 11**

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE SICK MASS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026
12:10 P.M.

CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PETER, SCRANTON
MASS WILL FEATURE THE LITURGY OF THE ANOINTING

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will be the principal celebrant for the Diocese of Scranton's annual Mass for the World Day of the Sick on Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026, at 12:10 p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

Celebrated each year on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, the World Day of the Sick invites the faithful to pray in a special way for those who are ill, the elderly, and all who suffer, while also honoring the compassionate service of caregivers, healthcare professionals, family members, and all who accompany the sick with love and dignity.

The World Day of the Sick Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter will feature the Liturgy of the Anointing. Any person who wishes to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick will be invited to approach the bishop/priest with their hands open and palms facing up. The bishop/priest will anoint both the forehead and hands of the sick person, accompanied by prayer for healing, strength, and peace.

CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will provide a live broadcast of the Mass for those unable to attend. The Mass

will also be livestream on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel and links will be provided on all Diocesan social media platforms.

The World Day of the Sick was established in 1992 by Saint John Paul II as a moment of prayer, reflection, and spiritual closeness for the entire Church, calling attention to the face of Christ present in those who are sick and vulnerable.

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

Tickets available for Rectory, Set, Cook! Launch Party



Rectory, Set, Cook! 5 will kick off in less than two weeks with a Launch Party on Tuesday, Feb. 17 at the Diocesan Pastoral Center in Scranton.

Our pastor chefs have been busy preparing a lot of fun recipes for you to enjoy, beginning on Feb. 17.

The Launch Party will be held from 6:00-8:30 p.m. and will feature a night of fellowship, food, music and good-hearted fun.

Advance tickets are recommended. The tickets are \$20 and include one (1) beer from Breaker Brewing Company in connection with Fr. Brian Van Fossen's new recipe this year, along with small plate appetizers and bites to eat.

[Click Here to Purchase Tickets to the Rectory, Set, Cook! 2026 Launch Party in Scranton](#)

Feast Day of St. John Henry Newman added to Church's universal calendar



Pope Leo XIV has added the feast day of St. John Henry Newman, who is “a radiant light for the Church on pilgrimage through history,” to the General Roman Calendar so that “his Optional Memorial be celebrated by all on 9 October.”

Cardinal Arthur Roche and Archbishop Vittorio Francesco Viola, respectively prefect and secretary of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, announced the pope’s decision in a decree published by the Vatican Feb. 3.

Previously, the feast day of St. Newman was inscribed only in the proper calendar of the Congregation of the Oratory – the religious congregation to which he belonged – and the proper calendar of England and Wales. Now his memorial, celebrated on the date of his conversion to Catholicism in 1845, is included in the calendar of the universal church.

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

Olympics 2026: Pope calls for 'healthy competition' to unite people at Winter Games



In a message to the Archdiocese of Milan, Pope Leo XIV expressed his hope that the 2026 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games will be an occasion of solidarity and bridge-building between peoples and cultures.

The papal message was read during a Jan. 29 Mass marking the arrival of the “Cross of Athletes” and the official launch of the archdiocese’s Olympic pastoral initiative, “For Each Other.”

In his message, which was signed on his behalf by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, the pope said he hoped the Olympic Games would bring about “sentiments of friendship and fraternity, strengthening awareness of the value of sport at the service of the integral development of the human person.”

“The Holy Father assures his prayers so that these days of healthy competition may contribute to building bridges between cultures and peoples, promoting hospitality, solidarity, and peace,” the message stated.

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U.S. Bishops commemorate Black History Month: 'Let us be faithful stewards of memory'



Two U.S. bishops Feb. 3 urged Catholics to be “faithful stewards of memory” and “courageous witnesses to truth” during Black History Month, observed in February.

Bishop Daniel E. Garcia of Austin, Texas, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Subcommittee for the Promotion of Racial Justice and Reconciliation, and Auxiliary Bishop Roy E. Campbell Jr. of Washington, chairman of the USCCB’s Subcommittee on African American Affairs, issued a joint statement to commemorate the month.

They noted that the 2026 observance marks 100 years of commemorating Black history in the United States. “This milestone is an opportunity for us to prayerfully reflect on the ways history has been preserved, honored, and passed on across generations,” Bishop Garcia and Bishop Campbell said.

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