



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

March 26, 2026

Bishop to begin observances of Holy Week with Palm Sunday Mass at Cathedral



**Palm Sunday
Mass**

*Celebrated by
Bishop Joseph C. Bambera*

Sunday, March 29
12:15 p.m.
Cathedral of Saint Peter

All 102 parishes across the Diocese of Scranton, including the Cathedral of Saint Peter, are busy preparing for Holy Week and Easter. The faithful are invited and encouraged to attend Masses to experience the joy, hope and love of Jesus Christ.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will celebrate Pontifical Liturgies at the Cathedral of Saint Peter for this holiest time of the year.

The solemn observances of Holy Week, which recall the passion and death of Jesus Christ, begin on Palm Sunday, March 29. Those attending the service receive palms, a reminder of Scripture telling us that people welcomed Jesus by laying down their cloaks and waving palm branches.

Bishop Bambera will celebrate a Pontifical Liturgy at 12:15 p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

All are invited to attend.

[Click Here to Read About All of Bishop Bambera's Holy Week Masses at the Cathedral of Saint Peter](#)

All faithful are invited to Chrism Mass on Tuesday, March 31



Priests serving throughout the Diocese will gather at the Cathedral on Tuesday, March 31, at 4:00 p.m. for the Solemn Pontifical Chrism Mass, at which the Holy Oils used during the conferral of sacraments throughout the Church year will be blessed.

Bishop Bambera will be the principal celebrant and homilist.

[Click Here to Read About All of Bishop Bambera's Holy Week Masses at the Cathedral of Saint Peter](#)

**On Holy Thursday, join us at the
Altar of Repose in parishes across
the Diocese**

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON
VOCATIONS

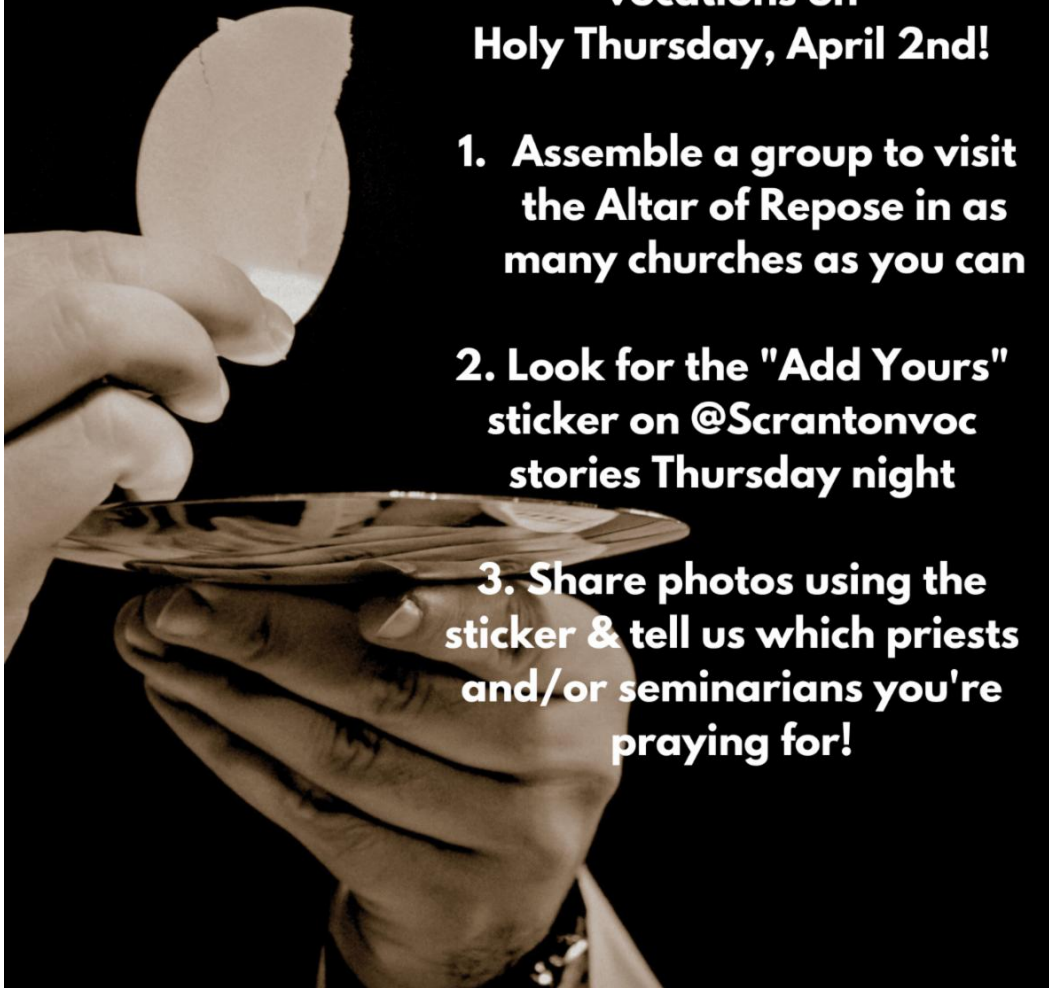


“Get Up and Pray”

Luke 22:46

Join us in praying for
vocations on
Holy Thursday, April 2nd!

1. Assemble a group to visit the Altar of Repose in as many churches as you can
2. Look for the "Add Yours" sticker on @Scrantonvoc stories Thursday night
3. Share photos using the sticker & tell us which priests and/or seminarians you're praying for!



**“Why are you sleeping?” he asked them.
“Get up and pray so that you will not fall into
temptation” (Luke 22:46)**

At the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, the Church celebrates the institution of the Eucharist and Christ giving the Twelve Apostles and their successors the authority to be ministers of the Sacrament. At the end of Mass, the Eucharist is taken in solemn procession to an Altar of Repose.

At the Altar of Repose, parishioners keep vigil in silent prayer and adoration, recalling our Lord's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane and his rebuke to his disciples: "What? Could you not watch one hour with me?"

On Holy Thursday in particular, Catholics are encouraged to pray for priests and seminarians – that they be holy messengers of hope, reconciliation and peace.

This Holy Thursday, April 2, the Diocese of Scranton is inviting you to participate on a prayer journey and is asking you to share that journey on social media.

Invite your family, friends or assemble a group of people from your parish (young adults are especially encouraged to participate) to visit the Altar of Repose in several different churches in your community.

[Click Here For a Full Listing Parish-By-Parish of Times for the Altar of Repose](#)

Jerusalem patriarchate cancels Palm Sunday procession, postpones Chrism Mass amid war



The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem said wartime restrictions have forced the cancellation or postponement of key Holy Week observances, urging the faithful to remain united in prayer despite the inability to gather for traditional celebrations.

In a March 22 statement, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, said the ongoing conflict has disrupted customary Lenten practices in Jerusalem, including communal observances at some of Christianity's holiest sites.

“Due to the war, this year we were unable to experience the traditional Lenten journey in Jerusalem, with the solemn celebrations at the Holy Sepulcher and in the Holy Places of the Passion,” the statement said. “Though we were able to pray and prepare personally, we felt the loss of the community journey towards Easter.”

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

Two days left to support your favorite pastor chef in Rectory, Set, Cook!



Will Monsignor Bendik's famous carbonara take the top spot - or will Father Paisley's favorite night time snacks or Father

McCreary's Indian-style lamb stew and Irish soda bread win the fifth annual Rectory, Set, Cook?

We are now just hours away from finding out who will have bragging rights for the next year in this popular culinary competition.

Of course, the big winners are the people served by Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton. This fundraiser is a way to raise money for anti-hunger and anti-homelessness initiatives.

To date, the contest has raised nearly \$200,000 from more than 1,874 donors - but there is still time to get your vote in!!

Voting is now open until Friday at 4 p.m.

[Click Here to Watch all the Rectory, Set, Cook! videos and Support Your Favorite Pastor Chef](#)

Data: Younger Catholics increasingly Hispanic; over half of Gen-Z adults stay Catholic



Younger Catholic adults in the U.S. are more likely to be Hispanic or Latino, while just over half of Gen-Z individuals raised Catholic are likely to retain that identity in adulthood.

Those and other insights on the nation's adult Catholics were shared by researcher Mark Gray in a March 23 analysis posted to Nineteen Sixty-four, the blog of the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University.

“We heard a lot in 2025 about a possible religious revival and about Catholics outnumbering Protestants in this younger demographic. What’s in the numbers?” wrote Gray, director of CARA Catholic Polls, research associate professor at Georgetown, and editor of the blog.

To find out, CARA drew on data from the Comparative Election Survey (CES) in 2023 and the General Social Survey (GSS), a nationally representative survey of adults in the U.S. conducted since 1972.

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

Pope Leo XIV calls for dialogue, not weapons, as Iran War enters fourth week



Pope Leo XIV renewed his appeal for a ceasefire in the ongoing U.S. and Israel-Iran war in comments to journalists in Castel Gandolfo on the night of March 24, urging leaders to pursue dialogue over military force.

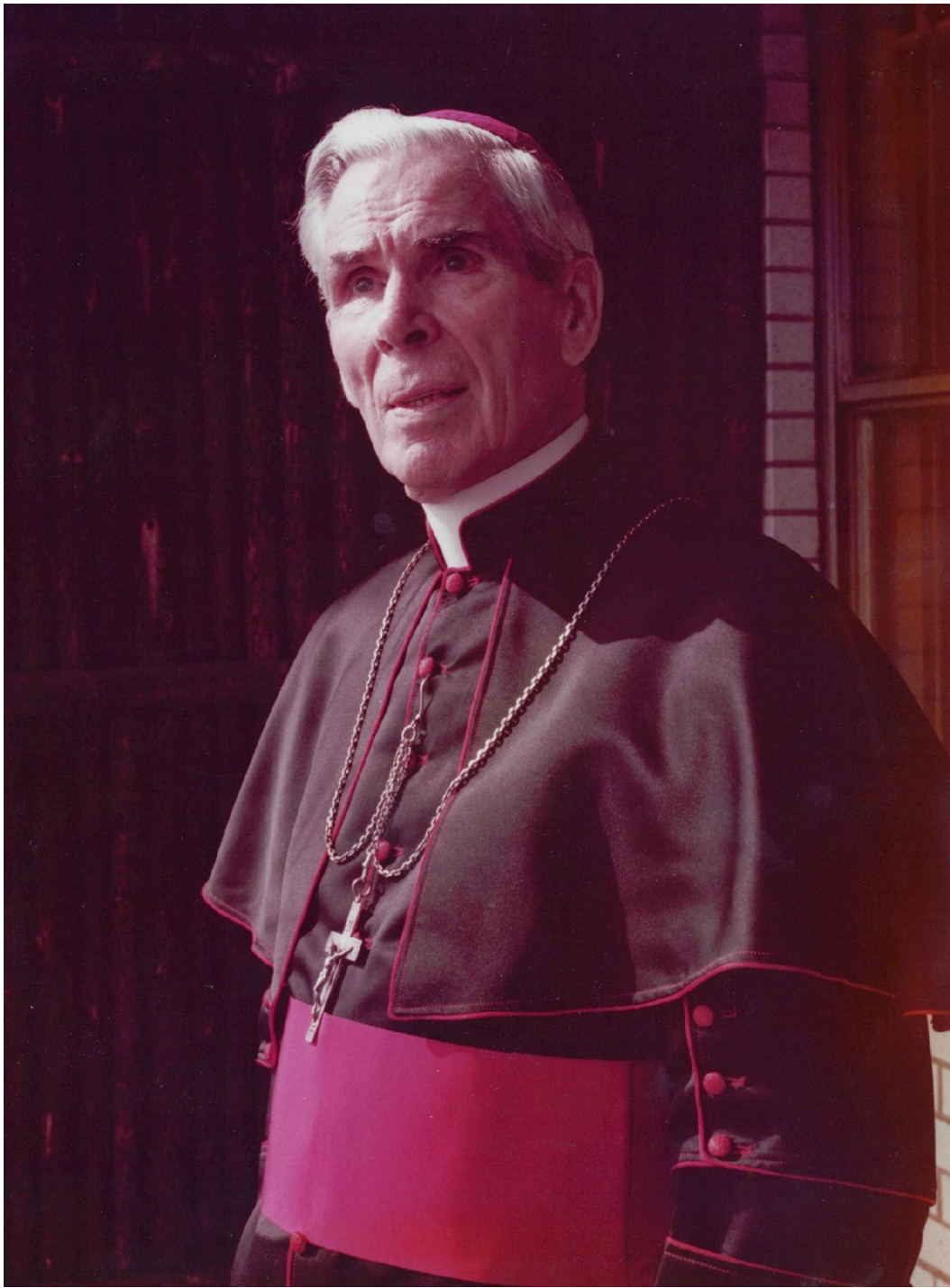
“I want to renew my call for a ceasefire, to work toward peace, not through weapons, but through dialogue, and to genuinely seek a solution that benefits everyone,” the pope told journalists gathered outside the Apostolic Palace in Castel Gandolfo on the 25th day of the war.

The pope, who regularly spends Tuesdays at the palace outside of Rome, approached reporters and delivered the appeal without taking questions.

“Right now, hatred is on the rise, violence is getting worse, there are over a million displaced people, and so many have lost their lives,” Pope Leo said.

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

Sept. 24 beatification of Archbishop Sheen to be a 'moment of immense grace'



Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen will be beatified on Sept. 24 in St. Louis, the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints announced March 25.

The beatification will take place in St. Louis, with Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, pro-prefect for the Dicastery for Evangelization, presiding.

On Feb. 9, the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, had announced that the Vatican had given the green light for the beatification of Archbishop Sheen to move forward six years after the Holy See had postponed the beatification, initially scheduled for December 2019, only weeks before the event was to take place.

In a statement March 25, Bishop Louis Tylka of Peoria said the beatification will take place at 2 p.m. CT at The Dome at America's Center in St. Louis.

“With anticipation of a great number of people wanting to participate, we chose this location because of availability, being indoors, and the close proximity to the Diocese of Peoria,” Bishop Tylka said.

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

Pope Leo XIV declares Boys Town Founder Father Flanagan venerable



Pope Leo XIV declared Father Edward Flanagan, the founder of Boys Town, venerable on March 23, recognizing his heroic virtue and moving him one step closer to sainthood.

The pope signed the decree during an audience with Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for the Causes of Saints.

The declaration grants Father Flanagan the title “Venerable” and now requires two approved miracles, one for beatification and one for canonization, before his cause can advance further.

Father Flanagan, who was born in County Roscommon, Ireland, in 1886 and emigrated to the United States at age 18, is best known for founding Boys Town, a home for orphaned and at-risk youth on the outskirts of Omaha, Nebraska.

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

Universal health coverage is not a luxury but a 'moral imperative,' pope says



Universal health coverage is not “merely a technical goal to be achieved” but is a “moral imperative,” Pope Leo XIV told participants at a conference on health equity.

“It is primarily a moral imperative for societies that wish to call themselves just” and also to prevent injustice from becoming a cause of conflict, the pope said in a private audience at the Vatican March 18 with attendees at a conference titled “Today who is my neighbor?” organized by the Council of the Bishops’ Conferences

of Europe, the World Health Organization (European Region) and the Italian Episcopal Conference.

The audience came the same day as the release of the second “WHO European Health Equity Status Report.” The document “draws attention to the situations faced by many poor and isolated people in Europe,” the pope said.

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

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