



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

March 5, 2026

Pope Leo warns of 'irreparable abyss,' if diplomacy doesn't take over violence in Iran, Middle East



Pope Leo XIV issued a fervent appeal for return of diplomacy in “these dramatic hours” in the Middle East and Iran, condemning use of weapons that cause “destruction, pain, and death.”

Pope Leo spoke roughly 12 hours after the U.S. and Israel revealed that Iran's supreme leader, 86-year-old Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is among the country's senior leaders killed in their initial assault on Iran, started in the early morning hours on Feb. 28.

During his Sunday Angelus prayer March 1, the pope said he was "following with profound concern" these events and warned of a potential "tragedy of enormous proportions." He appealed for the warring parties to assume "the moral responsibility of halting the spiral of violence" before it becomes "an irreparable abyss."

The pope insisted the nations return to diplomacy.

"Stability and peace are not built through mutual threats, nor with weapons that sow destruction, pain, and death, but only through reasonable, authentic, and responsible dialogue," he said.

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



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USCCB President: Prayer, Diplomacy needed in Middle East

The leader of the U.S. Catholic bishops has echoed Pope Leo XIV's call for deescalation and dialogue in the Middle East, following the joint attacks on Iran launched Feb. 28 by the U.S. and Israel.

**Catholic Sisters to host livestream
Prayer for Peace Friday as violence
continues in Iran, Middle East**



Catholic sisters from around the world are inviting people to join a livestreamed prayer for peace March 6 amid ongoing violence related to the U.S. and Israel-Iran war.

The International Union of Superiors General, which represents more than half a million religious sisters from more than 1,900 congregations worldwide, is calling for prayer, fasting and action for peace.

The sisters will host a livestreamed moment of prayer March 6, at 9:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (3:30 p.m. Rome time), open to people of every faith and all people of goodwill. The online prayer event, livestreamed at youtube.com/@UISGRome, will bring together religious communities from every continent.

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

First of three Bishop's Youth Award Masses takes place at Cathedral



On Sunday, March 1, 2026, the first of three Masses for the 2026 Bishop's Youth Awards was held at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

The recipients of the Bishop's Youth Award are young people in either 8th or 12th grade who have demonstrated a commitment to living out the Gospel and have contributed to the mission of our local church in real and meaningful ways.

The students honored in the following video and photo album are from parishes and schools in the Southern Region of the Diocese of Scranton.

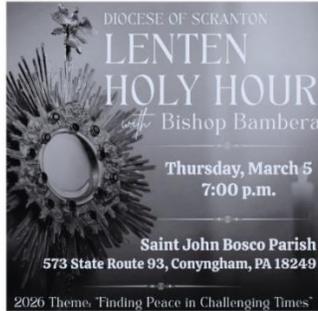
On Sunday, March 15 - students from the Northern Region will be celebrated and on Sunday, March 22 - students Western and Eastern Region will be honored.

[Click Here to Watch a Short Video from CTV of the Bishop's Youth Awards Mass from March 1, 2026](#)

[Click Here to View a Photo Album from the Bishop's Youth Award Mass on March 1, 2026](#)

Hazleton Deanery 'Road to Resurrection' kicks off with Holy Hour tonight; St. Carlo Acutis exhibit opens this weekend

Road to Resurrection Hazleton Deanery Lenten Retreat March 5-8, 2026



Holy Hour with Bishop Bambera

Thursday March 5th 7PM Saint John Bosco Church
573 Rt 93 Conyngham PA 18249

Holy Hour includes solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Vespers and Benediction.

Homily by Bishop Bambera

Saint Carlo Acutis Exhibit Weekend

In partnership with the Saint Carlo Acutis Shrine of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Our Lady of Peace Parish at MPB Church will host the Saint Carlo Acutis International Exhibition of Eucharistic Miracles of the World. During this weekend you will also have the opportunity to venerate a first-class relic of Saint Carlo Acutis.

March 6-8, 2026

All taking place at MPB Church 131 E 4th St, Hazleton, PA 18201

Exhibit

Open to the public MPB Church Hall

Friday: 3pm to 6pm

Saturday: 10am until 3:45pm

Sunday: 9am until 1pm



Liturgical Schedule

Friday March 6th MPB Church

Mass 5pm Stations of the Cross 6pm Exposition 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Confession 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Adult & HS Presentation about Saint Carlo by Jeff Daley DRE@ St Isadore 7:30pm-8pm

Saturday March 7th MPB Church

Mass 9:00am Novena and Rosary 9:30 am Adoration 9:30am to 2:30pm

Confession 2:15pm to 3pm Mass 4 pm

Adoration 5pm to 6pm ending with Benediction at 6pm

Sunday March 8th MPB Church

9am to 10:15am Kids Presentation and exhibit visit following presentation if time allows.

Exhibit will close at 1pm

Tonight's Lenten Holy Hour at Saint John Bosco Parish in Conyngham will kick off the Hazleton Deanery's Road to Resurrection - and a big weekend that will feature an exhibit on Saint Carlo Acutis at Most Precious Blood Church this weekend.

Preludes for tonight's Holy Hour begin at 6:40 p.m.

Following the Holy Hour, there will be refreshments and fellowship in the auditorium. All are welcome!

[Click Here for Full Details on the Saint Carlo Acutis Exhibit Weekend at Our Lady of Peace Parish in Hazleton](#)

Rectory, Set, Cook! tops \$80,000 raised to fight hunger and homelessness



During its first 16 days, the fifth edition of Rectory, Set, Cook! has already raised nearly \$81,000 because of the generosity of the community.

Rectory, Set, Cook! is an online fundraiser that features more than 25 local priests cooking in their rectories to support anti-hunger and anti-homelessness initiatives of Catholic Social Services.

Viewers are invited to watch the videos and then vote for their favorite recipe or pastor chef by making a donation. Half of the money goes directly to Catholic Social Services. The other half remains with the parish of the specific pastor chef - so it is a win-win for everyone!

Nearly 1,000 donors have already supported this year's effort - but there is plenty of time to get involved. The online competition will be open until Friday, March 27!

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

Seminarian Jacob Mutchler receives Ministry of Acolyte at Pontifical North American College



On Sunday, March 1, 2026, seminarian Jacob P. Mutchler from Saint Matthew Parish, East Stroudsburg, was one of 33 seminarians who received the Ministry of Acolyte in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at the Pontifical North American College, Vatican City State.

His Excellency, Archbishop Samuele Sangalli, Adjunct Secretary of the Dicastery for Evangelization, conferred the Ministry of Acolyte.

In the rite of the Institution of Acolyte, Archbishop Sangalli placed the paten, which contains the hosts for the celebration of Mass, in the hands of each candidate. He then said, “Take this vessel with bread for the celebration of the Eucharist. Make your life worthy of your service at the table of the Lord and of His Church.”

The seminarians, currently in their second year of formation at the College, have two additional years of theological studies before being ordained to the priesthood in their home dioceses.

The Pontifical North American College serves as the American seminary in Rome.

Founded in 1859 by Blessed Pius IX, the College has formed over 5,000 priests in the heart of the Church for service in dioceses around the United States and Australia. The College strengthens the bonds between Rome and local Churches worldwide, and it allows its students a first-hand encounter of the Church's rich religious and cultural heritage.

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

Church is Holy by Christ's Presence, not human perfection, pope says



The Catholic Church is both a community made up of fragile and limited human beings and a divine reality, Pope Leo XIV said at his weekly general audience.

The pope continued his series on the Second Vatican Council March 4 in St. Peter's Square, emphasizing one of its principal documents, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, "Lumen Gentium," which examines the nature and identity of the Church.

He said the Church is "a community of men and women who share the joy and struggle of being Christians, with their strengths and weaknesses, proclaiming the Gospel and becoming a sign of the presence of Christ who accompanies us on our journey through life."

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

Vatican Synod Study Group proposes creation of Pontifical Commission for New Technologies



A Synod on Synodality study group has recommended the creation of a new “Pontifical Commission for Digital Culture and New Technologies” in the first of 15 synod study group reports expected in the coming weeks.

The Vatican published the first two final reports from its Synod on Synodality study groups on March 3.

The first report contains recommendations on navigating the Church’s presence in digital spaces, including a proposal for a Vatican office or commission to monitor emerging theological, pastoral and canonical questions; prepare guidelines and training strategies for bishops, priests, religious and laypeople; and support bishops’ conferences in integrating digital mission into their pastoral plans.

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

**Pope Leo XIV pens book
introduction: 'Only peaceful hearts
can build a world of peace'**



Pope Leo XIV wrote an introduction to his book “Peace Be with You!” published by HarperCollins and available in bookstores in the United States and English-speaking countries starting Feb. 24.

The book is the English-language version of the volume “E pace sia!” published in August 2025 by the Vatican Publishing House.

It begins: "Peace is one of the great issues of our time, and is both a gift and a commitment: a gift from God built by men and women throughout the ages."

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

**Catholic Schools welcome guests for
'Read Across America' Week**



Catholic Schools across the Diocese of Scranton are welcoming special guests all this week in celebration of 'Read Across America' Week.

From television and radio personalities to parents, judges to elected leaders - everyone is celebrating the importance of literacy.

Bishop Bambera was pleased to read to the students in Pre-K4 at Saint Clare/Saint Paul Primary School in Scranton on Monday. He read the story "The Little Engine That Could."

In addition to reading to the Pre-K4 students, the Bishop also visited the Pre-K3, Kindergarten, First and Second Grade classrooms at the school.

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