



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

April 16, 2026

Diocese to establish Saint Pius X Propaedeutic House of Formation



The Diocese of Scranton will take a significant step forward in fostering vocations this summer with the establishment of a new Propaedeutic House of Formation in the heart of downtown Scranton.

In a letter released April 13, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, announced that the Cathedral Convent building at 333 Wyoming Avenue will become the Saint Pius X Propaedeutic House of Formation, welcoming its first seminarians in August 2026.

“This decision is a visible sign of hope and vitality,” Bishop Bambera wrote. “It demonstrates to our faithful that the Church of Scranton is alive, growing, and actively investing in its future.”

For decades, the Cathedral Convent served as a home to generations of religious sisters – particularly the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary – whose lives of prayer and service left a lasting imprint on the Diocese. With the recent departure of the remaining sisters, the building now enters a new chapter of service to the Church.

“While this transition marks the end of a significant chapter, it also presents us with a providential opportunity,” the Bishop noted.

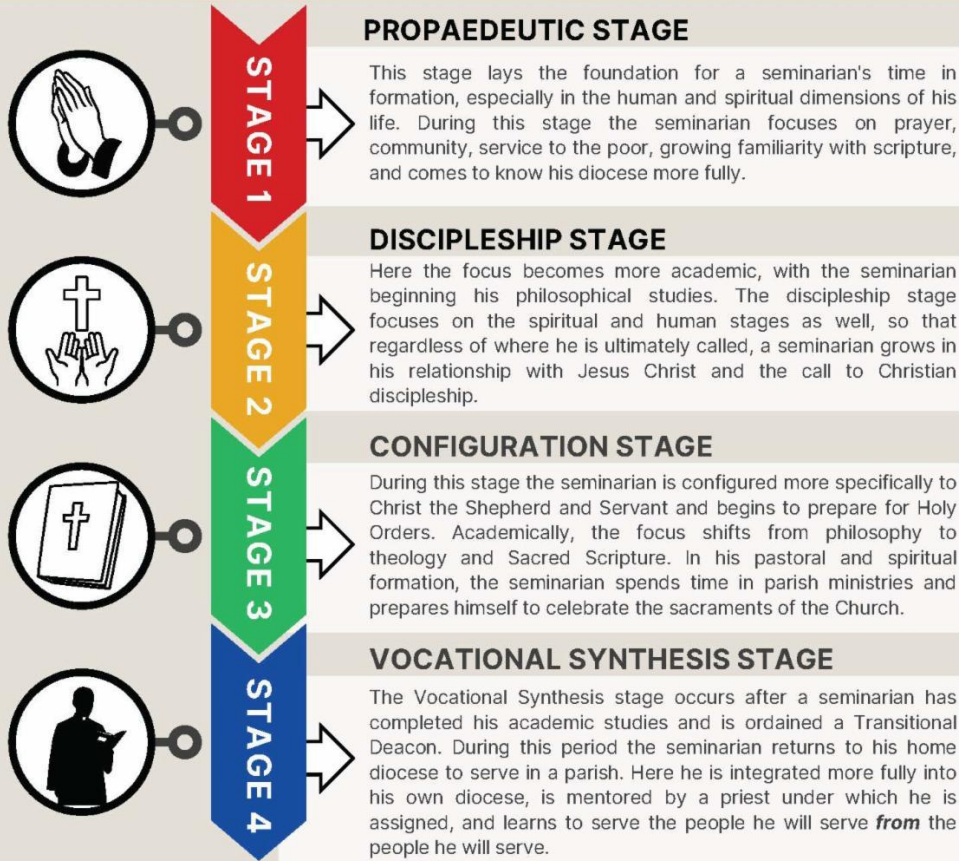
That opportunity comes at a time of renewed energy around vocations within the Diocese. According to Bishop Bambera, the number of men currently studying for the priesthood is the highest it has been in several years.

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

What is a Propaedeutic Stage? An explainer on the new stages of priestly formation

NEW STAGES OF FORMATION

PROGRAM FOR PRIESTLY FORMATION, 6TH EDITION



There are now four stages of formation for priesthood: Propaedeutic, Discipleship, Configuration, and Vocational Synthesis.

The Propaedeutic Stage is a new addition for first-year seminarians. The Discipleship Stage was formerly known as Pre-theology, with an academic focus on philosophical studies. The Configuration Stage corresponds with theological studies through what was previously third theology. Finally, there is a Vocational Synthesis Stage, which occurs after Diaconate ordination, and is a period of real-world pastoral training, ideally within the Diocese.

In the graphic above, you can see a very brief description of each stage.

Scranton parish filled to capacity for Divine Mercy Sunday celebration



All of the pews were filled at Divine Mercy Parish on April 12, 2026, as hundreds of faithful gathered to celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday through prayer and devotion.

The annual celebration – held on the Second Sunday of Easter – has grown in recent years, drawing people from across Lackawanna and Luzerne counties and beyond for an afternoon centered on God’s forgiveness and grace.

The annual observance included the Sacrament of Confession, Mass, the praying of the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet, Eucharistic Adoration, a procession with the Blessed Sacrament and the veneration of a first-class relic of Saint Faustina.

“We are very honored, proud and grateful here at Divine Mercy Parish to host everyone for this beautiful spiritual celebration,” Father Paul McDonnell, O.S.J., Pastor of Divine Mercy Parish, said. “How beautiful it was to see our church filled to capacity – and everyone praying and celebrating that great gift that the world needs – the gift of God’s love.”

Six priests were available for Confession for more than two hours, offering what Father McDonnell described as “a grace and a blessing” to those in attendance.

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

Saint Padre Pio relics to be on display this weekend in Hazleton

SAINT PADRE PIO

RELIC EVENT

A Weekend of Prayer, Reflection & Veneration.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026

Transfiguration Church

213 West Green Street
West Hazleton, PA 18202

- 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM
- 4:00 PM Mass
- 5:00 PM Special Talk;
Padre Pio's Love
for the Blessed Mother

SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2026

Saint Gabriel's Church

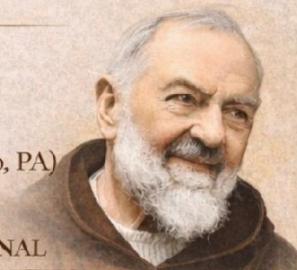
122 S. Wyoming Street
Hazleton, PA 18201

- 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- Mass Schedule:**
 - 7:00 AM (English)
 - 8:30 AM (Spanish)
 - 10:00 AM (English)
 - 12:00 PM (Spanish)
- 2:00 PM *Talk on the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Presented by

Joe Santoro

Director, Mission Outreach Program
National Center for Padre Pio (Barto, PA)



VENERATION OF RARE RELICS:

- The Veil of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Padre Pio's Glove
- Blood-Stained Sock, Nightshirt, and Bandage from his Side Wound
- Hair from Padre Pio's Beard
- Relic from Padre Pio's Stigmata (Wound and crust of blood)

>> DEVOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:

- Bring personal items to touch to the relics (*especially for the sick or homebound*)
- Create your own Third-Class Relics
- Browse and purchase Padre Pio devotional items
- Listen to a spiritual talk on the Blessed Virgin Mary

ALL ARE WELCOME

Join us for a special time of faith, healing, and devotion.

Questions? Contact Debi: 570-956-2222



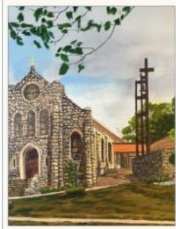
The faithful of the Diocese of Scranton are invited to come together this weekend for prayer, reflection and veneration of a relic of Saint Padre Pio.

This is a rare opportunity for the faithful to encounter sacred relics associated with Padre Pio, along with opportunities for Mass, spiritual talks, and personal devotion.

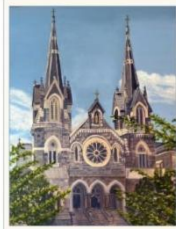
The relics will be on display for veneration at both Transfiguration Church in West Hazleton on Saturday, April 18, and Saint Gabriel Church in Hazleton on Sunday, April 19.

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

**Catholic Foundation hosting online
art auction featuring paintings of
local churches**



St. Catherine of Siena



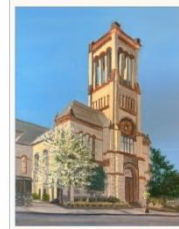
St. John, Pittston



Cathedral of St. Peter



St. Jude Church



Annunciation Church

A Portrait of Faith

Art Auction to celebrate parishes of the Diocese of Scranton

Own an original piece of artwork
that honors the beauty of OUR DIOCESE!

The Catholic Foundation is holding a special online auction to celebrate the rich heritage and architecture of local churches.

- Over 20 original pieces by accomplished artist Austin Burke will be up for auction online.
- All proceeds will benefit the Catholic Foundation and expand its impact on parishes, schools, and Catholic Ministries.
- The winning bidder and a guest for each piece will be invited to a reception at the Cathedral Rectory on May 13, 2026. Dinner and photos with the Bishop are included!

Scan for Auction Website
or visit dioceseofscranton.org



Online Auction
takes place:
April 13 — May 1



<https://catholicfoundationscranton.org>

The Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Scranton is hosting an online art auction through May 1, featuring more than 20 original paintings of local Catholic churches and sacred spaces.

Proceeds from the auction, which launched on April 13, will benefit the “Founders Fund” of the Catholic Foundation and support the long-term pastoral, educational, and service ministries of the Diocese of Scranton.

The online auction showcases a collection of artwork generously donated by artist and philanthropist Austin Burke of Archbald.

Burke, a longtime community leader and former President of the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, has spent the past year painting some of the most iconic church buildings in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.

“I feel blessed. God has given me some talent, and I feel privileged to be able to use it in this way,” Burke said.

Each piece reflects not only architectural beauty but the deeper role of parish life.

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

[Click Here to Go Directly to the Art Auction Site](#)

Mueller Family McDonald's donates \$10,000 to Diocese of Scranton Scholarship Fund



Carol Mueller and Christina Curran of the Mueller Family McDonald's presented a check for \$10,000 to Diocese of Scranton Scholarship Foundation on Friday, March 20, 2026.

The donation was a result of the annual Fry Fundraiser that kicked off National Catholic Schools Week Jan. 25, 2026, and

ended Feb. 15, 2026. A total of 21 Mueller Family McDonald's locations in Bradford, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming counties participated by donating a portion of every large order of french fries sold during that period.

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

'Son of Augustine': Pope Leo XIV retraces St. Augustine's steps in Algeria



Pope Leo XIV offered Mass April 14 at the basilica built near the site where St. Augustine died nearly 1,600 years ago, making a deeply personal pilgrimage in the footsteps of St. Augustine in Algeria.

“Here the martyrs prayed; here St. Augustine loved his flock, fervently seeking the truth and serving Christ with ardent faith,” the pope said in his homily, delivered in French. “Be heirs to this tradition, bearing witness through fraternal charity to the freedom of those born from above as a hope of salvation for the world.”

Preaching to hundreds of people inside the Basilica of St. Augustine, the pope, who called himself a “son of Augustine” in his first speech as pope from the loggia of St. Peter’s Basilica, emphasized Augustine’s dramatic conversion from a restless seeker of truth to one of Christianity’s greatest saints.

“We revere him for his conversion even more than for his wisdom,” said Pope Leo, who twice quoted directly from St. Augustine’s autobiography “Confessions.”

He also recalled the role of Augustine’s mother, St. Monica, whose persistent prayers and tears accompanied her son’s conversion.

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

**Pope decries horror, inhumanity
that 'some adults boast of with
pride'**



Warning against an increasingly unpredictable and aggressive “delusion of omnipotence” threatening the globe, Pope Leo XIV called on world leaders and individuals to empty their hearts and minds of hatred and violence, and to start serving life.

“Enough of the idolatry of self and money! Enough of the display of power! Enough of war! True strength is shown in serving life,” he said during a special evening prayer vigil for peace in St. Peter’s Basilica April 11.

“Those who pray are aware of their own limitations; they do not kill or threaten with death,” he said. “Instead, death enslaves those who have turned their backs on the living God, turning themselves and their own power into a mute, blind and deaf idol, to which they sacrifice every value, demanding that the whole world bend its knee.”

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

U.S. Bishops express 'grave concern' over ICE treatment of pregnant women



Two U.S. bishops, who lead the U.S. Catholic bishops' efforts on pro-life and migration concerns, have advised the new head of the Department of Homeland Security of their "grave concern" over

the treatment of pregnant and postpartum women in immigration detention.

“There are increasing numbers of alarming reports of pregnant mothers not getting the medical care they need while in immigration detention, tragically resulting in miscarriage in some cases, as well as reports of nursing mothers being separated from their babies when detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement,” wrote Bishop Daniel E. Thomas of Toledo, Ohio, and Bishop Brendan J. Cahill of Victoria, Texas, in an April 13 letter addressed to DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin.

The two prelates respectively chair the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities and Committee on Migration.

Their letter follows a Feb. 13 letter in which more than 30 pro-life leaders urged President Donald Trump, Mullin’s predecessor Kristi Noem and ICE Acting Director Todd Lyons to reinstate federal guidance that would largely prevent immigration detention for pregnant and new mothers.

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

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