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Bishop to ordain Rev. Mr. Jan Carlo Pérez to Priesthood June 27

“God has done something great for me, and I really want to share that,” Pérez says

EAST STROUDSBURG – When Rev. Mr. Jan Carlo Pérez reflects on his journey to the priesthood, he is quick to acknowledge that it was anything but a straight path.

Raised in a family that was not especially active in the practice of the Catholic faith, Pérez says his understanding of God developed gradually over time.

“It wasn’t until really my First Communion that I heard anything about our faith,” he recalled.

Years later, after enrolling at Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg, he began to encounter Sacred Scripture and Catholic teaching in a deeper way.

“It was my first time hearing the stories about Adam and Eve, Moses and David,” Pérez explained. “I never got the Jesus part until later, until about sophomore year, but when I did, everything clicked.”

That newfound faith eventually led him to Eucharistic Adoration at Saint Matthew Church and a growing desire to know Christ more intimately.

“Over time, this desire to be like Jesus, to emulate the saints, just grew in me until it possessed me,” he said.

On Saturday, June 27, 2026, that journey will reach a significant milestone when the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, ordains Pérez to the Priesthood for service in the Diocese of Scranton during a 10:00 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.



Rev. Mr. Jan Carlo Pérez

The Ordination Mass is one of the most significant celebrations in the life of the local Church. During the Rite of Ordination, Pérez will publicly promise obedience to Bishop Bambera and his successors, prostrate himself

before the altar during the Litany of the Saints, and receive the laying on of hands and Prayer of Ordination. His hands will then be anointed with Sacred Chrism, setting them apart for priestly ministry and the celebration of the sacraments.

For Pérez, that anointing has taken on particular meaning as his ordination draws near.

“One of the most beautiful signs in the Ordination Rite is the anointing of the priest’s hands,” he said. “I just finished a retreat where a lot of my time was spent reflecting on this anointing – that these hands are going to be set apart to call down the Spirit onto the altar and transform the elements into the Body and Blood of Christ.”

He paused before adding, “That is incredible. This is what these hands have been preparing for, for years!”

Pérez’s vocation journey began years ago at Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg, where he first met then-Diocesan Vocation Director Father Donald Williams.

“I first met Jan Carlo when I was the Vocation Director and Director of Seminarians,” Father Williams recalled. “Father Jerry Shantillo was the pastor here at Saint Matthew and he called me and said, ‘I have a young guy who is a first-year student at Temple. I’d like you to come and meet with him.’”

What followed was a years-long process of discernment, formation, and spiritual growth.

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In first encyclical, Pope Leo XIV urges world to ‘disarm’ AI amid increased reliance

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - Presenting the first encyclical of his pontificate, Pope Leo XIV warned that artificial intelligence must be “disarmed,” urging governments, tech leaders and society to confront the rapidly growing technology before it weakens human relationships, critical thinking and peace itself.

With its authoritative teaching, the 82-page encyclical, “Magnifica Humanitas” (“Magnificent Humanity”), significantly boosts the Catholic Church’s position as an active voice in discussions over artificial intelligence, autonomous weapons, labor,

human dignity and the concentration of technological power among a handful of corporations.

“Peace, not merely the absence of war, is justice at work,” Pope Leo said May 25 during a presentation unveiling the document in the Vatican’s Synod Hall to an audience filled with members of the Roman Curia, reporters and special guests. “But when technology weakens our critical sense, peace itself is at risk.”

The pope said he wrote the encyclical after hearing from scientists, engineers, political leaders, parents and teachers about



Pope Leo XIV speaks at a presentation of his encyclical “Magnifica Humanitas” at the Synod Hall at the Vatican May 25, 2026. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

the promises and dangers posed by artificial intelligence. While some were enthusiastic

about the technology, he said others expressed fears over future generations and increasingly autonomous weapons systems.

“The risk of dehumanization - of building a future that excludes God and reduces the other to a means - is an ancient and ever-new temptation that today takes on a technical guise,” Pope Leo wrote in “Magnifica Humanitas.”

“In the era of A.I., when human dignity is threatened by new forms of dehumanization, ours is the pressing duty to remain profoundly human,” he said.

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DIOCESE OF SCRANTON MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Catholic community of the Diocese of Scranton, are called through Baptism to imitate the servant leadership of Jesus Christ. In union with Our Holy Father, the Pope, we proclaim the Gospel faithfully, celebrate the sacraments joyfully, and boldly promote life, justice and peace in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.

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Jubilarians say their greatest blessings came through service

SCRANTON – For generations, they have baptized infants, witnessed marriages, celebrated the Eucharist, comforted grieving families, and guided countless souls in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

On Thursday, June 4, 2026, faithful from across the Diocese of Scranton gathered at the Cathedral of Saint Peter to honor twelve priests who are celebrating milestone anniversaries of their ordination during the annual Mass for Priest Jubilarians.

Principal celebrant and homilist, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, recognized the priests for their decades of faithful service to the Church. Together, the jubilarians represented 600 years of priestly ministry.

While each priest's journey has been unique, several of the jubilarians shared a common reflection as they looked back on their years of service: the blessings they received far exceeded anything they sacrificed.

"I've gotten more," Father Phillip J. Sladicka said when asked if the priesthood had given back as much as he had invested over the last fifty years.

Overcome with emotion, the Pastor Emeritus of Queen of the Apostles Parish in Avoca paused before continuing.

"So much more. It's all I can say."

Ordained on May 1, 1976, Father Sladicka traces his vocation back to a family life rooted in faith and the encouragement of an aunt who inspired him to reflect on his desire to become a priest.

Looking back, he said some of his greatest joys have come through accompanying people during important moments in their lives and helping them grow in faith.

"Being with families, being



The Diocese of Scranton recognized 12 priests who are celebrating milestone anniversaries of their ordination at a Mass for Priest Jubilarians on June 4, 2026, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton. Attending the Mass this year were, from left: Rev. Jose Joseph Kuriappilly (25 years); Rev. Seth D. Wasnock, Episcopal Vicar for Clergy; Rev. Phillip J. Sladicka (50 years); Rev. Joseph J. Pisaneschi (25 years); Rev. John B. Boyle (50 years); Rev. Gerald W. Shantillo, Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia; Rev. John V. Polednak (50 years); Rev. Michael J. Kirwin (50 years); Rev. William B. Pickard (50 years); Very Rev. Richard W. Burke, C.P. (50 years); Rev. John J. Kilpatrick (65 years); Rev. Joseph J. Adonizio (70 years); and Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton. Absent from photo but still celebrating an Ordination Jubilee: Rev. Theodore L. Obaza (65 years) and Rev. Kevin P. Mulhern (50 years). (Photo/Mike Melisky)

with people, being able to draw them in through Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation," he said. "What a joy it is to celebrate our Lord with people who love Him and are desiring to grow in the Lord."

For Father John Polednak, who is also celebrating his fiftieth anniversary of ordination, the greatest gift of priesthood has likewise been the people he has served.

The former Diocesan Vicar for Clergy said he did not seriously consider priesthood until his sophomore year in college.

"Some things happened in my life, and I got the inkling that maybe I should try seminary," he recalled. "The rest is history."

Five decades later, Father Polednak still treasures the notes and cards he occasionally receives from parishioners who remember

a homily, a conversation, or a moment of support years after it occurred.

"You don't have an immediate family, but you have the whole parish, and the parish literally becomes your family and you're very much enmeshed with them," he added.

Among this year's jubilarians, no one has served longer than Father Joseph J. Adonizio, who was recognized for seventy years of priesthood.

Ordained on May 29, 1956, Father Adonizio has witnessed tremendous changes in both the Church and society during his seven decades of ministry.

Now approaching his 100th birthday, he remains deeply grateful for his vocation.

"I had within me a feeling that I wanted to serve and also that I would have Christ in my life," he said when reflecting on his

decision to enter the priesthood.

Throughout his ministry, some of his most meaningful moments came while caring for those who were suffering.

"One of my greatest joys was visiting the sick and comforting families in mourning," he said.

Although he eventually stepped away from active ministry, Father Adonizio continues to reflect with gratitude on the blessings God has bestowed upon him.

"God has been very generous and good to me," he said. "I thank Him every moment of my life. Throughout the day, I express my gratitude: 'Thank you Lord, thank you.'"

He also credits the Blessed Mother for being by his side.

"Our Blessed Mother has guided my priesthood and protected me all these years," he added.

After years of discernment, Pérez prepares for Ordination

Continued from Page 1

“Jan Carlo very generously and wonderfully just opened himself to a discernment process,” Father Williams said.

Over time, Father Williams watched that openness mature into a deep commitment to Christ and the Church.

“What I have experienced in Jan Carlo as a disciple of Jesus is that he is a committed student,” Father Williams explained. “But what I’ve seen over the years is not just something residing in the intellect but in the heart. His heart has been transformed. He has been stretched – and perhaps broken open – and formed to become a priest for the People of God.”

Pérez expressed similar thoughts – agreeing that seminary formation challenged him in unexpected ways.

“It has been the experience of being stretched constantly,” he said. “Thinking, ‘That was enough, I’ve grown this far,’ and then God takes me in a different direction and shows me, ‘You still have to work on this here.’”

As he prepares to begin priestly ministry, Pérez is especially excited about accompanying people through life’s most important moments.

“In the Diocesan priesthood, we have the privilege of being able to do a little bit of everything,” he said. “Baptizing children at the beginning of life, funerals at the end of life, weddings in the middle of life, leading worship, preaching, teaching perhaps in schools.”

Ultimately, Pérez says his vocation comes down to gratitude.

“In the end, I’m doing this because I think God has done something great for me,” he reflected. “And I really want to share that with other people.”

Throughout his years of formation, Pérez says he has been humbled by the support he has received from people across the Diocese of Scranton.

“I feel extremely blessed ... Even by people I’ve never met before,” he said. “It’s just really humbling and incredible what kind of hopes people put into me.”

All faithful are invited and encouraged to attend the June 27 Ordination Mass. For those unable to attend, the Mass will also be broadcast live on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton and livestream through the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel, and Diocesan social media platforms.



**Ordination Mass
of
Rev. Mr. Jan Carlo Pérez**

**Saturday, June 27, 2026
10:00 a.m.**

**Cathedral of Saint Peter
315 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton**

**DIOCESE OF
SCRANTON**

Bishop Bambera to celebrate annual Mass of Remembrance July 23

SCRANTON – The Diocese of Scranton’s annual Mass of Remembrance will take place on Thursday, July 23, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton.

This Mass is offered for family and friends of those who have died in tragedy, especially through murder, suicide and accident.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant of the Mass.

To register the name of your loved one for this liturgy, please contact the Diocesan Office for Parish Life at (570) 207-2213, no later than Friday, July 10, 2026.



CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will provide live coverage of the Mass of Remembrance. The Mass will also be livestream on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel and across all social media platforms.

Bishop to ordain Oblate of Saint Joseph to Priesthood in Hazleton

HAZLETON - Saint Gabriel Church, 122 South Wyoming Street, Hazleton, the primary worship site of Saint Pius of Pietrelcina Parish, will be the setting for the Sacrament of Holy Orders to be conferred upon Deacon Jose Luis Batista Castillo, O.S.J., by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, on Wednesday, July 1, 2026.

The Mass will take place at 5:00 p.m. Concelebrants of the Mass will be Oblates of Saint Joseph priests of the “Holy Spouses” Province (USA) and Diocesan clergy.

A Mass of Thanksgiving will be celebrated the following evening, July 2, at 6:00 p.m. in the Oblates of Saint Joseph Chapel, Route 315, Laffin.

Homilist for the Mass will be Rev. Matthew Spencer, O.S.J., former provincial superior, currently serving at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Bakersfield, Calif.

Receptions will follow both the Masses of Ordination & Thanksgiving.

Deacon Castillo is a native of the Dominican Republic with his parents and family migrating to Hazleton in his childhood years.

He became familiar with the Congregation of the Oblates of Saint Joseph when the former Annunciation



**Deacon Jose Luis Batista Castillo,
O.S.J.**

Parish was under the pastoral care of the religious Order from 2009 - 2023.

He entered the formation program of the Oblates of Saint Joseph located near Sacramento, Calif., with his academic formation at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, Philadelphia; and St. Patrick’s Seminary, Menlo Park, Calif.

During his diaconate year he has been serving at the Oblate-staffed parish of Saint Joachim Parish, Madera, Calif., in the Diocese of Fresno.

'Reading the Signs of the Times' is theme for Solemn Novena to Saint Ann

SCRANTON - Father Richard Burke, C.P., Rector of Saint Ann's Monastery has announced the dates for the 2026 Solemn Novena to Saint Ann.

The Novena will take place from Friday, July 17, through Sunday, July 26, the Feast Day of Saint Ann.

The Passionist preachers for the 2026 Novena will be Father Rick Frechette, C.P., and Father Jack Conley, C.P.

Father Rick is a member of Saint Paul of the Cross Passionist Province.

He is a Passionist priest and a medical doctor currently continuing his ministry in the violence-torn country of Haiti. His love and care for the people of Haiti extends back for more than thirty years.

Father Jack is a member of Holy Cross Passionist Province who currently serves as superior



Father Rick Frechette, C.P.



Father Jack Conley, C.P.

of Saint Vincent Strambi Retreat in Chicago. This is home to all of the Passionist young men preparing for Perpetual Profession of Passionist vows and ordination to the priesthood

Father Jack has spent most of his Passionist years as a preacher of God's Word. He preaches parish missions, clergy and

religious retreats and novenas throughout the United States.

The theme chosen by this year's Novena preachers is "Reading the Signs of the Times."

They will be reflecting on such topics as "the Art of Living," combating meaninglessness; "Today's Mission of a Believer," dealing with a polarized world;

"the Art of Dying," combating fear and denial of death; "A Believer's Fidelity," discovering the faith we pass onto the next generation; "the Art of War," combating polarization and radicalization around conflict; "the Real Presence of Jesus," its necessary importance in our world; "the Art of Loving," combating the increasing inability of people to relate to one another; and "Christian Integrity," an essential virtue for our times.

All are invited and welcome to join this year's Passionist preachers at Saint Ann's Monastery and Basilica, 1239 Saint Ann Street, Scranton, Pa, beginning July 17.

Evening Schedule Change

This year, there will be a change in evening services. The former 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Masses are now being combined into a 6:30 p.m. Mass and Novena service. All of these services will be in English.

Novena services each day will include:

- 7:00 a.m. Mass with Novena prayers only

- 8:00 a.m. Mass followed by Novena services with talk, Novena prayers and blessing with the relic of Saint Ann

- 11:45 a.m. Mass followed by Novena service with talk, Novena prayers and blessing

- 3:30 p.m. Novena service only with talk, prayers and blessings

- 6:30 p.m. Mass followed by Novena service with talk, Novena prayers and blessing.

Weather permitting, the 8:00 a.m., 11:45 a.m., and 6:30 p.m. Masses and Novena services are held in the outdoor sanctuary.

Sacred Heart celebrations draw hundreds in Peckville and Dupont

PECKVILLE - Hundreds of Catholics from across the Diocese of Scranton gathered in Peckville and Dupont on June 11 and 12 to celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, taking part in two special liturgies highlighting one of the Church's most beloved devotions and its enduring message of God's love.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, first celebrated Mass at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Peckville on the Vigil of the Solemnity and visited Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Dupont for the feast day itself.

The celebrations coincided with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' consecration of the nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as the country prepares to mark its 250th anniversary.

At the conclusion of the Vigil Mass in Peckville, Bishop Bambera consecrated the parish community

to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and encouraged families to renew that devotion within their own homes.

"It was glorious to see so many people here," Father Andy Kurovsky, Pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Peckville, said. "When you know and you believe that you are loved, it becomes so much easier to act in a more loving way in your day to day lives."

Throughout both celebrations, Bishop Bambera emphasized a simple but profound message rooted in Scripture: We love, because God first loved us.

Father Kurovsky said that message resonates deeply in a world often marked by division and uncertainty.

"There is too much division and what we forget is that we're so much more alike," he said. "That begins with God's great love for us. His love is freely given to all of us."



Several hundred people turned out to celebrate a Pontifical Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 11, 2026, at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Peckville. (Photo/Mike Melisky)

In his homily, Bishop Bambera reflected on the meaning of the consecration and challenged the faithful to allow Christ's love to transform their lives. He reminded everyone that devotion to the Sacred Heart is not merely a prayer or image but a commitment to live with greater

mercy, compassion, and concern for others.

"Our consecration challenges us to move into our world and embrace it with love, mercy, and respect," the Bishop said. "It challenges us to feed the poor, to love our enemies, to live in peace with one another, to accept the

immigrant, and to proclaim to our world that we are Christians not solely because of the words of consecration that we proclaim but because of the love we share with our broken world."

Many who attended the celebrations say they offered a hopeful reminder of Christ's presence amid the challenges facing society today.

"For all of us, the love of Christ has to come from our heart," Christine Loyek of Saint Ann Basilica Parish in West Scranton said. "What better way than to be here when our hearts are joined with the Sacred Heart of Jesus?"

At the Mass in Dupont, Father Thomas Petro said the devotion remains especially relevant in today's world because it continually calls people back to God's mercy.

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SOLEMN NOVENA

IN HONOR OF

Saint Ann

JULY 17 TO 26, 2026

PREACHERS: FR. RICK FRECHETTE, C.P. AND FR. JACK CONLEY, C.P.

NOVENA DEVOTIONS

After 8 & 11:45 A.M. & 6:30 P.M. Masses;
Novena Devotions only at 3:30 P.M.

DIVINE LITURGY - BYZANTINE RITE

Tuesday, July 21, 6:30 P.M.

DAILY MASSES

7:00, 8:00 & 11:45 A.M. & 6:30 P.M.

CONFESSIONS

Lower Basilica for 30 minutes prior to each Mass &
the 3:30 P.M. Novena Service, and after all services

MASS OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Thursday, July 23, 1:30 P.M.

CHILDREN'S MASS & NOVENA PRAYERS

Saturday, July 25, 10:00 A.M.;
Special Blessing for Families and Grandparents

SUNDAY, JULY 19

MASSES

7:00 A.M., 8:00 A.M.,
11:45 A.M., & 6:30 P.M.

NOVENA DEVOTIONS

After 8:00 & 11:45 A.M. & 6:30 P.M. Masses;
w/Novena only at 3:30 P.M.

SAINT ANN'S FEAST DAY

SUNDAY, JULY 26

CONFESSIONS 4:00 A.M.

MASSES & DEVOTIONS

4:30, 7:00, 8:00, 10:00 & 11:45 A.M.
3:30 P.M. (Novena only)

LANGUAGE SERVICE

1:30 P.M. - POLISH in Upper Basilica
4:45 P.M. - SPANISH in Upper Basilica

Individual Blessing with Relic of St. Ann After Each Devotion

SOLEMN CLOSING SUNDAY, JULY 26, AT 6:30 P.M.

Pontifical Mass celebrated by Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.

CTV COVERAGE OF THE SOLEMN NOVENA

Every Day at 12:00 pm and 3:30 pm; Weeknights at 7:00 pm
(except Thursday, July 23 at 8:00 pm)

Closing Mass live Sunday, July 26 at 7:30 pm; Rebroadcast Monday, July 27 at 12:00 pm

BASILICA OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF ST. ANN PASSIONIST MONASTERY

1239 SAINT ANN STREET

SCRANTON, PA 18504

For the convenience of the people attending the novena, refreshments will be available on the monastery grounds during the entire novena.



Parishioners gather to celebrate legacy of Sacred Heart of Mary Church

JERMYN – With prayers and cherished memories, parishioners gathered on June 7, 2026, for a Closing Mass of Sacred Heart of Mary Church in Jermy, bringing to a close more than 130 years of worship at the church in Lackawanna County’s Upper Valley.

Father Ryan P. Glenn, Pastor of Christ the King Parish, served as the principal celebrant and homilist for the Solemn Mass of Relegation, held on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. Concelebrating priests included Assistant Pastor, Father Michael Amo Gyau, and several priests of the Diocese of Scranton. Members of the Knights of Columbus Council 7622 provided an honor guard.

The Mass marked the final celebration of the Eucharist in the church before its permanent closure as part of the Diocese of Scranton’s *Vision 2030 Pastoral Planning Process*.

“Unfortunately, because of a declining population, a limited number of priest personnel, and some major repairs coming down the pike, we determined with our pastoral council and our finance council that the church needed to be relegated, needed to be closed,” Father Glenn said. “To honor the legacy of the church and its parishioners, and the wonderful ministries here, we celebrated this final Mass.”

While the day was marked by sadness, it was also an opportunity to celebrate the church’s rich history and enduring impact on generations of Catholics.

The roots of the Catholic faith in



Father Ryan P. Glenn, Pastor of Christ the King Parish, celebrates the Liturgy of the Eucharist during the Closing Mass of Sacred Heart of Mary Church in Jermy on June 7, 2026. (Photos/Dan Piazza)



Parishioners, including the Honor Guard, made up of members of the Knights of Columbus Council 7622, participate in the Closing Mass of Sacred Heart of Mary Church in Jermy.

Jermy date back to 1875, when the first Mass was celebrated in Rymer’s Hall for a growing population of Irish immigrants, many of whom worked in local coal mines.

In 1879, a plot of land was purchased on Washington Street in Jermy for a church and for ten years, priests from Saint Thomas Aquinas Church in Archbald would ride into the community on horseback to celebrate Mass.

Sacred Heart of Mary Parish was formally established in 1889, and the cornerstone for the present church on Madison Avenue was laid in 1892. The first Mass at the site was celebrated in 1893. Plans to proceed with the construction of the upper church were delayed for several years due to significant coal mine strikes and labor disputes.

In 1908, Sacred Heart of Mary Church in Jermy was formally dedicated and it became a spiritual and community center for families.

“As you come off the Casey Highway, the steeple of the church is one of the

first things you see in the skyline,” Father Glenn noted. “The community has gathered here for social events, for fundraisers, for prayer and for the sacraments.”

For parishioners, the church’s significance extended far beyond its bricks and stained-glass windows.

“My family has been there for four generations,” parishioner Elizabeth Pittsman said. “I grew up going to this church—baptized, confirmed, Communion, everything happened in this church for me.”

Olivia Cunningham, who served at the Closing Mass as an altar server, reflected on the church’s importance in her own life.

“My mom and dad received all their sacraments there. I received all my sacraments there. My parents got married in the church,” she said. “I just think the family aspect of it holds a special place in my heart.”

Even in their sadness and grief, many took comfort in some of the Scripture verses contained in the worship aid for the closing Mass, trusting that Jesus Christ will transform their broken hearts by his grace and mercy.

Those verses included: “Behold, I make all things new” (Revelation 21:5) and “one Faith, one Lord, one Baptism” (Ephesians 4:5-6).

At the conclusion of the liturgy, the closing ritual included special prayers over the ministers of the church, the baptismal font, the statue of Mary and

Saints, Stations of the Cross, stained glass windows, crucifix, ambo, and the altar.

Parishioners were also invited to process forward and reverence the altar one final time before leaving the church. Many paused to kiss the altar or offer a prayer of thanksgiving.

“It was a very emotional moment because the finality is very much present,” Father Glenn said. “Our human reaction is to mourn and grieve what has been, but as people of faith, our response is to move forward with hope.”

After all parishioners exited, three individuals representing different generations and ministries of the church ceremonially closed and locked the doors.

At the time of its closing, Sacred Heart of Mary Church was a secondary worship site of Christ the King Parish. Even with its doors now closed, Father Glenn emphasized that the mission of Christ the King Parish continues.

“So many people from Mayfield, Jermy, Archbald and Eynon continue to rally, continue to do the good work of the Gospel, whether it is prayer, gathering for the sacraments, our community outreach to the hungry and those who are in need, catechizing and educating our children, there is so much that continues to happen at Christ the King Parish. The legacy of Sacred Heart of Mary (Church) continues, and we move forward as a united parish of Christ the King,” he said.



As part of the Closing Ritual, all parishioners were invited to reverence the altar of Sacred Heart of Mary Church in Jermy with a kiss or a touch as a symbol of taking leave. (Photo/Dan Piazza)

Three new parish consolidations to take effect July 1

SCRANTON - For the last six years, the Diocese of Scranton has been working proactively to address the realities of our local church while striving to meet the opportunities and challenges of the coming decade. The Diocese created its *Vision 2030 Pastoral Planning Process* in order to create vibrant expressions of parish life rooted in the life of Jesus Christ.

This planning process addresses the ongoing needs of parishes through the lens of four distinct priority drivers: People (Mass Attendance & Sacraments); Condition of Facilities; Financial Viability of a Parish; and Distribution and Availability of Clergy.

Over the last year, conversation and consultation has taken place in several parish communities regarding how best to work together and grow together in faithfulness to Christ and His Church. Beginning on July 1, 2026, three new consolidated parish communities will take shape.



VISION 2030

Beginning on July 1, Saints Anthony and Rocco Parish, Dunmore, with its worship sites of Saint Anthony of Padua Church and Saint Rocco Church, will be consolidated with Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Dunmore, and its sole worship site of Saint Mary of Mount Carmel Church.

The name of the newly consolidated parish will be **Saint John Paul II Parish.**

Beginning on July 1, Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Pittston, with its sole worship site of Saint John the Evangelist Church, will be consolidated with Our Lady of the Eucharist Parish, Pittston, and its sole worship site of Saint Mary, Help of Christians Church, and Saint Joseph Marelllo Parish, Pittston, and its sole worship site of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.

The name of the newly consolidated parish will be **Communion of Saints Parish.**

Beginning on July 1, Saint Patrick Parish, White Haven, with its sole worship site of Saint Patrick Church, will be consolidated with Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish, Freeland, and its sole worship site of Saint Ann Church, Freeland.

The name of the newly consolidated parish will be **Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Parish.**

APPOINTMENTS

His Excellency, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, announces the following appointments, effective as follows:

PASTORS EMERITI:

Reverend Gerald J. Gurka, from Pastor, All Saints Parish, Plymouth, and Saint John the Baptist Parish, Larksville, to Pastor Emeritus, Saint John the Baptist Parish, Larksville, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend John C. Lambert, from Pastor, Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Plains, to Pastor Emeritus, Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Plains, effective July 15, 2026.

PASTORS:

Reverend Thomas Augustine, from Administrator *pro tem*, Saint Brigid Parish, Friendsville, to Pastor, All Saints Parish, Plymouth, and Saint John the Baptist Parish, Larksville, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend David W. Cramer, from Pastor, Saint Eulalia Parish, Roaring Brook Township, to Pastor, Saint John Parish, East Stroudsburg, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend Kevin M. Miller, from Pastor, Saint Pius of Pietrelcina Parish, Hazleton, to Pastor, Saint Brigid Parish, Friendsville, and Holy Name of Mary Parish, Montrose, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend Thomas M. Muldowney, to Pastor, Saint Eulalia Parish, Roaring Brook Township, effective July 15, 2026. Father will continue to serve as Pastor, Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow.

Reverend Philip S. Rayappan, from Pastor, Holy Name of Mary Parish, Montrose, to Pastor, Holy Child Parish, Mansfield, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend Gregory Reichlen, V.F., from Pastor, Saint John Parish, East Stroudsburg, to Pastor, Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Brodheadsville, effective July 15, 2026. Father Reichlen will continue to serve as Dean of the Stroudsburg Deanery.

Reverend Robert J. Simon, from Pastor, Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Brodheadsville, to Pastor, Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Plains, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend Bryan B. Wright, from Pastor, Holy Child Parish, Mansfield, to Pastor, Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Hawley, effective July 15, 2026.

ADMINISTRATORS PRO TEM:

Reverend Richard W. Beck, from Administrator *pro tem*, Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Hawley, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend Anthony J. Generose, J.C.L., to Administrator *pro tem*, Saint Pius of Pietrelcina Parish, Hazleton, effective July 15, 2026. Father Generose will continue to serve as Pastor, Our Lady of Peace Parish, Hazleton.

SACRAMENTAL MINISTER:

Reverend Christian Ekeh, to Sacramental Minister, Holy Rosary Parish, Hazleton, effective July 15, 2026. Father Ekeh will continue to serve as Parochial Vicar of Saint John Bosco Parish, Conyngham.

PAROCHIAL VICARS:

Reverend Michael Amo Gyau, from Parochial Vicar, Christ the King Parish, Archbald, to Parochial Vicar, Epiphany Parish, Sayre, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend Michael Osei-Boateng, from Parochial Vicar *pro tem*, Saint Thomas More Parish, Lake Ariel, to Parochial Vicar, Christ the King Parish, Archbald, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend Rafael Ofarril Bermúdez Gonzalez, from Parochial Vicar, Our Lady of Peace Parish, Hazleton, to Parochial Vicar, Saints Cyril and Methodius Parish, Hazleton, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend Shawn M. Simchock, from Senior Priest, Our Lady of Peace Parish, Hazleton, to Parochial Vicar, Saint Pius of Pietrelcina Parish, Hazleton, effective July 15, 2026.

Reverend Shinu Vazhakkootathil John, from Parochial Vicar, Epiphany Parish, Sayre, to Parochial Vicar, Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow, and Saint Eulalia Parish, Roaring Brook Township, effective July 15, 2026.

DEACONS:

Deacon Paul J. Brojack, to diaconal ministry, Holy Name of Mary Parish, Montrose, effective July 15, 2026. Deacon Brojack will continue to serve as Deacon, Saint Brigid Parish, Friendsville.

Deacon Nicholas M. Rocco, to diaconal Ministry, Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow, effective July 15, 2026. Deacon Rocco will continue to serve as Deacon, Saint Eulalia Parish, Roaring Brook Township.

Deacon Frank H. Zeranski, to diaconal ministry, Saint Eulalia Parish, Roaring Brook Township, effective July 15, 2026. Deacon Zeranski will continue to serve as Deacon, Saint Catherine of Siena Parish, Moscow.

Catholic women encouraged to live 'courageous faith' at annual conference

SCRANTON – More than 400 women from parishes across the Diocese of Scranton and beyond gathered at Marywood University on June 6 for the 2026 Catholic Women's Conference.

The day of prayer, fellowship and inspiration centered on the theme, "Courageous Faith."

The annual event featured Mass with the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, keynote speakers, opportunities for Reconciliation and Eucharistic Adoration, the Rosary, music and more.

In his homily at the opening Mass, Bishop Bambera reflected on the Gospel account of the widow who placed two small coins into the temple treasury, explaining that her gift was significant not because of its value, but because of her complete trust in God.

"The widow in today's Gospel is praised by Jesus not because of what she gave but because of who she was – a woman of faith who relied upon her God and trusted that he would walk with her in her life's journey," the Bishop said.

Drawing from the conference theme, the Bishop reminded participants that courageous faith is not merely belief but action.

"It's a faith that lives boldly, stepping forward despite opposition, and refusing to compromise on the truth," he said.



Mary Kay Noto of Dunmore, left, and other women pray the Rosary at the beginning of the 2026 Catholic Women's Conference at Marywood University on June 7, 2026. (Photo/Mike Melisky)

Throughout the day, speakers also challenged attendees to deepen their trust in God and live their faith more intentionally.

Father Dan Reehil, pastor of Saint Catherine of Siena Parish in Nashville, Tenn., encouraged women to remain rooted in gratitude regardless of life's circumstances.

"God wants us to have faith that no matter what happens in our life, we turn to him and we thank him," Father Reehil said. "At every Mass, in the preface, we say it every single day, 'We give thanks to you, O Heavenly Father, always and everywhere.'"

Musician, speaker, and evangelist Francesca LaRosa reflected on the challenge of surrendering one's plans to God, especially during difficult moments.

"Maybe God is asking you to trust him with your family, with your marriage, with your faith, with your children, with your health, with your future, with a dream that you had buried," LaRosa said. "Courageous faith means, 'Jesus, I trust in you,' no matter what."

For many participants, the conference provided an opportunity to be renewed in faith while connecting with other Catholic women.

It's very important, as a woman, to be with a lot of people, and prayer is so powerful with groups of people," Mary Kay Noto, a parishioner of the linked parishes of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saints Anthony & Rocco in Dunmore, said. "To express your faith, it's a beautiful thing."

Robyn Patrick of Saint Carlo Acutis Parish in Olyphant described the conference atmosphere as "uplifting and energizing."

"You walk into this room, and you feel welcomed," Patrick said. "You know that your purpose is to be here and to learn and to bring something back and hopefully share it with the people that you meet in your everyday life."

Maria Dalrymple of Saint Ann Basilica Parish in Scranton



A sold out crowd of more than 400 women filled the large conference room at Nazareth Hall on the Marywood University campus for the 2026 Catholic Women's Conference on June 7. (Photo/Mike Melisky)



Above Left: Father Dan Reehil gives a keynote address during the 2026 Catholic Women's Conference.

Above: A woman comforts a young baby during Mass.



Left: Francesca LaRosa plays the keyboard and sings during Mass. (Photos/Mike Melisky)



Bishop Joseph C. Bambera delivers his homily during Mass at the 2026 Catholic Women's Conference on June 7. (Photo/Mike Melisky)

said the conference served as an important reminder that Christians are not meant to walk alone in faith.

"We're meant to be in community with one another," Dalrymple said. "It is an incredible opportunity when we get to come together, pray together, and remind ourselves that not only is God walking with us, but the Body of Christ – the Church – all these women – we're all in this together."

For Bridget Conway of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Peckville, the conference offered encouragement through

the witness of others who have faced challenges with faith and perseverance.

"I was encouraged and invited to come here by my mom and I'm so glad that I accepted that invitation," Conway said. "It has really been a wonderful experience ... I hope to someday in the future, share this day with my daughter."

As this year's conference ended, the women were encouraged to mark their calendars for the 2027 Catholic Women's Conference – which will be held on June 11 & 12, 2027.

Bishop Bambera to carry Diocesan Prayer Intentions on upcoming Camino

All faithful invited to submit prayer intentions online prior to July 8

SCRANTON – This summer, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will embark on a unique spiritual journey that he has never undertaken before.

Beginning July 13, Bishop Bambera will walk a portion of the Camino de Santiago, an ancient Christian pilgrimage route that has drawn believers from around the world for centuries. Over the course of seven days, through July 19, he will walk approximately 100 miles across northern Spain, traveling toward Santiago de Compostela and its cathedral, the traditional burial place of Saint James the Apostle, the destination of all those pilgrims who walk the Camino.

For many pilgrims, the Camino is much more than a physical challenge. It is a time of prayer, reflection, renewal, and a deeper encounter with God. Each step becomes an opportunity to slow down, listen to the Lord's voice, and reflect upon the blessings and challenges of life.

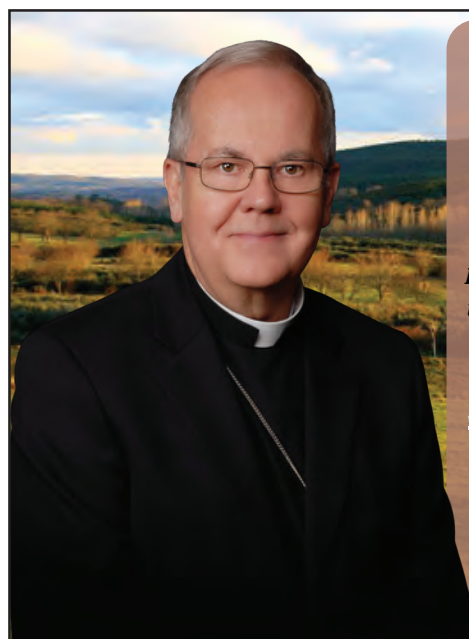
Throughout his journey, the Bishop will be joined by Father Brian J.W. Clarke, Pastor of Saints Cyril and Methodius Parish in Hazleton.

As Bishop Bambera prepares for this

pilgrimage, which has long been a personal goal and one that has special significance for him this year, having celebrated his 70th birthday and 16th anniversary as Bishop of Scranton, he would like to carry the people of the Diocese of Scranton with him in a special way.

The Bishop plans to pray for the intentions of parishioners, families, friends, and all those who call the 11 counties of northeastern and north central Pennsylvania home. Whether you are praying for a loved one, seeking guidance, carrying a burden, celebrating a blessing, or simply asking for God's grace in your life, Bishop Bambera invites you to share your prayer intentions with him.

Using an online submission form that can be found on the Diocese of Scranton website (dioceseofscranton.org) and all



Bishop Bambera is walking the Camino

From July 13-19, Bishop Bambera will walk a portion of the Camino de Santiago - and he wants to carry the prayer intentions of the people of the Diocese of Scranton with him.

SHARE YOUR PRAYER INTENTIONS

Bishop Bambera will pray for the intentions he receives each day on the Camino.

Submit intentions online at dioceseofscranton.org before July 8!



Diocesan social media pages, all faithful are invited to submit a personal prayer intention that Bishop Bambera will take with him on the Camino.

During his daily prayer and reflection, the Bishop will remember these special intentions and lift them up to the Lord throughout his pilgrimage.

As he journeys toward Santiago, Bishop Bambera asks for your prayers as well – that this time of pilgrimage may strengthen his faith, renew his spirit, and deepen his commitment to serving the people of the Diocese of Scranton.

All prayer intentions should be submitted online prior to noon on July 8.

Wedding Anniversary Mass to celebrate marriages of 163 couples

SCRANTON - A total of 163 couples who are celebrating milestone wedding anniversaries this year will be recognized at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton on Sunday, June 28, 2026.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, will serve as principal celebrant and homilist for the Diocese of Scranton's annual Wedding Anniversary Mass that this year recognizes married couples who are celebrating their 10th, 25th, 40th and 50th anniversaries.

The Mass will begin at 2:30 p.m.

In all, the couples registered to attend the Mass will signify 6,250 years of married life.

Marriage is a vocation to holiness. All marriages can grow in knowledge, faith, joy, and love. Whether a married couple is

just starting out or has fifty years (or more) under their belt, the Church can always help strengthen and bless your marriage.

This year, a couple who has been married for 69 years is planning to attend the Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Mass.

In all, couples from 69 different parishes plan to participate.

CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton will broadcast the Mass live and provide a livestream on the Diocese of Scranton website, YouTube channel and all Diocesan social media platforms.

As we celebrate these milestone anniversaries, please join us in praying for these couples and all married couples throughout the Diocese, that their lives may continue to reflect the faithful and enduring love of Christ.



BISHOP BAMBERA'S SCHEDULE

June 16-24 - Catholic-Pentecostal Interreligious Dialogue
Rome

June 27 - Priesthood Ordination Mass of Rev. Mr. Jan Carlo Perez
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 10:00 a.m.

June 28 - Mass for the Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
SS. Anthony and Rocco Parish, Dunmore, 11:15 a.m.

June 28 - Wedding Anniversary Mass
Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, 2:30 p.m.

June 30 - Mass of Candidacy during Quo Vadis & Fiat Days
Marywood University, 2:00 p.m.

July 1 - Priesthood Ordination Mass of Brother Jose Batista, OSJ
Saint Pius of Pietrelcina Parish, Hazleton, 5:00 p.m.

Pope urges humanity to build civilization of love in digital world

Continued from Page 1

“We must lovingly safeguard the grandeur of humanity bestowed upon us and revealed in its fullness in Christ, the splendor of which no machine can ever replace,” Pope Leo XIV continued.

AI misuse compared to ‘Tower of Babel’

Pope Leo opens his encyclical by saying that humanity today faces a pivotal choice - “either to construct a new Tower of Babel or to build the city in which God and humanity dwell together.”

Using the Biblical Genesis narrative, the pope warns against the “‘Babel syndrome,’ namely the idolatry of profit that sacrifices the weak” and the pretense that everything, “including the mystery of the person,” can be translated into “data and performance.”

“Calling for prudence, rigorous evaluation and even, at times, a slower pace in adopting AI does not mean opposing progress; instead, it is an exercise of responsible care for the human family,” Pope Leo wrote.

From cryptocurrency to the ‘Lord of the Rings’

The lengthy papal document is divided into five chapters and touches on wide ranging issues related to AI, including the prospect of massive unemployment, the future of education, the protection of human freedom, excessive screen time for young people, cryptocurrencies, economic disparities, transhumanism, cyberattacks and the application of Catholic social teaching principles.

Pope Leo dedicated the final chapter of the encyclical to AI in warfare and the need for “rigorous ethical constraints” and proactive peacebuilding “to curb the technological arms race.”

The American pope points to Martin Luther King Jr., St. Teresa of Kolkata, Dorothy Day, St. Maximilian Kolbe and others as examples that “history can also change when individuals truly take the dignity of everyone seriously.”

In “Magnifica Humanitas,” Latin for “Magnificent Humanity,” the pope calls on Christians not to be “passive spectators” or “mere commentators on what is crumbling,” but to take a proactive role in building the



A copy of Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical, "Magnifica Humanitas: On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence," is seen during a presentation on the document at the Vatican May 25, 2026. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)

future by cultivating community and in-person relationships, educating young people to love wisdom, spending time with the poor and the lonely, being a voice for justice, defending objective truth, and treating the digital world as “a new continent to be evangelized.”

“It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succour of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till,” the pope wrote, quoting J.R.R. Tolkien’s “Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King.” He added that it is “small and steadfast acts of fidelity that serve as a bulwark against dehumanization.”

‘Slowing things down when everything is accelerating’

In the encyclical, Pope Leo says that the idea of a “more moral AI” is not enough if that morality is only determined by a few.

“What is needed is a more active political involvement that is capable of slowing things down when everything is accelerating, and of protecting the opportunities for communities still to be able to participate and ask questions,” he said.

The pope argues that “we cannot consider AI to be morally neutral” and underlines that ethical discernment cannot be limited to “asking whether we are using a system for good or bad purposes,” but must also “examine how that system is designed and what vision of the human person and society is embedded in the data and models that guide it.”

Pope Leo added that data cannot be

left solely in private hands and “should not be treated as something to be sold off or entrusted to a select few,” calling for appropriate regulation and creative thinking to “manage data as a common or shared good.”

Unemployment as a ‘grave evil’

Pope Leo addresses the looming specter of mass unemployment due to the adoption of AI, saying this would be “a true social calamity that especially requires the State to exercise responsibility.” He cites St. John Paul II’s 1981 encyclical on human work “Laborem Exercens,” noting that his predecessor recognized that unemployment is “a grave evil,” with Pope Leo adding that “exposing many to forced inactivity, a lack of responsibility and the absence of daily tasks and stimuli” could lead to “human and cultural impoverishment.”

“The pursuit of greater profits cannot justify choices that systematically sacrifice jobs, because the human person is an end, not a means, and the economic order must remain subordinate to human dignity and the common good,” Pope Leo said.

“Without bold decisions, the prospect of greater poverty and inequality looms large, which would leave many individuals marginalized, stranded and surrounded by the machines and automated systems that have replaced them,” he added.

God created humans for communion, not efficiency

Pope Leo writes that AI promises efficiency but the “new ways” of working are not necessarily better, describing how “contrary to the advertised benefits of AI, current approaches to technology can paradoxically de-skill workers, subject them to automated surveillance and relegate them to rigid and repetitive tasks.”

“When efficiency becomes the ultimate measure of value, human beings are tempted to see themselves as a project to be optimized rather than as persons called to relationship and communion,” Pope Leo said.

A defense of objective truth

Truth is a major theme in the encyclical by the Augustinian pope. He said that in the face of incessant flows of information, opinions, images and sophisticated

algorithms that can influence decisions, it is imperative to “cultivate hearts that love the truth, prefer what is right despite the most appealing content and pursue wisdom rather than immediate results.”

“We must always keep before us the truth about God and humanity, just as Christ has revealed them to us. We must lay aside an individualistic and technical view of humanity,” he said.

Quoting Pope Benedict XVI, he added, “Modern man is wrongly convinced that he is the sole author of himself, his life and society. This is a presumption that follows from being selfishly closed in upon himself.” The pope underlined that “the search for truth is an essential element of democracy,” and that “indifference to the truth leads, slowly but surely, to a descent into totalitarianism.”

He said people must “promote an ecology of communication,” in which public policy establishes norms “so that the decision-making behind content selection and its development becomes more transparent and protects personal data.” On a cultural level, he called for “a strengthening of intermediary organizations, serious journalism and forums for debate,” for families and schools to gain formation in using digital tools, and for universities to strive for the “integration of knowledge.”

“Our first task is neither to demonize nor idolize technological tools, but to utilize them on the basis of a fundamental principle, namely that truth is a common good and not the property of those with power or influence,” he said.

Social control and the ‘digital attention economy’

Pope Leo called for “education in digital sobriety” due to subtle forms of addiction in today’s “digital attention economy,” in which digital platforms that are “designed to capture users’ time and attention” weaken “their inner freedom.”

He warned of the risk of “social control made possible by the massive collection of data and use of algorithmic systems.”

“When every action - movements, purchases, relationships and preferences - leaves a trace, a new form of power emerges, namely the power to profile, predict and influence behavior, often without individuals being fully aware of it,” he said.

Catholic Social Services hosts national People of Hope Museum



Visitors to the People of Hope Museum engage with a poverty simulator as the 53-foot traveling museum made a stop in Scranton June 10, 2026. (Photo/Dan Gallagher)

SCRANTON – More than 180 visitors stepped into stories of compassion, resilience and service when the national People of Hope Museum made a stop at Nay Aug Park on June 10.

Hosted by Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton, the traveling exhibit from Catholic Charities USA welcomed 183 visitors throughout the day, offering an interactive experience designed to foster greater understanding of poverty, community service and the dignity of every human person.

Before the museum opened, the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, joined Catholic Social Services staff and community leaders for a brief prayer service and blessing.

“I think the most important thing this museum reminds us of is not only need, but opportunities that we are given as a people, as a community, and as a Church to respond to that need,” Bishop Bambera said. “The name of this traveling museum says it all – a people of hope.”

Housed inside a 53-foot tractor trailer, the museum featured video testimonies, storytelling opportunities and an interactive poverty simulation that challenged visitors to navigate the difficult decisions many families face each day.

Joe Mahoney, CEO of Catholic Social Services, said the exhibit offered an opportunity for visitors to better

understand both the challenges facing vulnerable individuals and the ways Catholic Charities agencies respond.

“The poverty simulator was eye-opening to me,” Mahoney said. “It’s not easy being poor. There are so many hoops and hurdles to get through – what people in poverty face on a daily basis as they try to feed their families and get through the day.”

Mahoney noted that the museum’s message aligns closely with the mission of Catholic Social Services.

“I’ve been working with Catholic Charities agencies for more than 20 years,” he said. “This is what we are. We are the people of hope.”

Bishop Bambera said the museum also served as an opportunity to highlight the often unseen work of Catholic Social Services throughout the Diocese of Scranton.

“Most of the work that we do, that touches thousands of people, is done quietly,” he explained. “We don’t have cameras at a kitchen or food pantry where people go for help each day. We don’t have cameras in our shelters where people stay each night. We’re content with doing it quietly and helping the people God has placed in our care.”

Launched in March, the People of Hope will travel to more than 150 cities across the country through the first half of 2028.

U.S. Bishops consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart



Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, concelebrates Mass as prelates consecrate the country to the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the Basilica of Mary Queen of the Universe in Orlando, Fla., June 11, 2026, during their spring plenary assembly. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

ORLANDO, Fla. (OSV News) - The spiritual refuge that is the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe in Orlando was the setting for Mass celebrated by the U.S. bishops to formally consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as part of the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City incensed the altar after processing in from the thick humidity and cloudy skies of a typical Orlando afternoon outside the shrine.

“Clothe us, Lord God, with the

virtues of the heart of your son, and set us aflame with his love,” the archbishop prayed in opening the Mass.

In his homily, Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore described the Sacred Heart of Jesus not as an “abstract devotion,” but as a “visible sign of love.”

He described the consecration as an act of faith and acknowledgment of the need for God’s mercy, wisdom and guidance. Renewal of the Church and the nation, he said, “will come through disciples who remain in Christ’s love and bear the good fruit of holiness in families, parishes, communities and in their daily lives.”

Faithful gather locally honoring Sacred Heart

Continued from Page 4

“I really do believe that our country and our world is in great need of God’s love and his healing power that begins in the hearts of each believer,” Father Petro said.

For many faithful, the large crowds at both liturgies served as a powerful witness to faith.

“Christ gives us the inspiration, the hope, the guidance, the love, the assurance, that in following him, we go along the path that we need to go to obtain eternal life,” Frank Suraci of Saint Joseph Marella Parish in Pittston, said.

“Jesus is always there for us. People



Faithful gather to celebrate the Sacred Heart Solemnity in Dupont on June 12, 2026.

come and go in our lives, but He is the one that is always here,” parishioner Mary Jo Salva said following the Peckville celebration. “He wants us to be happy, and He loves us no matter what.”



SUMMER PARISH PICNIC, FESTIVAL AND BAZAAR LISTING



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FRIDAY • 6-11PM
SATURDAY • 5-10PM

Live Entertainment!

Friday: Flaxy Morgan
Saturday: Hangin' With F.O.G.

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Show Me The Money • Corn Hole • Cup Stand**

AIR CONDITIONED BINGO

~ **HOMEMADE FOOD** ~
~ **BAKE SALE** ~
~ **CHILDREN'S GAMES** ~

Saint Faustina Kowalska in Nanticoke — June 19 & 20 (5 to 11 p.m.). Parish's Annual Homecoming Festival held on the grounds of Saint Faustina Grove, located on Old Newport Street in the Sheatown section. Two-night event features bake sale & ice cream stand and traditional picnic foods: pierogi, potato pancakes, halushki, hot dogs/hamburgers and fries. Also includes theme basket raffle, games for all ages, and children's face-painting, pony rides and bounce house. Live musical entertainment features The Tommy Guns Band (Friday) and The Idol Kings (Saturday). Weekend vigil "Mass in the Grove" celebrated on Saturday at 4 p.m.

Divine Mercy in Scranton — June 19-21 (5 to 10 p.m.). Annual Parish Picnic held Friday, Saturday & Sunday, from 5 to 10 p.m., on the parish church grounds, 312 Davis St.,

Minooka section of Scranton. Three-day summer festival features homemade picnic foods, beverages, specialty theme baskets, big cash & quilt raffle drawings, games and activities for all ages. Live nightly entertainment: Friday, Broadway on the Boulevard and Flaxy Morgan; Saturday, Velez Studio of Dance and The Impastas; and Sunday, Strangers. Outdoor Mass celebrated on Sunday at 4 p.m. on the picnic grounds.

Saint Leo the Great in Ashley — June 26 & 27. Summer Festival held on the parish grounds, 33 Manhattan St., Ashley, on Friday (6 to 11 p.m.) and Saturday (5 to 10 p.m.). Featured attractions include the Ashley Boutique, children's arts & crafts, specialty liquor stand, corn hole, bingo games (air-conditioned), games of chance, homemade ethnic foods & bake sale. Live musical entertainment

nightly: Friday, Flaxy Morgan; and Saturday, Hangin' With F.O.G.

Our Lady Queen of Peace in Brodheadsville — June 26-28. Annual Parish Flea Market hosted at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, Route 209 & Weir Lake Road, Brodheadsville; market hours: Friday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. Sale items at bargain prices include collectibles/vintage, furniture, arts & crafts, jewelry, fashion accessories, tools, toys, books, frames/prints, lawn & garden and more. Basket raffle and lunch food menu also available.

Sacred Heart of Jesus in Dupont — June 27. Traditional Polish Picnic held Saturday from 1 to 8 p.m. on the parish Picnic Grove grounds, 215 Lackawanna Ave., Dupont. Homemade ethnic foods include pierogi, golombki (pigs in blanket), halushki, kielbasi, and potato pancakes. Also featuring theme baskets, games of chance, beer tent, and live entertainment, including Polka music.

Saint Mary's in Dorrance — June 27 & 28. Saint Mary Church, 3529 Saint Mary's Road, Dorrance, will host its Annual Summer Bazaar on Saturday, 4 to 10 p.m., and Sunday, 2 to 9 p.m. Event features homemade ethnic/picnic foods, games, theme baskets, hay rides and bake sale. Musical entertainment provided by The Untouchables (Saturday, 6 to 10 p.m.), and The Legends Band (Sunday, 5 to 9 p.m.).

Immaculate Heart of Mary in Dushore — June 27 & 28. Annual "Old Time Picnic" will be held Saturday, 5 to 10 p.m.,

Continued on Next Page

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SUNDAY, JUNE 28 • 2:00 - 9:00 PM

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Saturday: The Untouchables
6:00 - 10:00 pm

Sunday: The Legends Band
5:00 - 9:00 pm





SUMMER PARISH PICNIC, FESTIVAL AND BAZAAR LISTING



Continued from Previous Page

and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m., on the grounds above Saint Basil Church in Dushore. The weekend picnic features food stands, various refreshments, musical entertainment, theme baskets, cash & whiskey raffles, and adult games. Fireworks Show begins Saturday night at 9:30 p.m. Sunday events feature a chicken barbecue dinner.

Our Lady of the Rosary in Carbondale — July 9-11 (5 to 10 p.m.). Carbondale parish sponsoring its “Feast 2026” summer festival Thursday, Friday & Saturday on the parish picnic grounds, 37 Farview St., Carbondale. Annual event features homemade Italian and Polish ethnic foods, games for all ages, and raffle drawings. Live nightly music from 7 to 10 p.m., performed by Mystic Rulers (Thursday), The Wanabees (Friday), and Joe Stanky & the Cadets (Saturday). Festival weekend concludes Sunday, July 12, with the traditional Our Lady of Mount Carmel procession following the 10 a.m. Mass.

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in Swoyersville — July 9-11 (5 to 11 p.m.). Summer Festival held on the parish grounds, 116 Hughes St., Swoyersville. Three-day event features homemade ethnic & picnic foods, and games & prizes for all ages. Nightly entertainment provided by: John Stevens’ Doubleshot (Thursday); Picture Perfect (Friday); and Hoopla.

Nativity of Our Lord in Duryea — July 10 & 11. Duryea parish picnic will be hosted on Friday and Saturday nights on the parish grounds at Holy Rosary Church and School, 127 Stephenson St., Duryea. Festival

attractions include homemade ethnic foods & Polish favorites; cash bingo, games of chance, homemade baked goods/desserts, and indoor flea market. Live nightly entertainment features CC Music (Friday) and The Sperazza Band (Saturday). Early-bird flea market held on Thursday, July 9.

Good Shepherd in Drums — July 10-12. Summer Festival held at the parish church grounds, 87 South Hunter Highway, Drums, on Friday, 5 to 10 p.m.; Saturday, 1 to 10 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 to 7 p.m. Event features festival food & beverage favorites and activities & games for all ages. Live musical entertainment: North of 40 (Friday, 6 to 9:30 p.m.); New Arrival (Saturday, 1 to 4 p.m.), followed by ALV Karaoke and DJ Services (4 to 6 p.m.) and Kartune (6:30 to 10 p.m.); and Tommy Molinaro (Sunday, 1 to 3 p.m.), followed by The Legends (3 to 6:30 p.m.).

Saint Elizabeth/Saint Mark in Bear Creek Township — July 11 (noon to 7 p.m.). SummerFest parish festival will be held on Saturday afternoon at the Bear Creek Community Charter School Pavilion, Bear Creek Twp. Featuring homemade pierogi, halupki, potato pancakes, halushki, pork BBQ, and chicken dinner. Added attractions include bingo, basket raffles & cash drawings, and bake sale. Saturday Vigil Mass will be celebrated at 4 p.m.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Saint Mary’s) in Wyalusing — July 12 (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.). Annual “Old Fashion Picnic” held on Sunday on the grounds of Saint Mary of the Assumption Church, 245 State St., Wyalusing. Festival food menu includes sausage & peppers, meatballs, baked ziti,

salads, beverages and homemade pies. Games and attractions for all ages; “Happy Wagon,” theme basket & cash raffle drawings.

Our Lady of Hope in Wilkes-Barre — July 12. Annual parish picnic hosted at the Wilkes-Barre Township Settlement Camp from noon until dusk. Featuring traditional picnic foods and beverages; swimming & boating at the lake; and recreational activities on the baseball field and basketball court. For more information, call Sue at (570) 852-5303.

Saint Nicholas-Saint Mary in Wilkes-Barre — July 16-18. Annual Parish Bazaar held on the Saint Nicholas Church grounds, 226 South Washington St., Wilkes-Barre, beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday and

Friday, and following the 4 p.m. Vigil Mass on Saturday. Bazaar features a variety of ethnic foods and traditional American menu items, including Mexican & Caribbean specialties. Event

includes cash prize raffle drawings, bingo, bountiful baskets, and picnic games for all ages. Giant flea market hours: Thursday, 1 to 9 p.m.; Friday

Continued on Next Page

IHM Parish, Dushore

ANNUAL PICNIC

and

Fireworks Show

Saturday, June 27, 5-10pm • Fireworks Show @ 9:30pm.
Food stands and adult games will be open.

Sunday, June 28, Noon-5pm • All stands open.
Chicken BBQ Dinner available.

Under the tent in Dushore above St Basil’s Church on the Hill
Shuttle service to & from church parking lot

Donations appreciated to offset the cost of the Fireworks Show.
<https://ihmdushore.com/donate> or by mail at P.O. Box 307, Dushore, Pa 18614

DJ & Music, Theme Baskets, Cash & Whiskey Raffles, Big 6, Instant Bingo

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church

215 LACKAWANNA AVENUE, DUPONT PA

*Join us for
Mass at
4 pm!*

POLISH PICNIC

**Saturday, June 27
1 PM - 8 PM**

Located in the Picnic Grove

FOOD OFFERINGS INCLUDE:
Pierogi • Golombki • Halushki • Kielbasi
Potato Pancakes • and more!

THIS FAMILY FRIENDLY PICNIC OFFERS:
Delicious Ethnic Foods • Theme Baskets • Games of Chance
Beer Tent • Polka Music and much more!





SUMMER PARISH PICNIC, FESTIVAL AND BAZAAR LISTING



Continued from Previous Page

& Saturday, 3 to 9 p.m. Live musical entertainment nightly from 7 to 10:30 p.m. by Flaxy Morgan (Thursday); Popstar Drive (Friday); and Kartune (Saturday).

Communion of Saints in Pittston — July 16-18. The new Pittston City Catholic parish's grand Summer Picnic will be held on the grounds of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 237 William St., Pittston. Event features a wide variety of picnic and homemade ethnic foods, including cannoli, pizza, sausage & peppers, and pizza frita; games for all ages, bountiful theme basket raffle drawings, and huge indoor flea market. Nightly musical entertainment will feature local band favorites Bugeye McGuire, Flaxy Morgan and The Taxmen.

Saint Eulalia in Roaring Brook Township — July 17 & 18 (5 to 10 p.m.). Summer Festival held on the church picnic grounds, 214 Blue Shutters Road, will feature homemade ethnic & picnic foods, Grandma's Attic flea market, and activities for all ages. Friday musical entertainment: Steel Velvet (classic rock), 5:45 to 8:45 p.m. Saturday: Electric City Steel Drum Project, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., followed by Alex "The Crooner," 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Hanover Township — July 17-19. "Big Tent Bazaar 2026" held on the church grounds, 420 Main Road, Buttonwood section, on Friday, 6 to 11 p.m.; Saturday, 5 p.m. to midnight; and Sunday, 4 to 10 p.m. Featuring homemade ethnic foods & baked goods, potato pancake express, full-service Tiki Bar, theme baskets, raffle drawings & assorted games. Live

nightly entertainment features Souled Out (Friday); OZ and Pop Star Drive (Saturday), and Lance Thomas Band (Sunday).

Saint Catherine of Siena in Moscow — July 23-25. Saint Catherine Parish will host their popular donations-only Rummage Sale and Ethnic Food Tent at the Moscow Country Street Fair on Thursday, Friday & Saturday. With the theme "Hometown Roots and Cowboy Boots," the Moscow Country Fair is celebrating its 10th anniversary of bringing music, art, and cultural entertainment and attractions to the borough's downtown. The Saint Catherine's food stand is featuring halupki, kielbasi, halushki, and many other menu favorites. For more information, call Christian Brown at (570) 309-1063.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Hunlock Creek — July 24 & 25 (5 to 10 p.m.). Parish "Summer Fest 2026" held on the church grounds at Lake Silkworth, 2011 State Route 29. Tent-covered two-day event features a huge indoor flea market, theme baskets, festival games, and homemade picnic & Polish/ethnic foods. Live musical entertainment provided by Kartune (Friday) and Popstar Drive (Saturday).

Saint Robert Bellarmine in Wilkes-Barre — July 30, 31 & Aug. 1. The "St. Al's Church Bazaar" held Thursday, 6 to 10 p.m.; Friday, 6 to 11 p.m.; and Saturday, 5 to 11 p.m., on the Saint Aloysius Church grounds, 143 West Division St., Wilkes-Barre. Picnic foods include sausage & peppers, potato pancakes, halushki, and pizza; bazaar also features games for all ages, bingo, and flea market.

Continued on Next Page

Divine Mercy PARISH PICNIC 2026

FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY
★ JUNE 19 - 20 - 21 ★
5:00PM to 10:00PM

DELICIOUS FOOD CHILDREN'S GAMES BAKE SALE THEME BASKETS BAR BIG 6 WHEEL BINGO

★ DON'T MISS OUR DELICIOUS POTATO PANCAKES! ★

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
★ Friday ★
BY
BROADWAY ON THE BOULEVARD
AND
FLAXY MORGAN

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
★ Saturday ★
BY
VELEZ STUDIO OF DANCE
AND
THE IMPASTAS

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
★ Sunday ★
BY
STRANGERS

📍 312 Davis St., Scranton PA 18505 📞 570-344-1724

OUTDOOR MASS will be held
SUNDAY, JUNE 21 at 4:00PM



SUMMER PARISH PICNIC, FESTIVAL AND BAZAAR LISTING



Continued from Previous Page

Nightly musical entertainment: Triple Fret (Thursday); Popstar Drive (Friday); and Strawberry Jam (Saturday).

Gate of Heaven (Dallas) & Our Lady of Victory (Harveys Lake) — Aug. 2. The 75th Anniversary Committee of Gate of Heaven Parish in Dallas will host a combined parish picnic gathering with Our Lady of Victory Parish in Harveys Lake. The Sunday summer festival begins at noon at the Gate of Heaven Parish Center. Hot dogs, hamburgers, and soft beverages will be provided. Those attending are requested to bring a covered-dish food item.

Saint Jude's in Mountain Top — Aug. 7-9. Parish's 73rd

annual "Picnic in the Grove" held Friday & Saturday, from 4 to 10 p.m., and Sunday, noon to 8 p.m., at the Saint Jude Grove, 420 South Mountain Boulevard (Route 309), Mountain Top. Features ethnic & traditional picnic foods, including homemade pierogi and halushki; summer refreshments, live music, games & activities for all ages.

Saint Matthew's in East Stroudsburg — Aug. 7-9. Summer festival held on Friday & Saturday, 5 to 10 p.m., and Sunday, noon to 6 p.m., on the parish grounds, 78 Ridgeway St., East Stroudsburg. Three-day event includes live entertainment, international foods & homemade desserts, beer & wine garden, kids' games & family bingo, raffle drawings, and mega cash raffle. Featured music headliners include: Joey & The T Birds,

Video Daze Band, Tempo Allegre, and more.

Saint John the Baptist in Larksville — Aug. 7-9. Saint John's Summer Picnic on the parish grounds features thousands of homemade pierogi (frozen orders available); a variety of traditional festival foods, games for all ages, theme baskets and live music.

Saints Peter & Paul in Plains — Aug. 15 & 16. Parish's summer weekend indoor flea market open on Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Event offers treasures for all, including jewelry, housewares, children's toys, home decor, pet accessories, and seasonal items. Menu favorites & refreshments available from various food trucks located in the parking lot outside the parish hall.

World Refugee Day celebration is Saturday

On Saturday, June 20, 2026, the community is invited to participate in the 2026 World Refugee Day Celebration from 2-5 p.m. The new location for this year's event will be the Diocese of Scranton Pastoral Center, 330 Wyoming Avenue, Scranton. The celebration will include cultural music and dance performances, refreshments, giveaways, games, and activities for kids. More than 25 community agencies are working together to plan this celebration.

Members of the planning committee pictured are, front row, from left: Krishna Rai and Tek Khadka, Bhutanese Community of Scranton. Back row, from left: Phil Yevics, Scranton Area Multifaith Ministerium; Ghana Rasaily, Bhutanese Community of Scranton; Toya Timsina, Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit; Tek Panday, Bhutanese Cultural



Foundation Scranton Association; Audrey Golosky, United Neighborhood Centers; Mary Nehme, Catholic Social Services; Ana Becerril, Diocese of Scranton; Joseph Mahoney, Catholic Social Services; Fikile Ryder, Catholic Social Services; Julie Schumacher Cohen, The University of Scranton; Daisy Carreto, The University of Scranton; Maria Vital, Leahy Clinic; Jenny Gonzalez, S.T.A.R.S. Program at Marywood

University; Sister Donna Korba, I.H.M., Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary; Rabbi Daniel Swartz, Temple Hesed; and Rev. Tyler Perry, St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

Not pictured: Chandra Sitaula, Bhutanese Cultural Foundation of Scranton Association; Ushu Mukelo, Congolese Community of Scranton; Channel Kearse, City of Scranton; and Dr. Melinda Krokus, Islamic Center of Scranton.

Saint Nicholas-Saint Mary Parish
226 SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET, WILKES-BARRE • 570-823-7736
(on the grounds of St. Nicholas Church)

Fr. Joseph Verespy, Fr. Fidel Ticono,
Deacon Michael Golubiewski, and Parishioners

Invite Everyone to the

PARISH BAZAAR

Thursday, Friday, Saturday
JULY 16, 17, 18

Opens 5:30PM Thursday & Friday • Opens after 4PM Mass on Saturday

Giant Flea Market (Thurs 1-9 PM; Fri. & Sat. 3-9 PM)
Games - Bingo - Fun for All Ages - Ethnic Food - Bountiful
Baskets - Raffle (1st prize 50-50) + 50 prizes

Live Music 7:00 PM to 10:30 PM 🎵

Thursday: Flaxy Morgan • Friday: Popstar Drive • Saturday: Kartune

Bratwurst, Haluski, Pierogies, Potato Pancakes, Piggies, Pizza,
Chicken Wings, Mexican/Caribbean Food, Fried Dough,
Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, French Fries and more!



Saint Eulalia
— PARISH —

SUMMER FESTIVAL | JULY 17-18 5-10 p.m.

Homemade Food, Grandma's Attic, & more...

WEEKEND ENTERTAINMENT:

FRI., JULY 17

5:45-8:45 PM

» Steel Velvet (rock band)

SAT., JULY 18

5:30-6:30 PM

» Electric City Steel Drum Project

6:30-8:30 PM

» Alex "the Crooner"

214 Blue Shutters Road, Roaring Brook Township
sainteulalias.com

For the full list of Parish Summer Picnics, visit the Diocese
of Scranton website at dioceseofscranton.org.

Saint John Neumann Regional Academy

WILLIAMSPORT — Graduation exercises were conducted for the Saint John Neumann Regional Academy Class of 2026 on May 28 in the George S. Klump Center at the Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport.

Saint John Neumann Principal Alisia McNamee presided over the presentation of diplomas to the 11 members of this year's graduating class, which were conferred by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, who also offered remarks and the closing benediction.

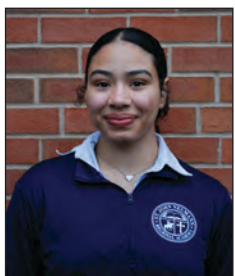
The Baccalaureate Mass was celebrated May 26 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Montoursville, where Father David Bechtel, high school chaplain, served as principal celebrant and homilist.

This year's Saint John Neumann valedictorian is Harrison Carnicom, son of Scott and Marla Carnicom, who reside in Lock Haven. Salutatorian honors were bestowed upon Breanna Nixon, daughter of Alicia Faulkner and Cleavon Nixon of Williamsport.

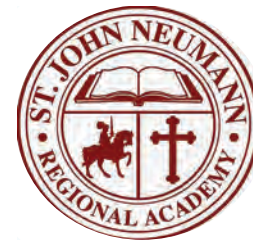
Ten members of the senior class will be pursuing further education on the university/college level, including three graduates who plan to attend Catholic institutions of higher learning. As a class, the Saint John Neumann graduates earned eight academic scholarships worth more than \$326,000.



**Harrison
Carnicom**



**Breanna
Nixon**



**“The skills that Neumann
has taught us are exactly
the kinds of skills that we need,
not only to survive, but to adapt,
succeed and prosper
in an ever-changing world.
It was challenging
for all of us, but there was
a reason for it.”**

— *Harrison Carnicom*
Valedictory Address
excerpt

**“May all of you find the future that fits
you best. Tonight, take time to appreciate
your accomplishments. Celebrate as we close
this chapter of our lives (and) reflect with great confidence
in ourselves...knowing that we are prepared
to draft the next pages of our future letters to ourselves.”**

— *Breanna Nixon*
Salutatory Address
excerpt

Holy Redeemer High School

WILKES-BARRE — Holy Redeemer High School was the first Scranton Diocesan secondary school to hold spring commencement exercises when its graduation ceremony was staged May 27 at the F.M. Kirby Center for the Performing Arts in Wilkes-Barre.

A total of 112 Holy Redeemer seniors, led by Principal Colin Martinson, were conferred their diplomas by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, who also addressed the graduates and offered benediction.

The Baccalaureate Mass was celebrated May 26 at Saint Nicholas Church, Wilkes-Barre, with Father Richard Cirba, V.F., serving as principal celebrant.

The 2026 Holy Redeemer class valedictorian is Ian Finnegan, son of William and Jody Finnegan of Edwardsville. Earning salutatorian honors was Brandon DelBalso, son of Patrick and Leane DelBalso, who are residents of Plains.

Of the total number of graduates, 108 will be enrolling in colleges or universities to further their education, including 33 who will be attending Catholic institutions of higher learning. The 2026 Holy Redeemer senior class merited a total of 749 scholarship awards worth more than \$45 million.



**Ian
Finnegan**



**Brandon
DelBalso**



**“Fellow classmates, we arrived
here four years ago as a blank
canvas. Today, we leave as a vibrant
tapestry of shared lessons, cultivated
friendships, great laughter, and
tremendous growth. As we step away
from Holy Redeemer, remember that
our greatest asset won't just be the
education we received, but the bonds
we forged together.”**

— *Ian Finnegan*
Valedictory Address
excerpt

**“Holy Redeemer's motto, *Omnia per Christum*
(‘All Things Through Christ’), became more than words
for us. It became a way of life, shaping our faith, strengthening
our compassion, and building a family that carried us
through every accomplishment and challenge
we shared along the way.”**

— *Brandon DelBalso*
Salutatory Address excerpt

242

The total number of young men and women who graduated from the four Catholic High Schools in the Diocese.

\$85.9 million

Graduates merited more than 1,360 scholarships, cumulatively earning this much toward their future schooling.

97%

The percentage of seniors who will continue their education in college. Nearly 80 graduates will attend Catholic colleges or universities.

Holy Cross High School



Claire Polishan



Kayleigh Shelp

DUNMORE — The Sette La Vergetta Center for Performing Arts at Marywood University was the setting for the annual spring commencement of Holy Cross High School.

Graduation ceremonies for the 75 members of the 2026 Holy Cross senior class were held May 29, led by school Principal Benjamin D. Tolerico.

Presiding over the commencement exercises and conferring the high school diplomas was Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, who addressed the Holy Cross graduates and offered the benediction.

The Baccalaureate Mass was celebrated May 28 at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, with Father Cyril Edwards, high school chaplain, serving as principal celebrant and homilist.

The 2026 Holy Cross valedictorian is Claire Polishan, daughter of Timothy and Kristyn Polishan of Dunmore. Class salutatorian is Kayleigh Shelp, daughter of Richard and Susan Shelp of Scranton.

Seventy-four seniors in the Holy Cross graduating class will be attending institutions of higher learning, with 28 graduates planning to enroll at Catholic colleges or universities. As a whole, the class earned 507 post-secondary scholarship awards totaling nearly \$33 million.

“No matter where each of us goes, we’ve all gained a little bit more experience with learning and celebrating why we were born: to be the hands of Christ in the world. So, as we enjoy tonight, let us cherish the past, live in the present, and walk without fear into the future.”

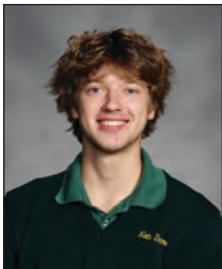
“All of us on this stage are truly blessed to have received a Catholic education, because the values that have been instilled in us will truly take us far. We have learned so much more than just ‘be nice to each other.’ We learned what being kind really means, how to care for the common good, and have hope for something greater than this life can give.”



— Claire Polishan,
Valedictory Address
excerpt

— Kayleigh Shelp,
Salutatory Address
excerpt

Notre Dame High School



Matt Jankowski



Georggel Bioh

EAST STROUDSBURG — Commencement exercises were held May 30 for Notre Dame High School, during which 44 graduates received their diplomas from Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, who also offered the principal address and closing benediction.

The high school theater set the stage for the graduation ceremonies for the Class of 2026 at Notre Dame, led by school Principal Bryan Scotton.

The Baccalaureate Mass was celebrated May 26 in the school’s theater by Father Brian J.T. Clarke, chaplain of Notre Dame High School.

Achieving valedictorian honors for Notre Dame High School this year is Matt Jankowski, son of Mariusz and Aleksandra Jankowski of Bushkill. The 2026 class salutatorian is Georggel Bioh, daughter of George and Magdalene Bioh, residents of East Stroudsburg.

Forty-three graduates from the Notre Dame Class of 2026 will continue their education at the university/college level, including 15 students who will be attending Catholic institutions of higher learning. The class received a total of 98 scholarship awards valued at more than \$7.6 million.

“I know for a fact that this class is more than capable of creating incredible futures. With all of us having been shaped and molded over the years by our Catholic education, we are prepared not only to chase success, but to live with purpose and integrity. I believe the most important lesson we have been taught is how community is the key to success.”

“Friends, it is time for us to rise, not allowing the sky to be the limit. In life, too many times we say, ‘I was going to do this’ or ‘I was going to do that.’ But when do we ever take the initiative? The time is now.”



— Matt Jankowski,
Valedictory Address
excerpt

— Georggel Bioh, Salutatory Address excerpt

Congratulations Catholic High School Graduates!

Class of 2026



HOLY CROSS

Angelica Antonova
 Kathryn Mary Apolinario
 Natalia Marie Archangeli
 Smriti Basnet
 Benjamin Ross Bellagamba
 Alexis Elena Bilski
 James Bordo
 Ariana Lee Cabelly
 Marena Anne Caravelli
 Henry Ryan Chilewski
 Elizabeth Ann Coval
 Grace Noel Donohue
 Branden Michael Fadl
 Bridget Jean Fay
 Addison Grace Flannery
 Emelia Franceski
 Giada Gaidula
 Angela Ghalley
 Trystan Thomas Gilroy
 Peyton Alexandra Graboske
 Grady Xavier Grill
 Joseph Daniel Hanley
 Alexander Ryan Harrison
 Shelby Marie Hartland
 Alyssa T. Hartman
 Noelle Lois Sophia Hunter
 Margaret Elizabeth Jones
 Noah Karzenoski
 Cameron Kelly

★ Valedictorians

Matthew Alexander Kennedy
 Savanna Killino
 Madison Ellen Knight
 Ava Lynn Kochmer
 Luke Gregory Kristyniak
 Aidan John Lalley
 Jael Lema
 Cole Lipinski
 Matthew John Liuzzo
 Alessandra Rita Lynn
 Simon Everest Madore

🎓 Salutatorians

HOLY REDEEMER
 Tia Marie Achuff
 Matthew Antinnes
 Bardia Belabadi
 James Joseph Bonczek Jr.
 Kaia Grace Bonham
 Isabella Boylan
 Arden Noelle Brunn
 Joshua Matthew Cackowski
 Tessa Marie Cegelka
 Kyra Isabelle Chepolis
 McKenzie Jean Chimock
 Michael Connolly III
 Gabriella Brynn Conston
 Sebastian John Cooney
 Mia Irene Correa
 Maryn Elizabeth Cosgrove
 Olivia Grace Davis
 Brandon Patrick DelBalso 🎓
 Marissa Kathryn D'Elia
 Brian Aiden DeMellier
 Dylan Joseph DiTrani
 Rylie Grace Domashinski
 Quron Bishop Drayton
 Daniel Haruto Dudrick



Nina Louise Dunleavy
 Gavin Joseph Evanoski
 Anthony A. Falcon
 Ian Christopher Finnegan ★
 Alyse Marin Forster
 Isabella M. Franchetti
 John Andrew Fredericks
 Ariana Grace Fumanti
 David Jenno Geskey
 Julia Michelle Gilchrist
 Aaron Bernard Glaser
 Alex James Gordon
 Michael F. Grandzol
 Gracie Lynn Griffin
 Andrew Charles Grove
 Ayden Thomas Hannigan
 Joseph Edward Holocheck
 Brendan Jan Kane
 Rebecca Carlene Kasmark
 Anthony Kinsella
 Frank Edward Klimovitz
 Kyla Lee Kon



Evan Mark McCoy
 Keira McGurgan
 Jonathan Ryan Mills
 Eugene Christopher Musto
 Elizabeth Diane Myers
 Avianna J Natale
 Gregg Joseph Novak, Jr.
 Grace Catherine O'Malley
 Sadie Mae Pappas
 Briana Perez
 Giuseppe Pilone
 Claire Elizabeth Polishan ★

Eric Anthony Smith
 Dylan David Steinmetz
 Anusha Thapa Magar
 Kevin Bradley Vincent
 Robert James Wallace
 McKenzie Walsh
 Alexa Lynne Waltman
 Lola Wilding
 Drew G. Wozniak
 Leland Theodore Wudarski
 Aiden John Wudarski
 Ray Zhang





Casey Edward Kovaleski
 Connor Michael Krakosky
 Evangelina Rose Kroposky
 Marlee Lapinski
 Taran Robert Lawrence
 Cole Lisowski
 Kyle Ly
 Joseph Christian Mackesy
 Cole Anthony Makarewicz
 Alex L. Mandoza
 Lilith Alden Marcincavage
 Quinn Marien
 Jude Joseph Matlock
 Kyaire Anthony Mclean
 Timothy Michael
 Madelyn Grace Miller
 Jazzlynn Moore
 Megan Marie Moore
 Ryan John Murray
 Lily Kathryn Nguyen
 Tyler P. Nguyen
 Eric Anthony Orlando
 Nathan Michael Orlando
 Elizabeth Ann Papciak
 Richard Allen Partington, Jr.
 Xander Richard Pascoe

Jennifer Grace Passeri
 Ava Marie Pate
 Arav Sanjay Patel
 Zoe Elizabeth Pecuch
 Cody Joseph Quaglia
 Kearney Helene Quinn
 Crescenzo Ramon Reedy
 Aurora Madeline Roote
 Theresa Elizabeth Rudloff
 Lukas Adan Runde
 Mateo Ian Runde
 Lillian Quinn Russin
 Caleb James Sabulski
 Mattea Selene Santos
 Cayden Michael Sartori
 Samuel Anthony Shovlin
 Isabel Raina Sikora
 Charlotte Kane Smith
 Patrick Eric Smith
 Pierce Robert Sparich
 Aubrey Dawn Spearing
 Grace A. Stetz-Madden
 Matthew Jacob Stilp
 Jessica Lynne Stochla
 Chase Logan Swoboda
 Madeline Grace Szura

Daniel Lam Tang
 Stephen Phillip Timchack
 Loretta Pearl Troxell
 Julia Bella Vitali
 Nevaehmarie D. Voytko
 Meredith M. Walting
 Jack Francis Wasiakowski
 Annalie Jane Werner
 Isabelle Wilk
 Isabel Christine Williams
 Sean David Williams
 Alexander Johnathon Worrall
 Reese Katherine Woytowich
 Conner Joseph Zera



NOTRE DAME
 Aidan Julian Acosta
 Rafael Andino, Jr.
 Matteo Thomas Antonucci
 Isabella Arias
 Enku G. Assegid
 Georggel Bioh
 Winniva Blain
 Daniel Alexander Bordas
 Peyton Deron Carter
 Constanza Helide Collao

Gabriella J. Connors
 Roderick Santos DelaPaz, Jr.
 Theodore Lucas Dilmohamed
 Kacy Ann Farrell
 Melodie Michelle Fierro
 Logan Michael Fish
 Tyler Patrick Frederick
 Brandon Josiah Garry
 Jacob Thomas Gillon
 Christian Louis B. Gonzales
 Rachel Ella Graham
 Xzavier Guadalupe
 Bryan Paul Hannis
 Alana Morgan Jackson
 Matt Dominic Jankowski
 Levi D. Joseph
 Rizos Katranis
 Jacob Connor Loncki
 Bryn Rachel Medina
 Cassidy R. Medina
 Christian David Merle
 Sean C. Miller
 Julissa Marisol Mizhirumbay
 Martin William Musgrave II
 L'oreal XuXu Newallo
 Cardin D. Nguyen
 Isabella M. Oliveira

Olivia Rose Protheroe
 Gabryella A. Rios
 Matthew Robert P. Vispo
 Kayla Mychele Vitaletti
 Brady Vincent Wickenheiser
 Oscar Alan Woods
 Morgan Mary Wurz



ST. JOHN NEUMANN
 Jahki Jeremiah Brister
 Harrison Prescott Carnicom
 Nina Marie Cox
 Connor Stephen Haswell
 Kallee Ann Johnson
 Emiley Nicole Moyle
 Breanna Nevaeh Nixon
 Savana Lynn Smith
 Nahmir Yasin Thomas
 Daiton Carter Thompson
 Selene Marvel Vasquez



Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., Bishop of Scranton

Mrs. Kristen Donohue, M.Ed. • Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Education/Superintendent of Catholic Schools

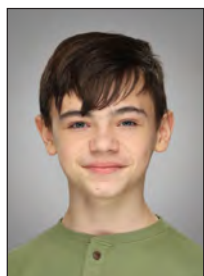
Mrs. Charlene Haggerty, M.S. • Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools

Mr. Christopher Tighe, M.S. • Assistant Superintendent of Catholic Schools

OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS • DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Award

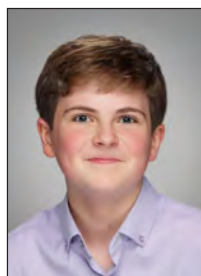
The Diocese of Scranton Catholic Schools Office recognizes these Seton Award recipients. The Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Award is recognition of 8th grade students who are enrolled in one of our Catholic high schools for the 2026-27 school year and exemplify the traits of Saint Seton: devoutness to faith, compassion, and desire to help others. This award is also given to students in 5th Grade at St. John Neumann Elementary School, and students in 6th Grade at Notre Dame Elementary, Epiphany and St. Agnes Schools, who meet criteria determined by their principal. Families of these individuals are commended for their commitment to Catholic education, and the students are congratulated for this distinguished honor. For these students and for all young people in our Catholic schools, Catholic education impacts their formation by incorporating a strong emphasis on the spiritual that is evident in all components of the learning process. Our vision for these students is to provide them an educational experience that promotes a lifelong learning in the faith, and one that prepared them to be responsible, competent, and confident persons as citizens of our country and world. In addition, our schools are dedicated to providing a loving, safe and nurturing environment where the young learn respect for themselves and for all persons.



David Bowen
All Saints Academy



Diane Idhaw
La Salle Academy



Jonathan Novak
Our Lady of Peace School



John F. Shattuck
St. Agnes School



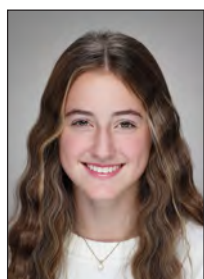
Elizabeth Marx
St. Clare/St. Paul School



Ella Dunleavy
Good Shepherd Academy



Annaleigh Coyle
All Saints Academy



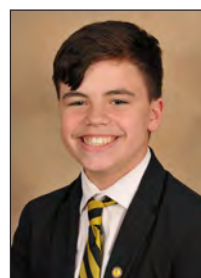
Sofia Roman
La Salle Academy



Patrick Donohue
Our Lady of Peace School



Kristian Anzures
St. Clare/St. Paul School



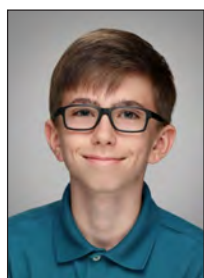
Ethan Murray
St. Clare/St. Paul School



Brandon Rogers
Good Shepherd Academy



Lilia Rossette
Epiphany School



Mason Burt
Our Lady of Peace School



Stefan Tolerico
Our Lady of Peace School



Madison Kreidler
St. Clare/St. Paul School



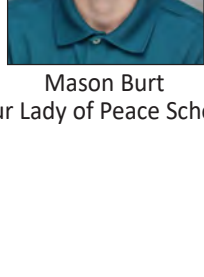
Kira McCoy
St. Mary of Mount Carmel School



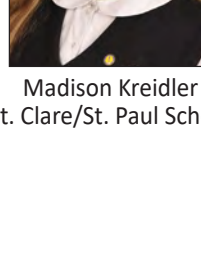
Shepard Smith
Good Shepherd Academy



Andrew Howey
Epiphany School



Madelyn E. Cox
St. Agnes School



Traigh Sottile
St. Mary of Mount Carmel School





To the students who have benefited from a Catholic education, and to those who continue their educational journey in a Catholic environment, we salute you and pray that God, through the intercession of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, guides you in

Faith, Hope and Love.



Sophia Matys
Holy Rosary School



William Conklin
St. Nicholas/St. Mary School



Frank Pacelli
Wyoming Area Catholic School



Rose Malone
Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School



Brielle Spearing
Good Shepherd Academy



Troy Papiercavich
Holy Rosary School



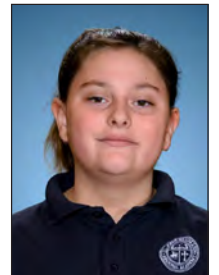
Ella Klein
St. Nicholas/St. Mary School



Matthew Shemo
Wyoming Area Catholic School



Caitlin Nappa
Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School



Bella Long
St. John Neumann
Regional Academy



Todd Houseknecht
Holy Family Academy



Elizabeth Decowski
St. Jude School



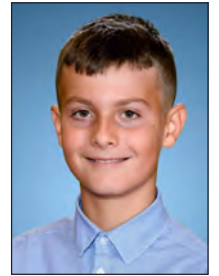
Yarmerys Diaz Ramos
St. Nicholas/St. Mary School



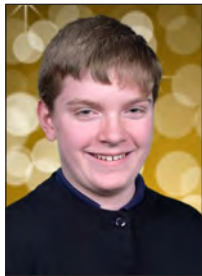
Hanna Brzuzan
Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School



McKenna Schnatter
Notre Dame Elementary School



Quillen McPherson
St. John Neumann
Regional Academy



Jude Rayno
Holy Family Academy



Lilly Holtz
St. Jude School



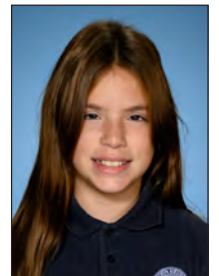
Sisilia Steransky
St. Nicholas/St. Mary School



Brayden Hardy
Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School



Anthony Sorto
Notre Dame Elementary School



Willow Reid
St. John Neumann
Regional Academy

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Notre Dame community celebrates passage of Greg Moyer Law

EAST STROUDSBURG – the Moyers have dedicated themselves to ensuring other families would not experience the same tragedy.

For more than 25 years, Rachel and John Moyer carried a mission born from heartbreak. On Dec. 2, 2000, their 15-year-old son, Greg, a student at Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg, died after suffering sudden cardiac arrest during halftime of an away basketball game. There was no automated external defibrillator (AED) available.

For the last quarter century,

On May 22, 2026, surrounded by students, educators, lawmakers, and supporters inside the same Notre Dame gymnasium where Greg once played basketball, the family celebrated the passage of Act 17 of 2026 in Pennsylvania, commonly known as the Greg Moyer Law.

The legislation requires AEDs at all PIAA-sanctioned athletic practices and competitions and mandates emergency action plans and training for sudden cardiac arrest situations in schools.

“I’m feeling ecstatic because there was no way that I was going to do anything else until this legislation was passed,” Rachel Moyer said. “But I didn’t think it was going to take 25 years. We kept thinking, ‘This is going to be the session,’ and we’d get this close and something would happen. But it is a no-brainer law.”

Returning to Notre Dame brought back memories of Greg, whose photograph and basketball jersey still hang in the school hallway.

“It’s bittersweet, in a way, because he loved it here,” Moyer said. “The love and the spirit are still here.”

Former Notre Dame Principal Jeff Lyons vividly remembers the night Greg died and the impact it had on the school community.

“It was the greatness of the Catholic community that kept us together,” Lyons recalled. “We could get together, we could pray together, we felt like we were doing something. Greg was a great kid.”

Lyons said he was never



The Moyer family, seated, celebrate the passage of the Greg Moyer Law at Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School on May 22, 2026. (Photo/Eric Deabill)

surprised that Rachel Moyer continued the fight despite repeated setbacks.

“Most people would have ended it after hitting roadblock after roadblock after roadblock,” he said. “Rachel is tenacious.”

State Senator Rosemary Brown, who authored the legislation, credited the Moyer family for making the law a reality.

“As your senator and the author of the Greg Moyer Law, I am truly proud to stand alongside the Moyer family today,” Brown said. “They – and Greg – have been the driving force behind this legislation from the very beginning.”

For John Moyer, the law’s significance extends beyond requiring AEDs. He feels the training this new law mandates will be just as critical.

“Sadly, we’ve encountered dozens of parents who have lost kids to cardiac arrest even when an AED was present simply because nobody knew where it was or how to use it,” he said.

While the law represents the end of one journey, the Moyers insist that their work is not finished.

“We’re not going to stop,” Rachel Moyer said. “We’re going to let everyone know, from age four and up, what to do in an emergency and how to get assistance.”

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'Stars, Stripes & Symphony' draws hundreds

CONYNGHAM – Hundreds of people filled Saint John Bosco Parish on May 31 for "Stars, Stripes & Symphony," a special patriotic concert celebrating America's upcoming 250th anniversary while raising support for the Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

Presented by the Hazleton Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, the free concert featured patriotic selections, tributes to the nation's armed forces, and musical favorites designed to honor America's history and heroes.

"We had a wonderful celebration getting ready for the 250th anniversary of our country," Father Richard Polmounter, Pastor of Saint John Bosco Parish, said. "We had the Hazleton Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra here to play all different tunes to get us in a patriotic spirit for this great anniversary that our country is having."

The concert attracted people



Robert Lagana directs the Hazleton Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra on May 31 at Saint John Bosco Parish in Conyngham.

from across the greater Hazleton area and beyond, filling the church with an enthusiastic audience.

"To be a musician in a world of technology, where everything is A.I., to do the real thing and play to a warm and receptive audience is every musician's dream. It's just so good to feed off their energy," violinist Sarah Woolbert stated.

A free-will offering was collected during the event to benefit the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, which supports first responders, military veterans, and their families.

"These people put their lives on the line for us day after day, so the least we can do is show them some appreciation," Robert Lagana, Director of the Hazleton Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra said.

One of the highlights of the concert came during a musical salute to the armed forces, when veterans and active-duty service members were invited to stand as their respective service songs were performed.

Audience members praised both the performance and its patriotic spirit.

"It was a great turnout. It really was," Arlene Stagg, a parishioner of Saint John Bosco Parish, said. "All of the selections were so appropriate. The salute to the armed forces was really a nice tribute."

As the nation prepares to celebrate its semiquincentennial, the concert offered an opportunity to reflect on the blessings of freedom and honor those who served.

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Resorts World Catskills Casino • August 16; November 15, \$25 slot play & \$15 food credit • \$59

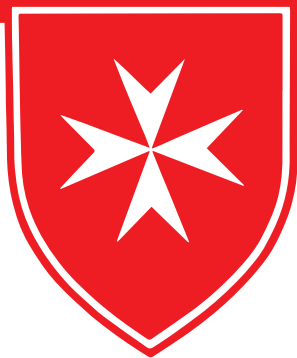
Niagara Falls, Canada • September 20-23 • Tour of the area, Niagara on the Lake, 5 meals & more • \$989

Texas Adventure by Motorcoach • Oct. 3-14, 3 nights on San Antonio's Riverwalk, Dallas/Fort Worth, Cattle Drive, 14 meals • \$2,785

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Fr. Pio Mandato, FMHJ is a Franciscan priest living as a missionary hermit. He was born in Italy and along with his brother Vincenzo, received his first holy communion from Saint Pio before coming to the USA. He grew up in New Jersey and entered the Capuchin Franciscans at the age of 17, and was ordained in 1985. In 1998 he was accepted in the Diocese of Scranton, Pa., and now lives a life of solitude, prayer and intercession. He is also Chaplain to the Capuchin Sisters of Nazareth and at times is engaged in the preaching apostolate.

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faith250
gathering
planned for July

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faith250 is a program that invites faith leaders and communities across the country to form clusters of congregations to act as sacred spaces for listening to one another, clarifying our shared civic values, and celebrating our hopes for America.

Because houses of worship are one of the few places where neighbors, friends, citizens, and newcomers can regularly meet face to face they hope to remind people to see the Divine in every human being.

Organizers plan to study and discuss some of America's sacred texts - The Declaration of Independence, Emma Lazarus's 'The New Colossus,' America the Beautiful, and Frederick Douglass's address, 'What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?'

The first gathering locally is July 13, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at Temple Hesed, 1 Knox Road, Scranton.

All are welcome to attend!

Participating Congregations include: Bahá'ís of Scranton; Bethel AME Church; Christians for the Common Good; Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints-Clarks Summit Stake; Covenant Presbyterian Church; Elm Park United Methodist Church; Islamic Center of Scranton; Jinyin Temple; Roman Catholic Diocese of Scranton; Scranton Area Ministerium; Sisters of IHM-Scranton; St. Luke's Episcopal Church; St. Mark Episcopal Church; Temple Hesed; Temple Israel; and United Baptist Church of Taylor.

Parish ministry dresses girls around the world

FALLS – Armed with fabric, thread, and a shared desire to help others, faithful from Corpus Christi Parish are living out one of the Corporal Works of Mercy in a unique way.

Through the parish’s “Dress a Girl Around the World” ministry, volunteers have created more than 300 handmade dresses for girls in need across the globe since the effort began last summer.

On May 16, members of the ministry gathered in the hall of the Church of the Holy Redeemer, a worship site of Corpus Christi Parish, to prepare dress kits and



supplies that volunteers take home to transform into colorful dresses for underprivileged girls.

The ministry is part of the international “Dress a Girl Around the World” organization, which has distributed more than two million dresses in 90 countries. Parishioner Michelle Cassetori started the local effort after she learned about the program while attending church during a vacation in California.

“I thought people around here would like to do this,” Cassetori said.

With the blessing of

Monsignor John Sempa, the ministry quickly took root, attracting approximately 15 volunteers. While some members sew the dresses, others cut fabric, prepare kits, organize materials, and assist in other ways.

“There are a lot of girls that have never had a dress or don’t have much to wear,” Cassetori said. “This is a very simple, easy way to give kids some dignity.”

For parishioner Lisa Falzone, the ministry offers an opportunity to combine fellowship with service.

“We are literally clothing the naked,” she said. “These

dresses are going out to many countries to young girls who are without the basics. To put on a pretty dress, I think uplifts them and makes them feel a little more special.”

Mary Supey, who helps assemble dress kits, said the project allows volunteers to make a difference in the lives of children they may never meet.

“We have so much here, and your heart breaks for people who don’t have,” she said. “It’s a nice thing to be together and laugh while helping people who need it.”

Every dress created by the volunteers, ensuring it reaches reminder of faith put into action. ministry is hand-delivered through girls in need. For Cassetori, the “It is truly the hand of God the organization’s network of ministry’s continued growth is a working through us,” she said.

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Notice Regarding Reporting Sexual Abuse of a Minor

It is the policy of the Diocese of Scranton to report any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor to law enforcement. If you are a victim of sexual abuse committed by a priest, deacon, religious or lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton, you are encouraged to immediately report the matter to law enforcement. If any priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton has cause or reason to suspect that a minor has been subjected to any form of abuse, including child sexual abuse, the matter will be reported to law enforcement.

It is also the policy of the Diocese to adhere to all civil and state regulations. To this end, the Diocese is equally committed to adhering to the norms of the *Code of Canon Law* and to upholding the tenets of the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, which includes supporting victims of sexual abuse in their pursuit of emotional and spiritual well-being. As such, information regarding an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor should also be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator, Mary Beth Pacuska at (570) 862-7551.

Aviso al Respecto de Reportar el Abuso Sexual de Un Menor de Edad

Es la norma de la Diócesis de Scranton reportar cualquier alegación de abuso sexual de un menor de edad a las autoridades. Si usted es una víctima de abuso sexual cometido por un sacerdote, diácono, religioso o empleado laico, o voluntario de la Diócesis de Scranton, usted está obligado a reportar el asunto inmediatamente a las autoridades de la ley.

Si algún sacerdote, diácono, religioso, empleado laico o voluntario de la Diócesis de Scranton tiene sospecha de que un menor de edad ha sido sujeto a cualquier forma de abuso, incluyendo abuso sexual de menor de edad, el asunto será reportado a las autoridades de la ley.

Es la norma de la Diócesis defender todas las regulaciones civiles y del estado. Al fin de que la Diócesis esté comprometida igualmente a defender las normas del Código de Derecho Canónico y defender los principios de la Carta Para la Protección de Niños y Jóvenes (Conferencia de los Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos), lo cual incluye apoyar a las víctimas de abuso sexual en pos del bienestar emocional y espiritual.

Por eso, información respecto a una alegación del asunto sexual de un menor de edad, debe ser reportada a la Coordinadora Diocesana de Asistencia para Las Víctimas, Mary Beth Pacuska, a (570) 862-7551.

Classifieds - Classifieds - Classifieds -

MISSION MESSAGE

One World, One Faith: What the World Cup Can Teach Us About Mission

By Shannon Ruiz
Diocesan Director,
Pontifical Mission Societies



This summer, the eyes of the world are turned toward North America as the FIFA World Cup unfolds across the United States, Mexico, and Canada. I'll admit upfront that I'm not much of a soccer fan — I'm holding out for College Football and the World Series. And yet, even I can feel the buzz.

For a few weeks, billions of people from around the world will take a break from their normal routines to watch and cheer alongside strangers who, just hours before kickoff, may not have shared a single inch of common ground. I think there is something beautiful — and something deeply Catholic — about that.

Walk through any city hosting a match, and you will see flags from dozens of nations waving side by side. You will hear different languages shouted in unison at the same goal, the same save, the same missed penalty. Fans who cannot understand each other's words find themselves celebrating after a final whistle, united not by nationality but by something larger: a shared love of the game, a shared moment of joy... or heartbreak. This is shared humanity.

As with the Olympics, or any other global event, I can't help but be reminded of what the Church is called to be. The word "Catholic" itself means universal — not bound to one culture, one language, or one nation, but embracing all of them. Just as the World Cup gathers people from

Brazil and Senegal, Japan and Croatia, Mexico and Morocco onto the same field, the Church gathers believers from every corner of the earth into the same Body of Christ. Our missionaries serve in tiny village chapels in the Amazon, in bustling parishes in Manila, in remote outposts across the African Sahel — and every one of them is connected to us, and to each other, through the same faith we profess at Mass each Sunday.

The camaraderie we see on the soccer pitch with players from rival clubs who become teammates for their country, fans who become friends over a shared chant, mirrors the camaraderie the Gospel calls us to live every day. I've seen this firsthand on mission trips, more times than I can count. A group arrives in a new country, a little apprehensive, maybe homesick, not sure how to connect with people whose language and customs are unfamiliar. Then someone brings out a soccer ball. Within minutes, those same nervous strangers are laughing, shouting, and high-fiving each other on a dusty field or a small patch of grass. The game doesn't need to be translated. The camaraderie of sport speaks for itself, and it opens doors that conversation alone often can't.

We are not meant to remain strangers to one another. We are meant to recognize, in every person we meet, a brother or sister made in the image of God.

This *IS* the missionary mentality: not staying comfortable

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within our own borders, our own customs, our own familiar faces, but going out to encounter the whole human family. When you support the work of the Missions, your prayers and sacrifices cross oceans just as easily as a World Cup broadcast does, reaching catechists, sisters, and priests who are bringing Christ to people who have never heard His name.

So, as you watch the matches this summer and feel that surge of unexpected solidarity with people you've never met, let it remind you of something greater: that we are all, already, one family.



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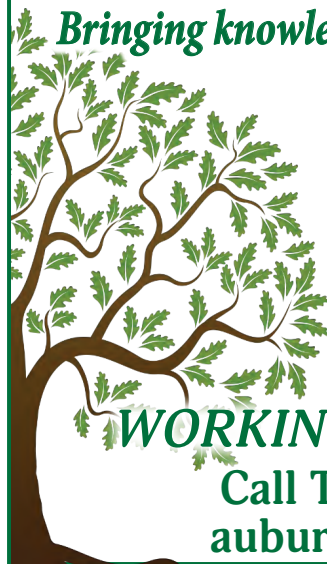
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Concert to celebrate America's 250th

PITTSSTON — Saint John the Evangelist Church, 35 William St., Pittston, will host an Independence Day concert in celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the Founding of the United States on Monday, June 29, at 7 p.m.

Featured performances include a combined choir of local singers and the student choir of Holy Rosary School in Duryea.

Guest instrumentalists for this year's concert include the brass quartet of Dale Chase, Dan Coyle, Chuck Smith and Geoff Speicher.

They will be accompanied by flutist Cindy Thomas and percussionist Monica Spishock.

The program will also include other instrumental selections.

A free-will offering will be accepted.

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Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Richard Mary Peters

Entered Life:
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Prayer Requests for Priests

The Daily Prayer Request for Priests schedule is as follows:

June 18, Father Michael Piccola; June 19, Father William Pickard; June 20, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Jackson Pinhero; June 21, Father Joseph Pisaneschi; June 22, Father John Polednak; June 23, Father Richard Polmounter; June 24, Father John Poplawski; June 25, Monsignor Patrick Pratico; June 26, Monsignor Joseph Quinn; June 27, Father Michael Quinnan; June 28, Father Philip Rayappan; June 29, Jesuit Father James Redington; June 30, Father Gregory Reichlen; July 1, Pope Leo XIV; July 2, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; July 3, Father August Ricciardi; July 4, Father Frederick Riegler; July 5, Jesuit Father Angelo Rizzo; July 6, Father Alex Roche; July 7, Monsignor Walter Rossi; July 8, Monsignor Dale Rupert; July 9, Holy Cross Father Brogan Ryan; July 10, Father Dominic Sabi; July 11, Father Arbogaste Satoun; July 12, Father Kenneth Seegar; July 13, Monsignor John Sempa; July 14, Father Gerald Shantillo, V.G.; July 15, Saint Joseph Oblate Father Joseph Sibilano; July 16, Monsignor Constantine Siconolfi; July 17, Father Shawn Simchock; July 18, Father Robert Simon; July 19, Father Joseph Sitko; July 20, Father Phillip Sladicka; July 21, Father Stephen Stavoy; July 22, Father Scott Sterowski.

Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese of Scranton

Monthly Meeting of the Lay Carmelites — **JUNE 20**, hosted by Our Lady of the Mountains Lay Carmelite Community on the third Saturday of each month; gatherings are held from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Oblates of St. Joseph Seminary/Chapel, 1880 Highway 315, Laflin. For more information, contact Chris at (570) 239-8094.

St. Joseph Fraternity of Third Order Secular Franciscans — **JUNE 21**, Lay Franciscan Canonical Order gathers on the third Sunday of each month; meetings hosted from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Oblates of St. Joseph Seminary/Chapel, 1880 Highway 315, Laflin. All interested men, women and visitors are welcome. For more information, contact Michele Sisak, OFS, at (570) 807-7996, or visit the Facebook page.

Weekly Pierogi & Soup Sale — **JUNE 21 & 24**, sponsored by SS. Peter & Paul Church, 1309 West Locust St., West Scranton; sale of homemade pierogi and various soups held each week following the church's Sunday morning Mass at 11 a.m. and Wednesday morning Mass at 9 a.m. Cost: pierogi, \$10/dozen; soup, \$8/ quart. For more information, call the St. Ann Basilica Parish office at (570) 342-5166.

Weekly Charismatic "Living in the Spirit" Series — **JUNE 22, 29 & JULY 6**, sponsored by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the Scranton Diocese; seminar sessions held on Monday night at 6:30 p.m. in the parish hall of

Immaculate Conception Church, 801 Taylor Ave., Scranton. Gatherings include testimonies, small group discussions, praise & worship, and fellowship. All are welcome; for more information, call Karen at (570) 983-6251, or visit: ccrscranton.org.

Bi-Weekly Rosary-Making Workshop — **JUNE 24**, hosted by St. John the Baptist Parish, 126 Nesbitt St., Larksville; lessons in the creation of homemade Rosaries are offered every other Wednesday, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the parish church basement. All men and women are welcome to attend and learn the art of Rosary-making for Rosaries to be distributed throughout the world. All materials are free of charge. Class teacher is Barbara Morris, with more than 30 years' experience. For information, call (570) 287-0555.

Parish Flea Market — **JUNE 26-28**, hosted by Corpus Christi Parish in West Pittston; held at Immaculate Conception Church in the former parish school, 605 Luzerne Ave., West Pittston. Flea market hours: Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; and Sunday, 8 a.m. to noon.

Venerable Father Patrick Peyton Monthly Rosary — **JULY 1**, hosted by the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton; Rosary devotion is held on the first Wednesday of each month following the 12:10 p.m. Mass at the Cathedral. Recitation of Rosary prayers is offered for the special intention

of furthering the cause for canonization of Venerable Father Patrick Peyton.

Third Annual Parish Car Show — **JULY 11**, sponsored by Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Peckville; held from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (gates open 8:30 a.m.) on the church grounds, 1101

Willow St. All vehicles welcome free of charge; event includes awards, prizes, complimentary gifts, food & music, basket and cash raffle drawings. Proceeds benefit the Sacred Heart of Jesus Faith Formation Camps. For information, call Rich at (570) 687-3487.

Continued on Page 30

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Apostleship of Prayer

Papal Intention for June 2026

For the Values of Sports —

Let us pray that sports be an instrument of peace, encounter, and dialogue among cultures and nations, and that they promote values such as respect, solidarity, and personal growth.

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Catholic Happenings Around the Diocese

Secular Discalced Carmelites Meeting — JULY 12, monthly meeting of the Holy Annunciation Secular Community of Discalced Carmelites (OCDS); the community gathers on the second Sunday of the month, from noon to 4 p.m., at the Oblates of St. Joseph Seminary in Laflin. New members are most welcome. For more information and inquiries, contact Gina Romancheck at (570) 956-9272.

Monthly Parish Bingo — JULY 15, sponsored by the Our Lady's Guild of Our Lady of

Victory Parish in Tannersville; bingo held on the third Wednesday of every month. Games hosted in the church hall, 327 Cherry Lane Road, Tannersville; doors open at noon. Bingo game cards cost 25 cents each; small snacks and refreshments will be served. Parish fundraising event is open to the public; for more information, contact Antoinette Martinelli at (570) 466-0830 or antoinette248@gmail.com.

Luzerne Knights Statue Dedication — JULY 19, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus in Luzerne; revered statue monument rescued from a fire at St. Hedwig's Church in Kingston in 2023 will be blessed and dedicated at the entrance of St. Hedwig's Cemetery in Larksville. Dedication service begins at 2 p.m., led by Father Michael Boris; refreshments follow in Conlan Hall at St. Ignatius Loyola Parish in Kingston.

Summer Youth Music Camp — JULY 27-31, hosted by Gate of Heaven Parish, 40 Machell Ave., Dallas; music camp for children held daily throughout the week beginning at 9 a.m., concluding with a Youth Liturgy on Sunday, Aug. 2, at 9 a.m. in Gate of Heaven Church. Camp is open free of charge to young singers ages 8 to 15; camper gatherings include singing/choir rehearsals, games, lessons, crafts, snacks, and other activities. For information & registration, contact Gate of Heaven Parish at (570) 675-2121, or goh@goholv.org.

Church Trip to Sight & Sound Theatres Production of

"Joshua" — JULY 28, sponsored by Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church, 313 First Ave., Jessup; bus excursion to Sight & Sound Theatre Lancaster departs 7:30 a.m. and returns approximately 7 p.m. Cost: \$195 per person (\$145, children 12 & younger), includes roundtrip motorcoach transportation, admission to live stage performance of "Joshua," and buffet dinner at Hershey Farms Smorgasbord. Paid reservations required in advance; contact Holy Ghost Church at (570) 489-2353.

Cash Bingo — AUG. 8, hosted by St. Maria Goretti Parish in Laflin; bingo games held from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. (doors open at 10 a.m.) in the parish hall, 42 Redwood Drive, Laflin. Admission cost: \$25 (in advance) or \$30 (at door), includes 20 games. Regular game prizes of \$100; prizes for special games (\$5 each) range from \$300 to \$1,000. Event also includes basket raffle, bake sale & cash drawing; food and beverages available for purchase. For tickets, contact the parish office at (570) 655-8956.

Knights 20th Annual Golf Classic — AUG. 17, sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 9832; hosted at Lords Valley Country Club, 1004 Hemlock Farms. Registration and light breakfast at 7:30 p.m., followed by golf tournament (scramble format) with 9 a.m. shotgun start. Awards program & barbecue luncheon follow play. Cost: \$150 per golfer; registration required by Aug. 3. For information/registration, contact Bryan Bolehala at (201) 874-8060 or Bry3336@gmail.com.

Who makes house calls?

As of October 2015, I will now meet clients either at their home, or at a location they choose and no longer require clients to meet at my office. I have decided that I would change the way I meet with people so it will be as easy and as convenient as possible for the client.

Based on my practice, which consists of estate planning and administration along with elder law, I find that clients are more comfortable discussing such matters in familiar surroundings. While I know this may seem unconventional to some, I believe I will be able to serve clients much better in this fashion.

If anyone is uncomfortable with home visits, I have a few locations where I can meet in an office setting. I look forward to meeting with my existing clients and especially meeting new clients that are looking for any assistance in estate or elder law matters.



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Apostleship of Prayer

Papal Intention for July 2026

For Respect for Human Life —

Let us pray for the respect and protection of human life
in all its stages, recognizing it as a gift from God.

Parish 'Baby Shower' benefits pro-life center



LUZERNE — The Altar & Rosary Society women of Holy Family Parish recently sponsored a Parish Baby Shower to benefit the Human Life Resource Center in Wilkes-Barre. Numerous new and handmade infant items, in addition to monetary donations, were gratefully received by the pro-life apostolate on behalf of area families of newborn babies. Parish committee members and volunteers from the Human Life Resource Center pictured above are, from left: Mary Stchur, Maureen Roughsedge, Anna Wasilowski, Donna Piekanski, Carol Cardoni, Marie Stefanides and Sharon Yale.



Seminarian's formation aided by Jermyn K of C

Following a recent Mass at Saint Thomas Aquinas Church in Archbald, Knights of Columbus Council 7622, Jermyn, Grand Knight Kevin Pittack is shown presenting a \$500 donation to Diocese of Scranton seminarian and fellow Council member Faustinus Ugo to assist in his priestly formation and seminary studies. Also pictured are, from left: Sean Pittack, Deacon Carmine Mendicino, Father Ryan Glenn, Council chaplain and pastor of Christ the King Parish, Archbald, and Rich Ercole.

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To learn more about creating your Catholic legacy, contact The Catholic Foundation of the Diocese of Scranton.

Contact: Mark DiPippa, Executive Director
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