

From: Diocese of Scranton <e-newsletter@dioceseofscranton.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 5, 2017 4:24 PM
To: stjosephchurch@optonline.net
Subject: E-Newsletter - Vol: 13 No: 1 Date: 1/5/2017

Diocese of Scranton *News Briefing*



www.dioceseofscranton.org Vol. 13 #1 1/5/2017



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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Diocese to Observe Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

"Reconciliation - The Love of Christ Compels Us" is the theme for the 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which is observed annually in January.

Pope Francis, in his 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* ("The Joy of the Gospel"), cited the quote "The Love of Christ Compels Us" from 2 *Corinthians* 5:14-20. The biblical text emphasizes that reconciliation is a gift from God, and those who have been reconciled in Christ are called in turn to proclaim this reconciliation in word and deed.

This year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity coincides with the commemoration of the 500th anniversary year of the beginnings of the Lutheran Reformation. In that context, it provides an opportunity for us to reflect upon the concerns and divisions that have afflicted the unity of the Church, and encourages us to take steps toward reconciliation.

The Diocese of Scranton will host an Ecumenical Celebration of God's Word on Wednesday, January 25, at 12:10 p.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton. There will be no 12:10 p.m. Mass that day in the Cathedral. All are welcome to attend. In addition, CTV: Catholic Television will broadcast the service live.

The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., Bishop of Scranton, will preside. The Reverend Dr. Robert M. Zanicky, pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Wilkes-Barre since 1988, will give the homily.

Clergy and representatives from various Christian traditions and ecumenical agencies will be present at the prayer service. Liturgical music will be provided by the students from Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton.

During the week leading up to the ecumenical service, Bishop Bambera will host dinner meetings for members of the local Polish National Catholic, Orthodox, Eastern Catholic and Latin Rite clergy.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development Empowers People to Overcome Poverty

An estimated 43 million people live in poverty in the United States. The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) aims to help people break the grip of poverty and enhance their lives.

The annual national collection for the CCHD will be taken up in parishes in the Diocese of Scranton on the weekend of January 28-29. The theme, "Working on the Margins," focuses our attention on the poor and vulnerable who can often be overlooked.

This campaign is the primary source of funding for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' anti-poverty grants and education programs aimed at fostering a culture of life and hope in communities across the nation.

The collection supports the work of groups that empower low-income people to participate in decisions that affect their lives and break the cycle of poverty. Many of the projects supported by CCHD embody the corporal works of mercy, including the protection of worker rights, expanding access to healthcare and reforming the criminal justice system.

Twenty-five percent of funds collected through the Catholic Campaign for Human Development remain in each diocese to support local human development projects. In the Diocese of Scranton, a portion of the CCHD collection will be dedicated to the Diocesan participation in the National V Encuentro for pastoral planning in Hispanic/Latino communities.

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development continues to operate within the 2010 guidelines established by their governing bishops in *The Review and Renewal of CCHD*. This ensures that the recipients of these grants are providing programs and services which are in keeping with Catholic social and moral teaching.

Additional resources to learn about poverty in the United States can be found at www.povertyusa.org.

Catholics Donate \$7 Million to Natural Disaster Collections

In 2016, dioceses across the country participated in three emergency appeals, donating over \$7 million for support in response to natural disasters.

They included the 2015-2016 Calamities Collection created after storms that hit the south and mid-west regions of our country, the Louisiana Floods Collection in response to the extraordinary flooding occurring in southern Louisiana, and the Hurricane Matthew Collection in the aftermath of the disastrous category 4 hurricane that struck large portions of the Southeastern coast of the United States and countries in the Caribbean, especially Haiti.

These collections funded humanitarian efforts in the form of water, food, shelter, and medical care, as well as long-term recovery efforts for pastoral and church reconstruction needs.

Faithful in the Diocese of Scranton contributed nearly \$273,000 to these three special collections.

"When disaster strikes, the Church responds with compassion, prayers and material support," said Bishop Joseph C. Bambera. "I am

very grateful to everyone here in our Diocese who has been so generous in contributing to these special collections. You are bringing the comfort of Christ to our sisters and brothers during their most urgent time of need."

Bishop Leading Pilgrimage to Spain and Portugal for Our Lady of Fatima Centennial

September 18-26, 2017 - reservations being taken now

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera invites the faithful to join him on a special pilgrimage to Spain and Portugal in honor of the 100th anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima's appearance to three young shepherd children in 1917.

The pilgrimage will take place September 18-26, 2017 and will include Masses celebrated by the Bishop and visits to many sacred and historic sites, including nearly two days in Fatima where the Marian apparitions occurred.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, appeared six times to the children - Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta - near the town of Fatima, Portugal between May 13 and October 13, 1917. During a time of war and turmoil, she told them that she had been sent by God with a message that Heaven would grant peace to all the world if her requests for prayer, reparation and consecration were heard and obeyed. The apparitions culminated in an inexplicable spectacle on October 13, when 70,000 onlookers witnessed the sun spinning like a ball in the sky.

The area where the apparitions happened is one of the principal places of pilgrimage in the Roman Catholic world.

"I am privileged to be leading another pilgrimage of faithful from our Diocese to a holy place that has such meaning for Catholics," said Bishop Bambera, who in the last few years has joined with local pilgrims on journeys to Rome, France and Poland for World Youth Day.

"It will be a particular treasure for us to be in Fatima during the commemoration of the centennial anniversary of the Blessed Mother's appearances there. This will surely be a memorable experience and one that will provide special graces and blessings for all who can go on the pilgrimage as well as those who participate through their prayers and devotions to Our Lady of Fatima."

Space is limited, so it is recommended that you call as soon as possible for reservations. All arrangements and reservations are to be made through TRAVELWORLD.

For information, call TRAVELWORLD at 800-828-6029 or visit www.asktravelworld.com.

Office for Parish Life

Creatively Reaching Out to Persons with Disabilities

What? An evening of networking and sharing of ideas/resources

Who should attend? DREs, pastors, catechists, buildings-and-grounds committee members and anyone interested in finding ways to better minister to and include parishioners with physical or mental disabilities

Presenters:

- Bernadette Rudolph will facilitate networking and sharing of ideas/resources.
- Rev. Dick Hockman, CSC, will speak about the spiritual needs/abilities of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities and introduce the SPRED program. Father Dick has a professional background and long history in special education and assists the Diocese of Scranton in parish-based SPRED programs.

When and Where? Each session is 6:30-8:30PM. All locations are wheel-chair accessible.

- Feb. 13 at St. Maximillian Kolbe Parish, Pocono Pines
- Feb. 20 at St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Castellano Center, Williamsport
- Feb. 21 at the Diocesan Pastoral Center, Scranton
- Feb. 27 at Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Wilkes-Barre

Please contact Jennifer at oplgeneral@dioceseofscranton.org or 570-207-2213 to register.

Would You Like to Offer an Evening/Afternoon of Reflection?

Bernadette Rudolph, MA, MS, Director for Family and Community Development, is available to present a 2-3 hour retreat on the following:

+ **An Introduction to Prayer** - what is prayer about as well as an experience of various prayer styles

+ **Living Your Strengths** - claiming the unique gifts of each person and recognizing that everyone's gifts are needed to truly be the Body of Christ

+ **Marriage as a Vocation: How Spouses Help Each Other Become Holier** - If a vocation is a path to God and marriage is a vocation, spouses walk with each other to God. What does that mean?

+ **Keeping the Doors of Mercy Open** - God was merciful long before the Year of Mercy and will continue to be, long after it has ended. We are called to do the same. Explore how we can live lives of mercy.

+ **Hospitality: A Ministry for Everyone** - Reflect on how God welcomes humans throughout the Bible, how Jesus models hospitality and calls us to welcome others. See how this simple element can transform parish life, if we all answer the call.

Other topics are also possible. These retreats can be extended up to a full day, if you wish. Contact Bernadette to discuss your ideas! (ext. 1104 or Bernadette-Rudolph@dioceseofscranton.org)

Rethinking Marriage Preparation

Do you ever wonder if your marriage preparation program is as effective as it could be? Authors Diana Macalintal and Nick Wagner suggest that we need to shift from simply preparing engaged couples for marriage and instead invite them into a discipleship which will sustain them long after the wedding day. Macalintal and Wagner have developed a way to use the RCIA model for marriage preparation. The process connects the couple into the parish community as well as evangelizes everyone.

Sounds intriguing but what would it look like? Bernadette Rudolph invites you to join a regional reading group to read Macalintal and Wagner's book, *Joined by the Church, Sealed by a Blessing*, and discuss how its ideas might be adapted for your parish. She can organize and facilitate the group or you can do so on your own. You will need to purchase your own copy of the book. Dates and locations of the reading groups will be arranged at the convenience of group members. Please [click here](#) to register for a reading group.

Couples Invited To Participate In Wedding Anniversary Celebration

On June 11, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will celebrate the Wedding Anniversary Mass at 2:30 p.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, for couples celebrating their 25th or 50th year of marriage in 2017. This is an occasion to recognize the role married couples play in the Church's mission to bring God's faithful love into the world. Couples will have the opportunity to renew their marriage vows. A reception will follow in the Diocesan Pastoral Center, where anniversary couples will be able to have their picture taken with the Bishop. Eligible couples should give their names and an April mailing address to their parish

office before March 13. Parish lists are due to the Office for Parish Life by March 20.

Still Time to apply! - Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry Program, 2017

The Office for Parish Life is still **accepting applications for the *Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry***. The *Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry* is a ministry formation program designed to equip and advance the servant leadership capacities of individuals serving in areas such as: Parish Pastoral Councils, Directors of Religious Education and Catechists, Liturgical Coordinators, Parish Staff, as well as members of Volunteer Ministry teams, and others.

Through independent online study with the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF), as well as regional skills workshops and opportunities for prayer and reflection, *Diocesan Certificate* candidates enrich their knowledge base, while also learning practical tools for effective parish ministry in serving their local faith communities.

Prospective candidates are encouraged to contact Kitty Scanlan, Coordinator for Lay Ministry Formation, at 570-207-2213, or by email at Kitty-Scanlan@dioceseofscranton.org for application information, materials, and application submissions.

ARISE 2017

Eight parishes in the Diocese of Scranton have entered into their third season of "ARISE Together in Christ," a RENEW International process.

Through faith-sharing, breaking open the Sacred Scripture, and putting their faith into action, ARISE participants have grown closer together within their parish communities.

We invite parishes who are still interested in getting started with ARISE, to take part in a RENEW program during the Advent season. New ARISE parish members can also join with a neighboring parish to explore the process this Fall.

To learn more about the benefits of this experience of awakening and deepening faith, call the Office for Parish Life at 570-207-2213.

The **Little Free Library**, OPL's collection of good books for the average parishioner, on Catholic spirituality, Scripture, the saints, Eucharist, ecclesiology and more - all in the spirit of Vatican II! This can be a bridge between good materials and parishioners. You can access the site through Pinterest or by emailing [Bernadette Rudolph](mailto:Bernadette.Rudolph) for a pdf listing. Titles are recommended for various uses:

- The Eucharistic adoration chapel library
- Adult catechesis
- Individual enrichment
- Small group study
- "Thank you" gifts for volunteers
- The parish library

Mark Your Calendar

Retrouvaille Weekend, Feb. 24-26 - at The Ramada Inn in Clarks Summit. Sponsored by the Diocese of Scranton, *Retrouvaille* is a weekend program for married couples who may be experiencing tension, stress and loneliness in the marriage relationship. The program helps couples - even those separated and divorced - to communicate better and resolve conflicts in their relationships. Cost for the program is by donation, and registration is required. For more information or to register, call (1-800-470-2230) or visit: www.helpourmarriage.org. All calls are confidential.

For a listing of Diocesan and parish events, go to: [Calendar](#)

Follow the Diocese on Social Media

We are pleased to announce a new edition to our social media lineup: the Diocese of Scranton Twitter page:

www.twitter.com/DioceseOfScr

If you're not already doing so, you can follow Bishop Bambera on Twitter by going to: www.twitter.com/BishopBambera

Also check out our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/DioceseOfScranton

You are also encouraged to visit the Facebook pages of other Diocesan departments. They are listed on our website at:

<http://www.dioceseofscranton.org/media/social-media/>

Thank you for connecting with us!

Real Estate Availability

The Property & Risk Management Division of the Diocese currently maintains a listing of real estate available for sale or use throughout the Diocese. If interested in learning about the available opportunities, please contact Ed Carlin, Property Assets Director, P&RM Division, at 570-558-4310.

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