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Diocese of Scranton News Briefing

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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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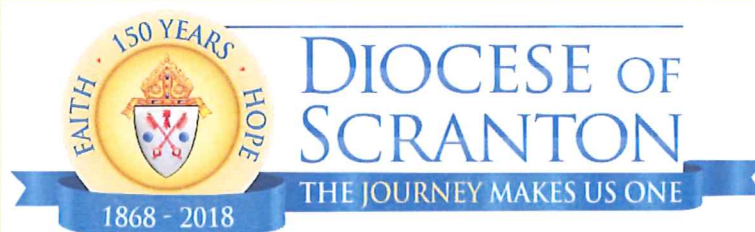
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Mass on December 3 To Begin Sesquicentennial Celebration

The year-long celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Diocese of Scranton will begin on the First Sunday of Advent, December 3, with a special Pontifical Mass at 12:15 p.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

His Eminence, Justin Cardinal Rigali, Archbishop Emeritus of Philadelphia and former Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of

Scranton, will preside. Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will be the principal celebrant and homilist.

The connection to Philadelphia is noteworthy since our Diocese was part of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia until March 3, 1868, when Pope Pius IX created the Diocese of Scranton.

"We are certainly honored that Cardinal Rigali has accepted our invitation to join us for this special Mass," Bishop Bambera said. "We were all touched by the Cardinal's sensitive pastoral care during the time he served as our Apostolic Administrator. On a personal note, Cardinal Rigali was a generous and gracious mentor to me while I served as his Delegate as we entered a period of transition here. On behalf of the clergy, religious and lay faithful of the Diocese of Scranton, I offer our deepest gratitude to Cardinal Rigali for his friendship and the blessings we have received through our encounters with him."

For this special Mass, our parishes have all been invited to send four delegates, and the Diocesan Catholic schools will be represented by two students per school. CTV: Catholic Television will broadcast the Mass.

The music ministry will be composed of choir members from the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Our Lady of the Snows Parish in Clarks Summit, and Saint Joseph the Worker Parish in Williamsport, as well as the Cathedral instrumentalists.

The cantor will be Dana Cerminaro, director of music at Our Lady of the Snows. The altar servers will be representatives of our Diocesan Catholic schools and parishes' Youth Ministry.

At all Masses on this weekend, all parishes in the Diocese will be uniting their prayers with those of the Diocesan celebration at the Cathedral as we open the commemoration of this 150th Anniversary Year.

The Sesquicentennial will be celebrated through most of next year. In addition to the opening Mass, a Pontifical Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter will celebrate the actual Anniversary Sunday of the founding of the Diocese of Scranton on March 4, with the Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput O.F.M. Cap., Archbishop of Philadelphia, as celebrant. Then to close the Anniversary Year, the Most Reverend Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, will be the principal celebrant at the Anniversary Year Concluding Mass on November 25, the feast of Christ the King, at the Cathedral. Representatives from our 120 parishes will be invited for each of these significant celebrations.

In addition to these three liturgical events, there will be numerous annually occurring and specially focused events throughout the year that will be spotlighting our Anniversary Year and the history of our Diocese. Among them is a Mass with the Hispanic community that Bishop Bambera will celebrate on December 9 at 1 p.m. at Saint John Neumann Parish in Scranton for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and a Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. on September 22.

Each parish has received a parish participation kit, with suggestions and resources for commemorating the more local aspects of the 150th Anniversary in every part of the Diocese of Scranton.

In periodic issues of *The Catholic Light*, beginning with the November 30 edition, a special center section will highlight various aspects of our history. Special segments will also be aired on the CTV program "Our Faith, Our Diocese," beginning with the December show. A special Anniversary Year page has been posted on the Diocesan website, and WVIA-TV is producing a documentary that will air in March.

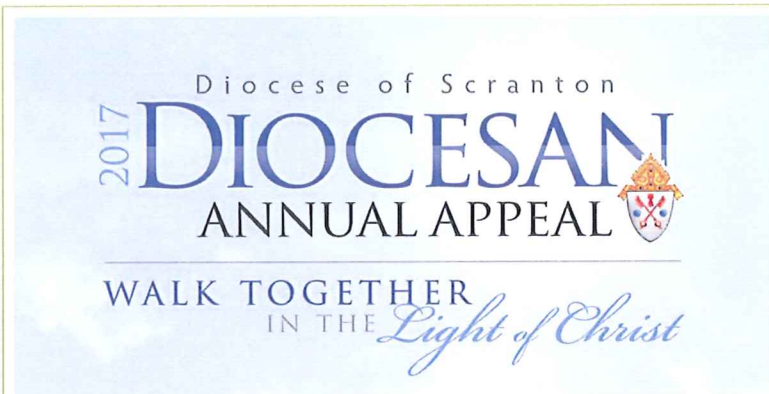
Day of Prayer for Persecuted Christians

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in collaboration with the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Relief Services, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) and Aid to the Church in Need announce the observance this **Sunday, November 26, as A Day of Prayer for Persecuted Christians**. The Day of Prayer also initiates "**Solidarity in Suffering**," a Week of Awareness and Education that runs from

November 26-December 3. The Day of Prayer on the Solemnity of Christ the King, is a fitting time to reflect on religious freedom and Christians around the world who are being persecuted in unheard of numbers.

"On the solemnity of Christ the King, I ask that the entire church in the United States come together in a special way for a day of prayer for persecuted Christians to express our solidarity with those who are suffering," says Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, during his annual address to bishops. In a statement to bishops, the cardinal added, "To focus attention on the plight of Christians and other minorities is not to ignore the suffering of others. Rather by focusing on the most vulnerable members of society, we strengthen the entire fabric of society to protect the rights of all."

To support the observance of the Day of Prayer and Week of Awareness, a wide array of resources are available to assist parishes, schools and campus ministries. One of those resources is the Executive Summary of *"Persecuted and Forgotten? A Report on Christians Oppressed for their Faith 2015-2017."* The report and additional resources are now available at www.usccb.org/middle-east-Christians. See also [Sample Intercessions for Persecuted Christians](#). The hashtag [#SolidarityInSuffering](#) is being used for social media.



Diocesan Annual Appeal at 82% of Goal
28 Parishes Over Goal

The **2017 Diocesan Annual Appeal: Walk Together in the Light of Christ**, has raised more than \$4.1 million in gifts and pledges, bringing the campaign to 82% of the \$5 million goal. More than 24,000 parishioners have made gifts to this year's Appeal so far and 28 parishes have surpassed their Annual Appeal goal.

"We are extremely grateful for the wonderful support we receive for the Annual Appeal from so many parishioners throughout the Diocese," said Jim Bebla, Diocesan Secretary for Development.

Parishioners and friends can make an online gift to the Diocesan Annual Appeal by visiting www.annualappeal.org. Gifts may also be made by calling the Diocesan Development Office at 570-207-2250 or by sending a donation to: Diocesan Annual Appeal, 300 Wyoming Ave., Scranton, PA, 18503-1279.

This year there are two Text-to-Give giving options using cell phones. The first option is a simple one-step process that gives parishioners the opportunity to give \$10 by texting the word LIGHT and their parish name and city to 50555. This option does not require the donor to submit contact or credit card information. The donation will appear on the donor's next cell phone bill. If donors prefer to make a gift of a different amount or a pledge over several months, they can text the word APPEAL to 50555 and the donor will be sent directly to the Annual Appeal online giving site where they can make a credit card gift.

Deacons To Be Ordained Saturday

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera will preside as ordaining prelate and principal celebrant this Saturday, November 25, for the ordination of 11 men to the Permanent Diaconate for service as permanent deacons in the Diocese of Scranton. The newly ordained deacons will join the ranks of clergy who minister to the faithful in parishes and other settings throughout the Diocese.

During the Mass of Ordination, scheduled for 10 a.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Bishop Bambera will ordain the following men to serve permanently in the Order of Deacon:

Carl S. Albright, Paul J. Cooper, Herbert W. Cruikshank, Andrew A. Fazio Sr., Maxime E. Francois, Michael M. Golubiewski, Leonard Jinselli Jr., Ronald D. Maida, John P. Musyt, James M. Rebarchick and Robert J. Warnock.

All are invited to participate in this special liturgy. CTV: Catholic Television will broadcast the Mass.

XLT (Exalt!)

XLT (Exalt!) will be held Friday, December 1, from 7-9 p.m. at Saint Matthew Parish, 78 Ridgeway Street, East Stroudsburg. The event, sponsored by the Diocesan Offices for Parish Life and Vocations, will consist of Eucharistic Adoration, praise & worship music led by Francis Zelinka from the *Full Armor Band*, a talk by Ross Capoccia, reconciliation, and a social. Father Gregory Loughney, pastor at Most Holy Trinity Parish, Cresco, will preside and preach. All are welcome to attend. For more information, please contact Dominick Costantino at 570-780-2996.

Collection for Retired Religious

The 30th appeal for the Retirement Fund for Religious will be taken up at Masses the weekend of December 9-10. The annual, parish-based collection is coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) and benefits some 32,000 aging Catholic sisters, brothers and priests in religious orders.

Catholic bishops of the United States initiated the collection in 1988 to help address the deficit in retirement savings among the nation's religious congregations. Proceeds are distributed to eligible congregations to help underwrite retirement and health-care expenses. Roughly 94 percent of donations aid elderly religious.

Most senior religious worked for little to no pay, leaving their religious communities with inadequate retirement savings. At the same time, religious communities are challenged by the rising cost of care. Last year, the average annual cost of care for senior religious was \$42,000 per person, while skilled care averaged more than \$63,000, according to NRRO data. In 2016, the total cost of care for women and men religious past age 70 exceeded \$1.2 billion.

Proceeds from the collection support the retirement needs of these women and men who spent their lives in church ministries such as education, health care and social services. In 2016, the collection raised more than \$30 million nationwide.

The collection for the Religious Retirement Fund is distinct and separate from the monthly collection taken in parishes for the Care and Education of Priests of the Diocese of Scranton.

Office for Parish Life

Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry Program, 2018

The Office for Parish Life encourages parish leaders to consider application for the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry for January 2018!

The Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry is a ministry formation program designed to equip and advance the servant leadership capacities of individuals serving their parish in areas such as:

- Pastoral Council
- Director of Religious Education and Catechist
- Liturgical Coordinator
- Parish Staff
- 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 their faith communities.

The Office for Parish Life anticipates welcoming new candidates into the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry program in the New Year. Applications will be accepted until January 15, 2018.

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 Together in Christ

Parishes recently began Season 5 of their faith-sharing process in small groups. Please keep them in prayer! We invite parishes who are interested in learning more about ARISE, to take part in a RENEW program during the upcoming Advent season. Discerning ARISE parish members can join with a neighboring parish to explore the process this Fall, to reflect on growing in missionary discipleship! To learn more about the benefits of this experience of awakening and deepening faith, call the Office for Parish Life at 570-207-2213.

New Program to Support "Earlyweds" in Parish

Looking for a way to support young married couples (those married 5 years or less)? Offer them a chance to walk through Pope Francis' wise exposition of 1Cor 13 in *The Joy of Love*. Host this new 6-session program written by Bernadette Rudolph, MA, MS, in consultation with Ann Perrin, cnd, Imft, that features individual reflection, couple discussion and group activities.

Because Millennials like to construct their own knowledge, leading the program simply means that a more seasoned married couple facilitates the discovery process. (Support for setting up the program is provided.) Help young couples to understand more deeply the reading so many of them choose for their wedding ceremony and to grow in their ability to love. Contact Bernadette Rudolph via email or call (570-207-2213, ext 1104) to discuss starting this in your parish.

Echoes of Faith

Do you want to know more about your faith? Are you a catechist or DRE who is looking for a way to earn a certificate in catechesis? Can you spare an hour a week? The Echoes of Faith 3.0 is for YOU!

Created by the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) and published by RCL Benziger, Echoes of Faith is an online education program offering basic adult formation in the Catholic Faith. With fourteen modules divided into three categories, the Echoes of Faith Learning Center can be used for parish Adult Faith Formation and for Basic Catechist Certification. It is also one way to complete the pre-requisites for the Diocesan Certificate in Lay Ministry.

Contact Mary-Anne-Malone@dioceseofscranton.org for information on how to get started for an affordable \$15 a year.

***Parish Sponsor Couple Program for Marriage Preparation
Available January 2018!***

Pairing engaged couples with sponsor couples is an effective way to prepare engaged couples for marriage, because it gives them personal attention, builds a bridge into your parish community and gives them mentors to rely on through the early years of marriage. A parish sponsor couple program also helps the married couple strengthen their own marriage.

The Office for Parish Life will offer a program for parish use starting in January 2018. In four sessions, couples will explore and discuss the same topics currently covered in the popular Diocesan PreCana Days of Reflection, with video content featuring John Regula and Bernadette Rudolph, who currently lead these retreats. Contact Bernadette via [email](#) or call (ext 1104) to discuss starting this in your parish.

Mark Your Calendar

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.

Diocese of Scranton, 300 Wyoming Ave, Scranton, PA 18501

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