



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

November 28, 2024

Happy Thanksgiving!



Thanksgiving spirit shines as local program delivers meals to 4,000 families



Volunteers and local organizations came together Wednesday to ensure that everyone in the greater Scranton area will be able to enjoy a warm Thanksgiving meal, no matter their circumstances.

The Family-to-Family Thanksgiving Food Basket Program served more families than ever before this year, providing each with all the grocery items needed to prepare a traditional Thanksgiving meal.

“We are going to feed 4,000 families today, which is the most that we have ever had to feed,” organizer Linda Robeson said as the event began inside the Scranton Cultural Center.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, was on hand to provide a blessing as volunteers packaged all the food.

“What a wonderful day it is and how encouraging it is for me, and this entire community, to see you representing all the generous hearts that make this possible,” Bishop Bambera told the small army of volunteers. “Thank you to each and every one of you, because every one of you is absolutely vital to this whole operation.”

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Bishop Bambera's Reflection for the First Sunday of Advent



The first Sunday of Advent is this coming Sunday, Dec. 1, 2024.

As we begin the liturgical season of Advent, Bishop Bambera will once again be providing video reflections to the faithful each Sunday focused on

the coming of Christ. The reflections will be available on Diocesan social media, the Diocese of Scranton YouTube channel, and Catholic Television.

In the First Reading from the First Sunday of Advent, the prophet Jeremiah foretold the coming of the Messiah in these words: "*He shall do what is right and just in the land.*"

To watch Bishop Bambera's reflection, click on the link above or below.

[Click Here to Watch Bishop Bambera's Video Reflection for the First Week of Advent](#)

During Advent, Catholic Television to broadcast Cathedral 5 p.m. Sunday Mass and Evening Prayer



With the Season of Advent beginning on Sunday, Dec. 1, the Cathedral of Saint Peter will once again be offering Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament each Sunday during Advent following the 5:00 p.m. Mass.

Advent Evening Prayer and Benediction will be celebrated at 6:15 p.m.

In order to help all faithful, especially those who cannot attend Mass in person, celebrate the coming of Christ, Catholic Television will be broadcasting both the 5 p.m. Mass and Evening Prayer each Sunday.

We invite you to join us either in person at the Cathedral or via Catholic Television each Sunday evening.

Pope urges Christians to joyfully cultivate fruits of the Spirit



Not every Christian is called to be an apostle, prophet or evangelist, Pope Francis said, but all Christians can cultivate the fruits of the Holy Spirit by becoming “charitable, patient, humble, peacemakers.”

Continuing his series of audience talks on the Holy Spirit, the pope explained that the fruits of the Spirit are different from charisms, which are given spontaneously by the Spirit for the good of the church. Instead, the fruits of the Spirit represent a “collaboration between grace and freedom,” he said.

“These fruits always express the creativity of the person, in whom faith works through charity, sometimes in surprising and joyful ways,” he told visitors gathered for his general audience Nov. 27 in St. Peter’s Square.

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Final Synod document is magisterial, must be accepted, Pope Francis says



Doubling down on the centrality of synodality in the Catholic Church, Pope Francis said that it is now up to local churches to accept and implement proposals from the final document approved the Synod of Bishops on synodality.

Approved by the pope, the synod's final document "participates in the ordinary magisterium of the successor of Peter, and as such, I ask that it be accepted," the pope wrote in a note published by the Vatican Nov. 25.

"Local churches and groupings of churches are now called upon to implement, in different contexts, the authoritative indications contained in the document, through the processes of discernment and decision-making provided by law and by the document itself," he wrote nearly a month after the synod's close.

The final document outlined key priorities for the church, including increased participation of laity through new ministries and adjusted governing structures, greater transparency and accountability among church leadership and creating space for previously marginalized groups.

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'It was brought back to life'

Americans react to Notre Dame's Dec. 8 opening



The devastating images – whether viewed from the banks of the Seine River in Paris or on millions of glowing screens around the world – stunned onlookers. Many wept, clutching tissues to smoke- and sorrow-reddened eyes, others prayed aloud or in silence, some even sung hymns.

It was the evening of April 15, 2019, and Notre Dame Cathedral – an 850-plus-year-old, stone-and-mortar monument to human ingenuity and religious aspiration – was burning.

France is a famously secular nation. Once known as “the eldest daughter of the church,” slightly less than half of the population call themselves Catholics, and only about 5% of the total population attend weekly Mass.

But on that slightly chilly spring evening, such statistics didn’t matter. A thing of beauty was being destroyed – and it wasn’t required to be religious, or even Catholic, to mourn its possible extinction.

“Paris without Notre Dame ... madness,” one onlooker mused to CNN as it broadcast the conflagration. Experts later estimated the heat in the cathedral’s crossing reached as high as 2200 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to melt metal.

Now, five years later – owing to the courage of Paris’ firefighters, nearly \$1 billion from worldwide donors, and the skills of almost 1,000 artisans – Notre Dame is scheduled to reopen to the public Dec. 7-8.

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**Saint Thomas Aquinas' skull traveling to
Pennsylvania, seven eastern states**



A touring relic will give the faithful in Washington and seven states a rare opportunity to venerate St. Thomas Aquinas, one of the greatest Christian theologians.

The skull of St. Thomas, which has been on tour in Europe for the past year for observances marking the jubilees of his canonization (700 years in 2023), death (750 years in 2024) and birth (800 years in 2025) will be in Washington for two days of veneration Nov. 29 and 30.

Washington is the first of its stops in 10 U.S. cities through Dec. 18.

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**U.S. Bishops announce Prayer Vigil for Life to
take place Jan. 23-24**



The annual Prayer Vigil for Life will take place Jan. 23-24, 2025, the U.S. bishops' conference announced Nov. 22.

The event is hosted each January by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Pro-Life Secretariat, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington and The Catholic University of America's Office of Campus Ministry. It takes place on the eve of the March for Life, an annual protest of the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, which was overturned in 2022.

The 52nd National March for Life will take place Jan. 24, 2025.

"I enthusiastically invite Catholics from all around the country to join me in-person or virtually, in praying for an end to abortion and building up a culture of life," said Bishop Daniel E. Thomas of Toledo, Ohio, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities, in the USCCB's statement announcing the dates.

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

Support the 2024 Catholic Ministries Appeal!



Donate now at
AnnualAppeal.org,
call (570) 207-2250 or
click this QR code



Advent begins with the theme of *hope*! As we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, let us also prepare to share the hope and love that Christ brings.

Your support of the Catholic Ministries Appeal ensures that our brothers and sisters in need receive the care and support they deserve.

[Click Here to Answer 'Our Call to Serve' Today!](#)

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