



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

December 4, 2025

Eight men ordained as Permanent Deacons for the Diocese of Scranton



Surrounded by family, friends, and fellow parishioners who supported them for five years of formation, eight men were ordained to the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Scranton during a joyful Mass on Saturday, Nov. 29, 2025, at the Cathedral of Saint Peter.

The day marked a profound moment in the life of the Church of Scranton, and a milestone for the newly ordained who will now serve the People of God in the ministries of Word, Liturgy, and Charity.

The Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, served as principal celebrant and homilist for the Mass, which drew clergy from throughout the Diocese.

The men ordained included Fernando B. Alves, Francisco Castelan, Michaelangelo J. Colaneri, Frank A. Fanelli, Joel Marte, Jorge A. Roca, Rafael Sanchez Velasquez, and Christian D. Saunders.

Look for full coverage of the Diaconate Ordination Mass in the Dec. 18 edition of *The Catholic Light*.

[Click Here to Watch a Short Video from CTV: Catholic Television with Highlights and Interviews from the Ordination Mass](#)

[Click Here to View a Photo Album from the Diaconate Ordination Mass](#)

**Bishop Bambera to celebrate Our
Lady of Guadalupe Feast in Scranton
this Sunday**

Celebración a nuestra

Virgen de Guadalupe

3 a 11 de diciembre

6:30 | Novena cada noche en la iglesia

Y la misa de la Fiesta de la Inmaculada Concepcion
el 8 de diciembre a las 7:30 pm



7 de diciembre

12:15 pm | La Santa Misa en la Catedral de San Pedro,
315 Wyoming Ave., con Obispo Joseph Bambera y
despues de la Misa la Fiesta en el Centro Pastoral

11 de diciembre

8:30 pm | La vigilia de la Fiesta con oraciones y musica. Antes de la
procesion habrá pan mexicano y bebidas calientes.

12 de diciembre

3:30 am | Procesión desde la Catedral hasta la Iglesia

5 am - 7 am | Mañanitas con mariachi

7:00 pm | La Santa Misa

La Parroquia de Santa Teresa de Calcuta
1217 Prospect Avenue, Scranton
www.STCParish.com/es



This coming Sunday, on the Second Sunday of Advent, celebrations in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe will begin in earnest throughout the Diocese of Scranton.

On Sunday, Dec. 7 at 12:15 p.m., Bishop Bambera will celebrate Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton with the Hispanic community of Saint Teresa of Calcutta Parish.

All are welcome to attend.

On Friday, Dec. 12, Bishop Bambera will celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe with the Hispanic community of Saint Nicholas-Saint Mary Parish in Wilkes-Barre at 6:00 p.m.

On Sunday, Dec. 14, the Bishop will celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe with the Hispanic community in the Poconos at Saint Matthew Parish in East Stroudsburg at 2:00 p.m.

Retirement Fund for Religious Collection to be held Dec. 13-14



The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) is announcing that the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be held in parishes throughout the Diocese of Scranton on the weekend of Dec. 13-14.

In 2024, Catholics across the Diocese of Scranton contributed \$70,104.60 to the collection, mostly through their home parishes.

“The generosity of U.S. Catholics continues to make a profound difference in the lives of aging religious,” John Knutsen, NRRO

director, said. “This year, we invite all Catholics to help provide the care and dignity these women and men of faith so richly deserve.”

Rising health-care costs and the absence of traditional retirement plans have placed significant financial strain on many religious communities.

The Retirement Fund for Religious helps address this need, supporting more than 21,000 religious over the age of 70.

In 2024, the average annual cost of care was about \$56,600 per person, with skilled nursing care averaging \$96,000.

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

Remembering Mary Jane Sheridan (1951-2025)



The Diocese of Scranton is mourning the loss of a long-time employee. We remember Mary Jane Sheridan, who devoted more than three decades to the Diocese of Scranton – serving most recently as the Executive Assistant to the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton.

Sheridan passed away peacefully last Friday afternoon at her home surrounded by her family. Her husband of 52 years is Patrick J. Sheridan.

Her greatest joy came from caring for her family, to whom she gave unwavering love, support, and guidance. She was a devoted mother, wife, sister, friend, and “Mimi” to her grandchildren.

Surviving are her daughters Jennifer Sheridan, Ed.D. and Kristen Sheridan Wozniak, FNP and her husband Ethan; her beloved grandchildren Ellia, Ryan, and Andrew Wozniak; her brothers James J. Thomas and his wife Carol, George T. Thomas and his wife Kathy, Patrick J. Thomas and his wife Gina, and sister Lori

Thomas Wagner, as well as, several cherished nieces and nephews.

Please join us for praying for the repose of the soul of Mary Jane Sheridan, as well as for God's love and support for her entire family.

[Click Here to Read the Full Obituary for Mary Jane Sheridan or to Make a Memorial Contribution in Remembrance of Her Service](#)

Unity, dialogue, respect: On first trip, Pope Leo XIV highlights paths to peace



Visiting two countries over six days on his first foreign papal trip, Pope Leo XIV preached unity, dialogue and respect for differences as the only paths to peace.

Spending time with Catholics, other Christian leaders and top Muslim clerics in Turkey Nov. 27-Nov. 30 and Lebanon Nov. 30-Dec. 2, the pope made formal speeches about how believing in God as the father of all means recognizing one another as brothers and sisters.

But he also set aside time in a packed schedule for private talks, lunches and late evening meetings with the leaders.

“The more we can promote authentic unity and understanding, respect and human relationships of friendship and dialogue in the world, the greater possibility there is that we will put aside the arms of war, that we will leave aside the distrust, the hatred, the animosity that has so often been built up and that we will find ways to come together and be able to promote authentic peace and justice throughout the world,” he told reporters flying back to Rome with him Dec. 2.

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

Though Nicaea is a ruin, its Creed stands and unites Christians, Pope says



Although the ancient city of Nicaea lies in ruins and the geographic center of Christianity has shifted West, Pope Leo XIV and Christian leaders gathered at an archaeological site in Turkey to celebrate the enduring faith set out in the Nicene Creed.

Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople hosted the ecumenical prayer service and the common recitation of the Creed Nov. 28 at Iznik, site of the ancient Nicaea, about 80 miles southeast of Istanbul.

With the Greek Orthodox patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem or their representatives and with representatives of other Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant churches, Pope Leo marked the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea — the primary motive for his first foreign trip as pope.

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Record numbers of women are visiting pregnancy centers, study shows



In 2024, pregnancy centers saw more new clients, provided more medical care and distributed more material goods than ever before, according to a new report from the Charlotte Lozier Institute.

Between free medical care, education services such as childbirth classes, and items such as diapers, baby clothes and car seats, pregnancy centers provided an estimated \$452 million to families in need.

Centers also are increasingly upping the number of services they offer, including abortion pill reversals, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, or STIs, childbirth classes and after-abortion support.

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

Supreme Court weighs appeal from New Jersey faith-based pregnancy centers



The Supreme Court on Dec. 2 heard oral arguments in an appeal from a group of faith-based pregnancy centers in New Jersey challenging an investigation by that state's attorney general alleging they misled people about their services and seeking information about their donors.

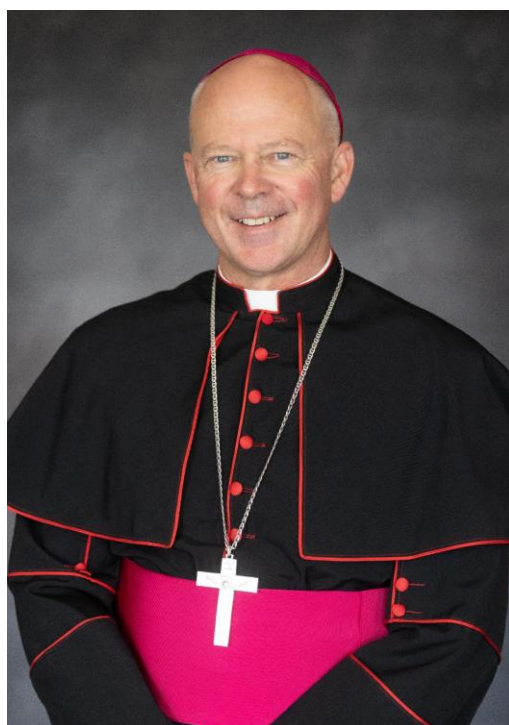
First Choice Women's Resource Centers operates five centers in the Garden State that provide some medical services, including ultrasounds, to women with unplanned pregnancies.

In 2023, New Jersey Attorney General Matthew Platkin moved to launch a consumer protection probe investigating First Choice, alleging they misrepresented themselves to clients as if their services included referrals for abortion. As part of his probe, he issued a subpoena seeking information including about its donors – but before the expiration date, First Choice asked a federal court to intervene on its behalf, arguing the probe violated its First Amendment rights.

A key question in the case is whether First Choice must first pursue its claims in state court or meet the legal threshold for the federal court.

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U.S. Bishops award more than \$7 million in grants to home missions



Dozens of “home mission dioceses” across the nation have received much-needed financial support, provided by the generosity of U.S. Catholics through an annual collection.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops announced Dec. 1 that 69 mission dioceses and Eastern Catholic eparchies had been awarded a collective total of more than \$7.8 million in grants.

The allocations — which ranged from \$10,000 to approximately \$145,000 — were determined by the USCCB’s Subcommittee on Catholic Home Missions, which met earlier in the fall to review the 2025-2026 grant applications.

The awarded funds were made possible through the USCCB’s annual Catholic Home Missions appeal. The collection, taken up in many dioceses and parishes on the last weekend in April, was established in 1998 to strengthen U.S.-based mission dioceses.

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

Pope Leo's childhood home in Chicago suburb now a historic landmark



Pope Leo XIV's childhood home just outside of Chicago has been declared a historic landmark.

The board of trustees of the village of Dolton, Illinois, approved a motion for the designation during a regular meeting Dec. 1 that began with a recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Mayor Jason House described the property as one of the "most culturally and spiritually significant locations in the United States," according to ABC-7 Chicago.

The modest, one-story brick residence, located at 212 E. 141st Pl., was purchased by the village's board in July for \$375,000, an amount that included all applicable realtor and auction fees.

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

YOUR GIFTS MATTER
Support the 2025 Catholic Ministries
Appeal!



PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

Preparing for the Lord's coming isn't only about our own hearts - it's also about making a way for His love to reach those in need. Through the Catholic Ministries Appeal, our Diocese is able to comfort God's people by feeding the hungry, caring for the sick and elderly, and forming future leaders in the faith.

Donate today at: AnnualAppeal.org

[Click Here to Learn More about or Donate to the 2025 Catholic Ministries Appeal](https://AnnualAppeal.org)

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