



# ***The Catholic Light***

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

**Weekly E-Newsletter**

**July 9, 2026**

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



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 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."

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

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## **Evening Schedule Change at 2026 Solemn Novena to Saint Ann**

# 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

### MASSSES

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.**

### MASSSES & 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)

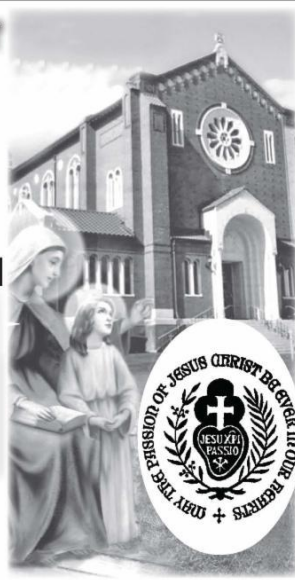
Closing Mass live Sunday, July 26 at 7:30 pm; Rebroadcast Monday, July 27 at 12:00 pm

**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.*



This year, there is an important change in evening services at the Solemn Novena to Saint Ann.

**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.**

Throughout the Novena, a number of special Masses and services are planned.

## **Bishop Bambera celebrates Ordination Mass for Rev. Jose Luis Batista Castillo, O.S.J.**



Saint Gabriel Church in Hazleton served as the setting for the Sacrament of Holy Orders which were conferred upon Rev. Jose Luis Batista Castillo, O.S.J., by the Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, on Wednesday, July 1, 2026.

Concelebrants of the Mass included Oblates of Saint Joseph priests of the “Holy Spouses” Province (USA) and Diocesan clergy.

Rev. 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 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 served at the Oblate-staffed parish of Saint Joachim Parish, Madera, Calif., in the Diocese of Fresno.

[Click Here to Watch a Video from CTV: Catholic Television from the Ordination Mass](#)

## **On U.S. Independence Day, Pope Leo XIV honors migrants in Lampedusa**



As the first American pope marked the 250th anniversary of the United States' Declaration of Independence July 4, he did so not in celebration of his homeland, but on a European migrant entrypoint, praying for migrants buried in the island's cemetery, meeting survivors and celebrating Mass where tens of thousands of people flee war, persecution and poverty.

Before delivering a single public address, Pope Leo laid flowers at the graves of migrants who died trying to cross the Mediterranean. He met a migrant family at the "Door of Europe" monument, blessed a plaque naming Favaloro Pier after Pope Francis, and later celebrated Mass beneath an image of Our Lady of Safe Harbor.

The visit deliberately echoed Pope Francis' first journey outside Rome in 2013, when Pope Francis came to Lampedusa to denounce what he called the "globalization of indifference."

"I am grateful to the Lord for the opportunity to visit you, following in the footsteps of Pope Francis," Pope Leo said in his homily at the Arena sports field in the Salina district of Lampedusa.

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

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**National Eucharistic Pilgrimage  
ends, but the 'journey continues'**



As the 2026 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage concluded amid the U.S.'s 250th anniversary, "the journey continues," said Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez of Philadelphia.

And, he added, "we're all walking to one place," with the path leading to the "powerful, transformative and lifegiving" love of God.

The archbishop was the principal celebrant and homilist at the final liturgy for the pilgrimage, which took place July 5 at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul in Philadelphia, the second to last stop on the pilgrimage route.

At the start of the Mass, Pope Leo XIV – the first U.S.-born pope – addressed the faithful in a pre-recorded video message, saying that the "strong, though largely unknown, Eucharistic heritage" of

the nation “must continue to serve as source of both renewal and unity.”

The pilgrimage arrived in Philadelphia July 2, having traveled through most of the nation’s original 13 colonies – spanning 18 dioceses and archdioceses, as well as two Eastern Catholic eparchies – since its May 24 launch.

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

## **Pope Leo invites Americans to cultivate 'moral greatness' as he accepts Liberty Medal**



Religious liberty “holds sacred the inner sphere of the person where convictions are formed and where conscience can guide the

decisions made in the intimacy of the human heart,” said Pope Leo XIV, as he accepted a major civic award for upholding freedom of belief on the eve of the nation’s 250th anniversary.

The first U.S.-born pope shared his thoughts — which centered religious liberty within a vision of God-given human dignity, and which called the nation back to shared founding ideals — during a July 3 acceptance address for the Liberty Medal, bestowed by the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

Established in 1988 to mark the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, and hosted by the center since 2006, the Liberty Medal honors both individuals and organizations “who strive to secure the blessings of liberty to people around the globe.”

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

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## **Bishops express sorrow, warn faithful and call for prayer after SSPX excommunications**



Several U.S. bishops have issued statements expressing sorrow, warning the faithful and urging prayers for unity following the Vatican's July 2 excommunication of adherents of the now-schismatic Society of St. Pius X.

The Switzerland-based SSPX — which has for decades wrangled with the Vatican in rejecting the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, incurring both previous excommunications and protracted reconciliation efforts by the Holy See — defied papal orders and entered into formal schism by ordaining four new bishops without authorization at a July 1 liturgy in Switzerland.

In its July 2 excommunication decree, the Vatican also explicitly stated that attempts to confer the sacraments of penance and matrimony involving the society's clergy are invalid. The same day, the Vatican also outlined steps for SSPX members to be reconciled with the Catholic Church.

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

## **Mass of Thanksgiving for America's 250th anniversary held at National Shrine in Washington**



Independence Day is a reminder that Americans' "inalienable rights" mentioned in the Declaration of Independence — life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness — are gifts from God, Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl said July 4 in the nation's capital.

Cardinal Wuerl, the retired archbishop of Washington, delivered the homily at a Mass of Thanksgiving for America's 250th anniversary held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. The quietly dignified service was a cool reprise from the 100-degree heat and high humidity outside.

“We can claim to be free because we have been created free and equal by God,” Cardinal Wuerl said.

And that, he said, can be traced, in American history, all the way back to the Mayflower Compact in New England in 1620. The compact, he reminded the congregation, only had two elements: “The law of God and the need of the common good.”

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

## **Planned Parenthood to receive Medicaid funds again as defunding provision expires**



A provision of the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” that stopped Planned Parenthood from receiving Medicaid payments for a year expired July 4, allowing the nation’s largest abortion provider to

regain access to hundreds of millions of dollars in Medicaid funding.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act, signed by President Donald Trump on July 4, 2025, enacted key items from his legislative agenda on issues including taxes and immigration. It also included a provision eliminating Medicaid funds to health providers who also perform abortions, but only for one year.

Although it was not named in the provision, Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider, sued in response, arguing the parameters for ending these funds effectively singled it out. However, courts eventually allowed the provision to go into effect.

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

## Catholic leaders, aid workers respond to Venezuela earthquakes



Catholic leaders and organizations in the U.S. continue to aid Venezuela as that nation recovers from two deadly earthquakes that struck seconds apart June 24.

Brittany Wichtendahl, a spokesperson for Catholic Relief Services — the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' official overseas humanitarian and development agency — told OSV News July 8 her agency is “working extremely closely” with its in-country partner Caritas Venezuela.

Both organizations are part of Caritas Internationalis, the universal Catholic Church's global humanitarian network.

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

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**Seven churches hosting picnics,  
festivals and bazaars this coming  
weekend!**

**Make plans now to visit Bear Creek,  
Carbondale, Drums, Duryea,  
Swoyersville, Wilkes-Barre and  
Wyalusing**

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY PARISH

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE FEAST

JULY 9-11, 5-10 PM

THE FEAST GROUNDS,  
35 FARVIEW STREET,  
CARBONDALE, PA

JULY 12:  
PROCESSION OF  
OUR LADY OF  
MOUNT CARMEL

THROUGH THE STREETS  
OF CARBONDALE'S  
WESTSIDE IMMEDIATELY  
FOLLOWING 10 AM MASS



# 2026 Good Shepherd Church SUMMER FESTIVAL

FRIDAY, JULY 10<sup>TH</sup>: 5-10 PM • SATURDAY, JULY 11<sup>TH</sup>: 1-10 PM • SUNDAY, JULY 12<sup>TH</sup>: 1-7 PM

## ENTERTAINMENT:

Friday, July 10th  
North of 40  
6-9:30 PM

Saturday, July 11th  
New Arrival 1-4 PM  
ALV Karaoke and  
DJ Services 4-6 PM  
Kartune 6:30-10 PM

Sunday, July 12th  
Tommy Molinaro 1-3 PM  
The Legends 3-6 PM

## REFRESHMENTS:

Empanadas  
Pulled Pork  
Chicken Fingers  
Halupki & Haluski  
Sausage and Peppers  
Cheesesteaks  
Pierogies  
Potato Pancakes  
Burgers & Dogs  
Pizza  
French Fries  
Funnel Cakes  
Ice Cream  
Bake Sale



## ACTIVITIES:

Games for  
Kids and Adults  
Face Painting by  
The Magical Brush  
Tricky Trays  
Basket of Cheer  
50/50 Raffle  
Instant Bingo  
Wine Wheel  
Money Tree



## BEVERAGES:

Beer Tent  
Wine Coolers  
Water  
Soda  
Snow Cones  
Birch Beer on Tap



*Great Food. Great Fun. Great Community. Everyone Welcome!*

87 S Hunter Hwy, Drums, PA 18222

Bring  
your family  
and friends  
and join us!

**ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON  
PARISH**

# **FESTIVAL**

**THURSDAY • FRIDAY • SATURDAY  
5 PM 'til 11 PM NIGHTLY**

**JULY 9-10-11**

**116 HUGHES ST. SWOYERSVILLE  
GAMES — PRIZES — REFRESHMENTS  
DELICIOUS HOMEMADE FOOD**

**Thursday — JOHN STEVENS' DOUBLESHOT**

**Friday — PICTURE PERFECT**

**Saturday — HOOPLA**

*Everyone Welcome!!*

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD PARISH, DURYEA, invites you to their ANNUAL PICNIC

on the  
Parish Grounds at Holy Rosary Church and School,  
127 Stephenson Street, Duryea



Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 5:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 5:00-11:00 p. m.

Live Entertainment: CC Music Band on Friday, playing from 6:00-10:00pm; and  
The Sperrazza Band reunion on Saturday, playing from 7:00-11:00pm.

Something for Everyone! Plenty of tent seating!!!

Enjoy homemade foods, Polish favorites, wings and pizza, and more!

Refresh yourself at our bar or have an ice cream float! Try your luck at our Cash Bingo, or at any  
of our games of chance – you could go home a winner! Homemade baked goods, desserts, and  
an Indoor Flea Market!

Parking? No problem...with the help of the Duryea VFW Post 1227 also on Stephenson Street,  
you can take our convenient shuttle bus right to the picnic entrance! We hope to see you there!  
Come Join Us – Enjoy and Have Fun!

**Early Bird Flea Market opens Thursday, July 9th, from 5:30-8:30 pm In the Holy Rosary School  
Auditorium. Many items to choose from: small furniture, vintage decorations, glassware,  
vinyl records, books, small appliances, gadgets, yard items, and much, much more!!!!**

Check us out at



Nativity of Our Lord Parish or online at [www.nativityduryea.org](http://www.nativityduryea.org)



St. Elizabeth/St. Mark

# SummerFest

Saturday, July 11th

Noon – 7:00 p.m.

Bear Creek Community Charter

School Pavilion

Bear Creek Twp.

BINGO

Bake Sale

Basket Raffles  
50/50 Drawings

Mass at 4:00 p.m.

Homemade Foods  
Pierogi Halupki  
Chicken Dinner Pork BBQ  
Haluski and MUCH more



This will be one of the biggest weekends of the summer for church festivals and picnics - and we encourage you to visit as many of them as possible for great food and fellowship!

All parishes in the Diocese of Scranton have been invited to send their picnic information to the Diocese of Scranton Communications Department for promotion.

[Click Here for the Full Listing of 2026 Parish Festivals, Picnics and Bazaars](#)

Follow us on Social Media...



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