



The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

August 20, 2026

'Shine His Light:' Catholic schools prepare for a new year of faith, growth and opportunity



In the coming days, classrooms in the Diocese of Scranton's 19 Catholic schools will once again be filled with students, teachers, and the excitement of a new academic year.

This year, a simple invitation will serve as a guiding light for the year ahead: Shine His Light.

That is the theme for the 2026-2027 school year, calling students, families, faculty, staff, and administrators to live out their Catholic faith not simply in words, but through acts of service, compassion and love.

Rooted in Jesus' words from the Gospel of Matthew – “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (5:16) – the theme will be highlighted throughout the school year through the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

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Diocese welcomes three new Catholic school principals this year



As the new school year begins, three Catholic schools in the Diocese of Scranton are welcoming new principals.

Kathy Maguire will serve as principal of All Saints Academy in Scranton, Jason Schlingman has taken the helm at Holy Family Academy in Hazleton, and Michael Catrillo has become principal of Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg.

While their paths to Catholic school leadership are different, the three new principals share a common desire to place students at the center of their work while strengthening the faith and academics in their buildings.

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Diocese continues to invest in school facility work



The Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System is continuing to invest money in much-needed infrastructure projects. With 19 schools across five counties, and with many of those buildings approaching a century old, the Catholic Schools Strategic Growth Plan made it clear that deferred maintenance had accumulated for many years.

For the second summer in a row, renovations have been underway across multiple schools with the help of \$8 million in financing.

After concentrating on roofs last summer, this year many projects were focused on heating/cooling systems and replacing windows. Click the link below to see some of the more significant projects completed over the summer.

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Walking with the Crucified of Today: Passionist Father continues mission of serving Haiti's most vulnerable



Father Rick Frechette, C.P., D.O., was in West Scranton in late July to preach during the 102nd annual Solemn Novena to Saint Ann. While his visit gave him a chance to reconnect with fellow priests and longtime friends, it was only a brief break from the work that has consumed his priesthood for nearly four decades.

As founder of the Saint Luke Foundation for Haiti, Father Rick has spent much of his life serving some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world, providing medical care, building schools and providing much needed humanitarian outreach.

“Over these 37 years that I’ve been there, we’ve built two hospitals, 35 schools and seven clinics,” he said.

While those numbers are impressive and significant, Father Rick's own ministry remains intentionally close to the people he serves.

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Summer, fellowship and a whole lot of pierogies



39,156 pierogies.

That is how many dumplings parish volunteers at Saint John the Baptist Parish in Larksville made and sold during this year's annual summer bazaar.

If that number seems impressive, it is, but it is only part of the story!

Across northeastern and north central Pennsylvania, summer weekends have long been marked by parish picnics, bazaars and festivals – gatherings where the smell of ethnic food fills the air, familiar music plays and families reconnect.

While the festivals certainly help support parish ministries and expenses, if you ask those who volunteer and attend, it quickly becomes clear that these events are about much more than fundraising.

They are about coming home.

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**True beauty found in enduring love,
which 'ennobles and lifts us up,'
Pope says on Feast of Assumption**



Christians are called to reflect Mary's authentic beauty, which is revealed through a life of enduring love rather than worldly aesthetic standards, Pope Leo XIV said.

Celebrating the Feast of the Assumption Aug. 15, the pope said the artistic depictions of a youthful Mary ascending to heaven stand in stark contrast to the reality of aging that all people experience.

"The glorification of Mary, body and soul, teaches us that our true beauty does not lie in hiding the signs of aging, but in revealing the signs of love that never end, and are even impressed on our flesh," he said.

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Sacred music must be 'dignified,' reflecting the mystery being celebrated, Pope says



Singing and playing music during the liturgy is an integral and necessary part of the celebration, which means it is much more than something “decorative,” Pope Leo XIV said.

“In the liturgy, to sing and to play music means to pray, attuning one’s heart to that of our sisters and brothers and to God, through active participation in the mystery that is being celebrated,” he said during his general audience talk in St. Peter’s Basilica Aug. 19.

“Far from being merely decorative, therefore, sacred music is a treasure of profound value. It should always be dignified, draw inspiration from Sacred Scripture and reflect the grandeur of the mystery celebrated,” he added.

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Jordan prepares for 2,000th anniversary of Christ's baptism in 2030



Jordan announced the start of its preparations for the historic 2,000th anniversary of the Baptism of Jesus Christ in 2030 at the site where it took place at Bethany Beyond the Jordan, also known as Al-Maghtas.

So far, four popes have visited the site of great religious importance, including St. Paul VI in 1964, followed by St. John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis. Jordan is the only country to host visits of the four popes, all affirming the site's significance.

Jordanian Prime Minister Jafar Hassan signed agreements Aug. 12 to begin work on the development of the lands adjacent to the Baptism Site to commemorate the second millennium of Christ's baptism in 2030 at the direction of Jordan's King Abdullah II.

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Religious life must find harmony amid change, LCWR's president tells assembly



The future of religious life depends on different congregations, with different charisms, working together like a symphony, the president of the United States' largest leadership conference for Catholic sisters told the group's members.

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious, which represents about two-thirds of the nation's nearly 35,000 sisters, held its annual assembly Aug. 11-14 in Orlando. More than 1,300 congregational leaders and their guests were in attendance.

LCWR's outgoing president, Sister Vicky Larson, a member of the Presentation Sisters of South Dakota, told attendees in her Aug. 12 presidential address that the assembly's theme, "Many Charisms, One Spirit, One Call" can best be seen through a musical lens. Good music requires the group to listen to each other.

"The Holy Spirit is asking us to lead by listening," Sister Vicky said. "Not indifferent listening. Not surface listening. But deep, contemplative, Spirit-led synodal listening — the kind that changes us."

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Vatican city mints new coins featuring face of Pope Leo XIV



Numismatists take note. The Vatican City State Mint has issued a new set of coins to mark Pope Leo XIV's pontificate and the Jubilee Year of St. Francis of Assisi.

The inaugural euro coin set of Pope Leo's pontificate features both the face and coat of arms of the 267th successor of Peter. The set also includes a special five-euro commemorative coin depicting the moment that St. Francis renounced his worldly possessions before the bishop of Assisi to mark the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi on the opposite side of Pope Leo's visage.

It is the first time that the Vatican has issued coins featuring a pope's portrait in nearly a decade. In 2017, Pope Francis requested that his portrait no longer appear on Vatican coins, making the Vatican at the time the only euro-issuing state without a depiction of its head of state on circulating coins.

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Forest City Parish holding Family Fun Day on Saturday



Ascension Parish in Forest City is holding a Family Fun Day on Saturday at the campus of Saint Joseph Church, 739 Hudson Street, Forest City.

The event will feature games, kids activities and a picnic lunch.

For more information, call the Parish Office at (570) 785-3838.

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

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