The Catholic Light
DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

Weekly E-Newsletter

November 5, 2026

Registration begins for 'Christmas Gifts for Kids' Program; Toy donations needed to make Christmas special for area children



Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton is preparing for its annual Christmas Gifts for Kids program, which brings Christmas joy to thousands of children and families.

With economic pressures continuing to affect families, the need for assistance is expected to be greater than ever this Christmas. In the greater Scranton area, Catholic Social Services is once again partnering with Friends of the Poor and Catherine McAuley Center.

Catholic Social Services is asking the community to help a little earlier this year so gifts can be collected and preparations made well before the holiday rush.

You can make a difference! Click the links below to shop the Catholic Social Services Amazon Wish List. Choose a toy or gift, and it will be shipped directly to Catholic Social Services to help make Christmas special for a child in need. Monetary donations are also being accepted.

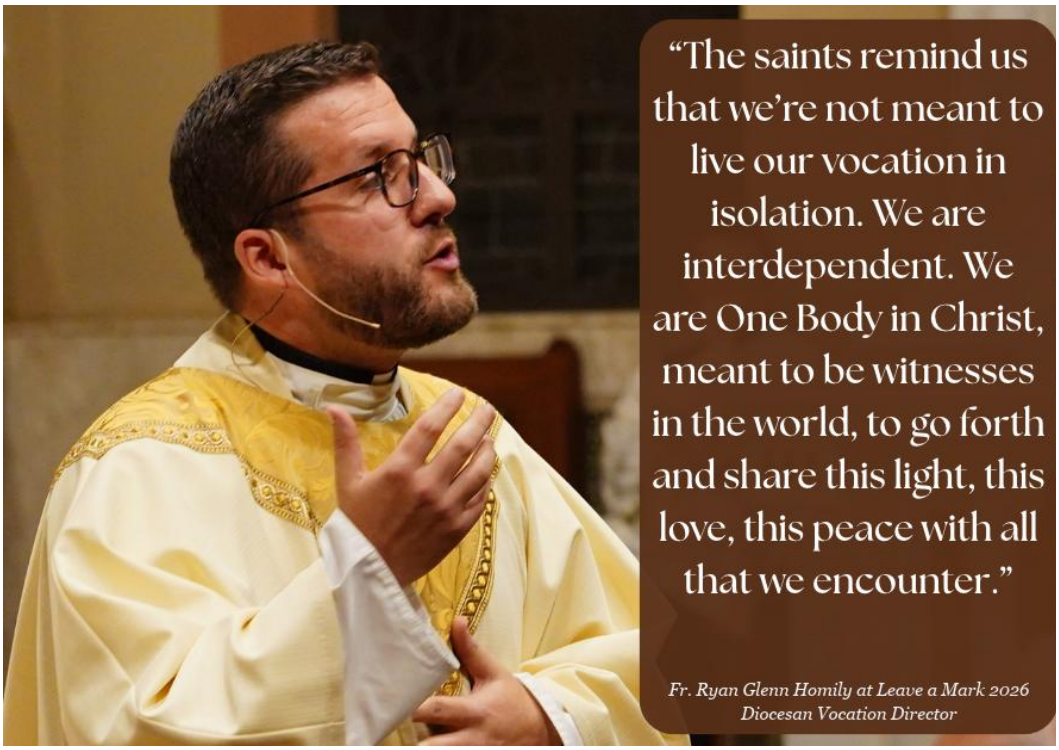
Thank you for helping share the joy of Christmas with children and families in our community!

Click Here for the 2026 Gifts for Kids Registration Link For Toy Assistance in the Greater Scranton Area

Click Here to View the Amazon Wish-List for Children in the Scranton Area

Click Here to View the Amazon Wish-List for Children in the Carbondale Area

Young adults urged to walk together in faith at annual 'Leave a Mark' Mass



After attending the Diocese of Scranton's annual 'Leave a Mark' Mass for the first time last year, Rebecca Morgan found herself back at the Cathedral of Saint Peter on Nov. 1, 2026, for this year's event.

"I really love coming to these kinds of things because I feel like there are so few ways to get together with other Catholics of the same age where you are specifically encouraged to talk about your faith," Morgan said.

Morgan – a native of Michigan who is currently a student at The University of Scranton – appreciated both the liturgy and the opportunity to connect with other young people afterward.

"I think it's really important to take a more active role and engage with your faith," Morgan added. "It's important to gather together and boost each other up."

Held on the Solemnity of All Saints, the 'Leave a Mark' Mass also marked the beginning of National Vocation Awareness Week,

which invites Catholics to reflect on how God calls each person to serve the Church and the world.

Click Here to Watch a Video from CTV: Catholic Television from the 2026 Leave a Mark Mass

More than 300 young people to participate in the fourth annual Diocesan Youth Rally this Saturday



More than 300 young people in grades 7-12 have registered for the fourth annual Diocesan Youth Rally, which will take place on Saturday, Nov. 7, 2026, at Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School in East Stroudsburg.

The theme for this year's Youth Rally is "Do Whatever He Tells You."

The participants - which come from 17 parishes throughout the Diocese of Scranton - will participate in ice breakers, small group talks, Adoration, Mass and more.

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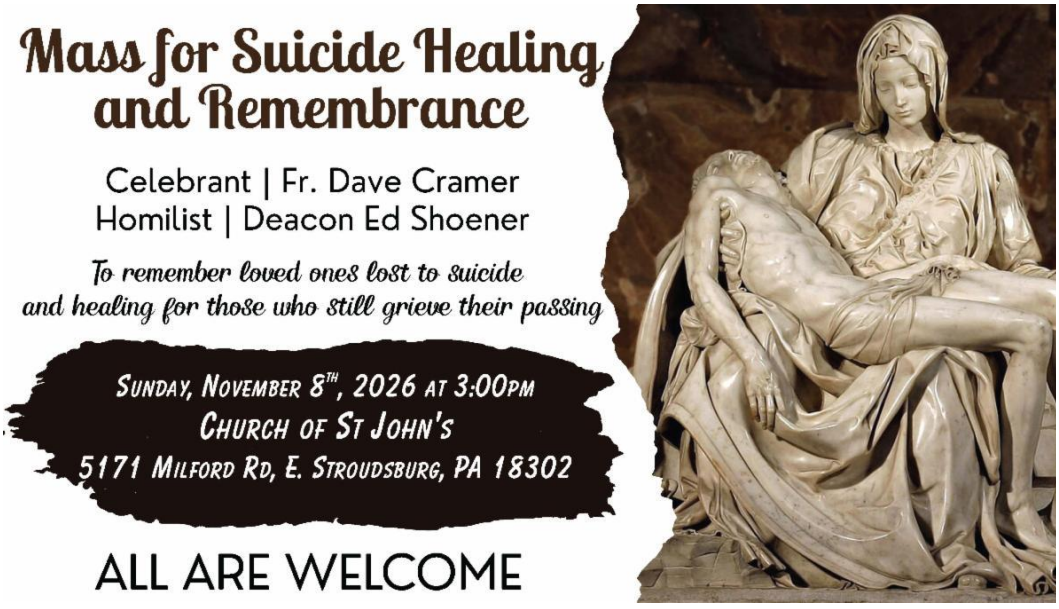
Mass for Suicide Healing & Remembrance to be held Nov. 8



The Northeast Pennsylvania Mental Health Ministry team will hold a Mass for Suicide Healing and Remembrance on Sunday, Nov. 8, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. at the Church of Saint John, located at 5171 Milford Road, East Stroudsburg.

The Mass will serve to remember loved ones lost to suicide, and to promote healing for those who grieve their passing.

Rev. Dave Cramer, Pastor of the Church of Saint John, will be the celebrant for the Mass. Deacon Ed Shoener, President of the International Association of Catholic Mental Health Ministers and Deacon at the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Immaculate Conception Parishes in Scranton, will serve as homilist.

All are welcome to attend.

Click Here to Share this Information from the Diocese of Scranton website

National Centre for Padre Pio to host four-day Holy Relics exposition



The National Centre for Padre Pio will host a special Holy Relics Exposition Nov. 5 – 8, 2026, inviting visitors to venerate over 600 major relics of saints and blesseds of the Catholic Church.

Held in celebration of All Saints' Week and the Feast of the Holy Relics, the four-day exposition offers an extraordinary, potentially once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for prayer and reflection before relics of many of the most important and influential figures in the history of Catholicism.

The exposition is a special part of the Centre's Year of Saint Pio, which began June 16, 2026, and culminates June 16, 2027, with the 25th anniversary of Padre Pio's canonization.

Through special events, Masses, and devotions, the Centre is inviting pilgrims to deepen their faith and draw closer to Christ through the life and intercession of Saint Pio.

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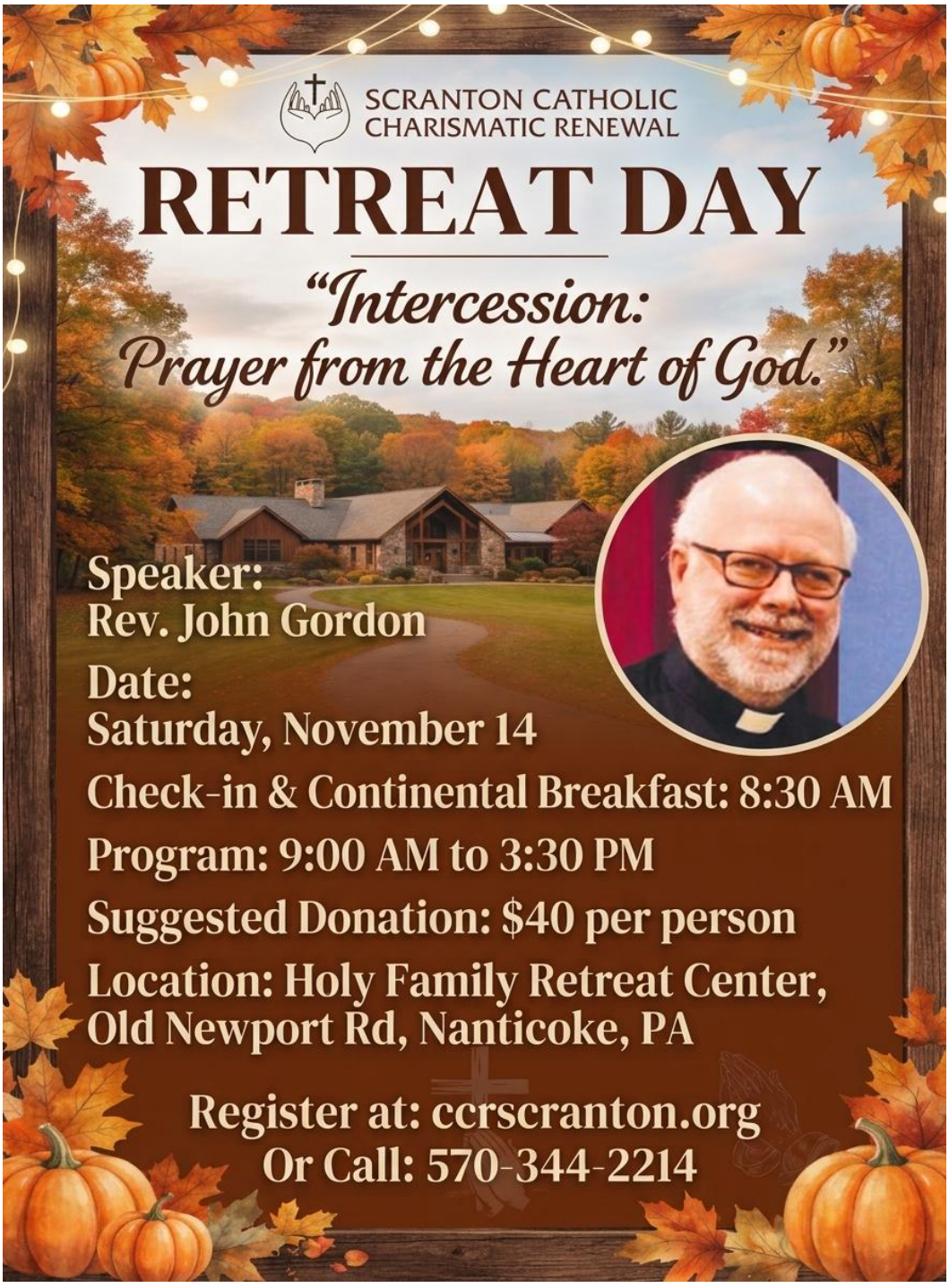
Catholic Charismatic Renewal to hold retreat day on Nov. 14



The Scranton Catholic Charimastic Renewal invites all faithful to a retreat day on Saturday, Nov. 14, at the Holy Family Retreat Center in Nanticoke.

The day begins with a continental breakfast and registration at 8:30 a.m., and the program will begin at 9:00 a.m.

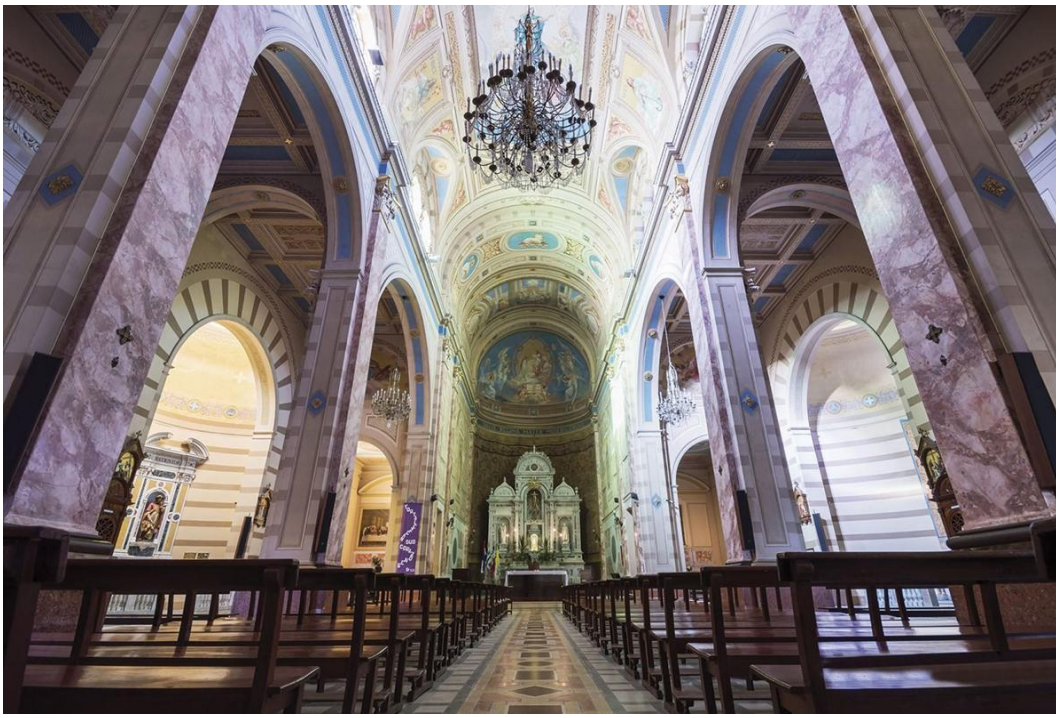
The suggested donation per person is $40.

The speaker for the day will be Rev. John Gordon, retired priest of the Diocese of Newark, New Jersey and long-time M.C. for the Scranton Catholic Charismatic Conference. He is a member of the People of Hope, a Catholic Charismatic Covenant Community.

Over his 35 years of priestly ministry, Rev. Gordon has served in a variety of parishes, as a high school chaplain, and a formation director at Franciscan University of Steubenville. Father John currently serves on the Board of Pentecost Today USA / NSC and is on the Steering Committee for the Association of Diocesan Liaisons.

Click Here for More Information or to Register for the Nov. 14 Retreat Day

Vatican: Pope Leo 'enthusiastic' and 'clinically fit' for whirlwind Latin America homecoming



Flying to South America a little over three weeks after his surgery for lung cancer, Pope Leo XIV is going “personally enthusiastic about this trip” with “the ordinary medical assistance” in force, Vatican communicators confirmed during a Nov. 3 briefing in the Vatican Press Office.

The Nov. 6-17 trip will be the first papal visit to Latin America of Pope Leo’s pontificate. Over 12 days, he will celebrate nine public Masses, visit seven cathedrals and preside over two stadium prayer vigils.

Matteo Bruni, Holy See Press Office director, said “about 36 speeches” of the pope will be delivered during the journey.

Maria Monstserrat Alvarado, who assumed her position as prefect of the Dicastery for Communication Nov. 1, told journalists that “he’s going to give you a lot of improvised texts to work with” – something she noted is a “beautiful thing” as “he wants to share his heart and we want to help him do that.”

The pope, she said, will be “giving away his heart in a language that is true to him,” like he did in Spain. “You will see that again, but in a totally different way, because he knows these streets.”

Click Here to Read the Full Story from Our Sunday Visitor

Pope Leo XIV offers All Souls' Day Mass in cemetery, encourages Catholics to pray for the dead



Surrounded by the tombs and monuments of Rome’s largest cemetery, Pope Leo XIV offered All Souls’ Day Mass Nov. 2, saying prayer for the dead helps lead our loved ones toward full communion with the Lord.

“Dear brothers and sisters, our faith in Christ tells us that our bond with the faithful departed is not severed, but transformed,”

Pope Leo said at the Mass in the Campo Verano Cemetery, which covers more than 200 acres.

“Through our prayers for the dead, we accompany our loved ones toward full communion with the Lord — that communion which we truly already taste here, in the Sacrament of the Eucharist,” he said. “Inspired by this faith full of hope, we continue our earthly journey, awaiting the day when He will wipe away every tear, when ‘there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away’ (Rev 21:4).”

Click Here to Read the Full Story from Our Sunday Visitor

Pew: Religion 'stable' in U.S., with 'mixed signals' from young adults



Data points to “signs of strength and stability” in religious behavior in the U.S. — but there are “mixed signals” among young adults, and demographers advise taking a “long view” of any shifts, according to Pew Research Center.

On Oct. 28, Pew and the Knight Foundation released an analysis of several surveys to provide an updated look at the latest trends in religion among U.S. residents, with an additional focus on young adults.

Data was drawn from Pew’s 2026 National Public Opinion Reference Survey and its 2025 Cross-Sectional Engagement Survey. The aggregated data was compared with previous data — including Pew’s 2007, 2014 and 2023-2024 Religious Landscape Studies — with other data drawn from a phone survey conducted May 26-June 1.

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'Unconquered heralds of Christ': Georgia Martyrs killed in 1597 for defending marriage beatified



Five Franciscan friars killed in present-day Georgia for defending Church teaching in 1597 were beatified Oct. 31 in a Mass where Church leaders considered their witness amid historical complexities and contemporary challenges.

The Mass at the Savannah Convention Center began at 11 a.m. with Cardinal Frank Leo of Toronto, the papal delegate, as principal celebrant.

“The 16th-century Franciscan friars from Spain, courageous missionaries ministering to the Guale people in La Florida, are bright lights for our journey of faith, as they reflect the light of Christ into the challenges and complexities of a wounded world,” he said in the homily. “It is imperative to remember those blessed souls who have gone before us, marked with the sign of faith, especially those who gave the supreme witness of their very lives.”

Click Here to Read the Full Story from Our Sunday Visitor

Catholic Ministries Appeal reaches 64% of goal



To date, the 2026-2027 Catholic Ministries Appeal has raised more than $2.86 million - or approximately 64% of its $4.5 million goal. That amount reflects the generosity and commitment of parishioners supporting the vital Catholic ministries of our local Church.

The Diocese of Scranton extends its gratitude to the thousands of donors who have already made a gift or pledge. Every contribution helps sustain ministries that serve individuals and families, strengthen parishes, educate young people and spread the Good News of the Gospel.

The Catholic Ministries Appeal supports Vocations, Seminarians and Retired Clergy; Catholic media and communications; Parish Life initiatives; Catholic Social Services; Catholic education; as well as Parish Faith Formation and Social Justice Grants.

Click Here for More Information or to Donate to the 2026-2027 Catholic Ministries Appeal

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