

St. Peter's Church



47 Central Avenue, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania 16901
 Rectory Phone: 570-724-3371 ~ Fax: 570-724-6322
 Religious Education Office: 570-724-9789
 Website: www.stpeterswellsboro.org ~ Email: stpch@ptd.net

Rectory Office Hours

Monday through Thursday 9:00–2:00pm

Parish Staff

Pastor: Rev. David Bechtel – Dbechtel00@yahoo.com
 Secretary: Connie Spang – stpch@ptd.net
 Business Manager: Patti Mitchell – stpadm@ptd.net
 Director of Religious Ed.: Melissa Mann – stpreled@ptd.net
 Assistant Director of Religious Ed.: Maureen Poirier
 Maintenance Staff: Connie Spang, Francis Kennedy

Schedule of Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:00pm ~ Sunday: 8:30am

Reconciliation

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 11:45am -12:00noon;
 Saturday 4:15 – 4:45pm; By appointment by calling the Rectory.

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time *September 1, 2019*

Mission Statement

We, the parishioners of St. Peter's Church, are called to holiness by God as present day disciples of Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are united in service to God to share our faith with one another and our community. May our participation in the Holy Sacraments, our ministries and our devotion to Mary bring glory to God and His Kingdom.

Emergency Contact

In the event of an emergency, please call the rectory at 570-724-3371. If no answer, please call 570-329-5762. This is a pager. You will be instructed to enter your phone number and Fr. Bechtel will return your call.

Pregnancy Support

Catholic Social Services (800) 982-4310
 Crisis Pregnancy Help line (888) 4-OPTIONS
 Endless Mountains Pregnancy Care Center (570) 673-4476

Religious Education and Formation

Religious Education classes are held for Pre-K – 12th grade. Classes begin in September and conclude in May. Pre-K (ages 3-5) is held during the 8:30am Mass. K-12th begins at 9:30am and concludes at 10:40am. To register, please contact the Religious Education Office at 570-724-9789 or the Rectory at 570-724-3371. Children's Liturgy (grades K-4th) is held during the 8:30am Mass when Religious Education classes are in session.

Welcome to St. Peter's Church!

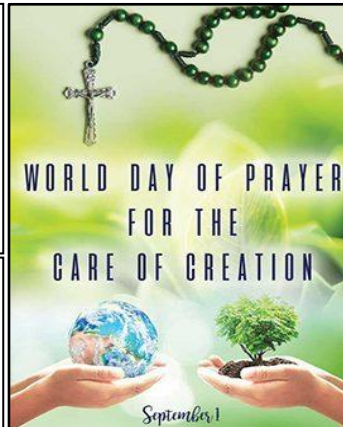
If you are visiting Tioga County this weekend, welcome and thank you for worshiping with us! If you are searching for a Spiritual home, we welcome you to join us and invite you to become part of our church family. Please complete this form and return it to the parish office or drop it in the offertory basket.

Request for Parishioner Registration Form

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____



*“Let us become agents
 of God's mercy, channels
 through which God
 can water the earth,
 protect all creation
 and make peace
 and justice flourish.”*

[Pope Francis]

Parish Contact Listing

Women's Bible Study – Sue Singer 570-724-2360
 Contemplative Spirituality Group – Kate Black 570-724-3047
 Cards & Games – Patty Kramer 570-948-9023
 Knights of Columbus – George Gamble 570-724-5216
 Social Concerns – Karen Plumley 570-439-0175
 Parish Rummage Sale – Mary Lasko 570-439-7706
 Pat Gorda 570-404-8918
 Church Linens & Decorations – Sue Singer 570-724-2360
 Buildings & Grounds – Rick Joachim 570-439-2591
 Cemetery Committee – Howard Rutledge 570-724-4529
 Fundraising Dinners – Paul Urner 570-723-9970
 Music Ministry – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085,
 Marilyn deGuzman 570-376-5427
 Samaritan House – Linda Sampson 570-404-2180
 Youth Group – Maureen Poirier/ Melissa Mann 570-724-9789
 Eucharistic Adoration – Rhonda Gooch 570-724-3092
 Finance Council – Priscilla Walrath 570-724-2056
 Parish Council – Rectory 570-724-3371
 Worship Committee – Rectory 570- 724-3371
 Sunday Nursing Home Communion – Eileen Evert 570-439-4470
 Prayer Chain – Kate Black 570-724-3047
 Order of Secular Carmelite – Lori Makos 570-724-3371
 ChristLife – Norb Josten 570-724-9095
 Prayer Shawl Ministry - Jan Bernethy 307-267-0677

Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention		
Monday 9/2	No Mass			
Tuesday 9/3	No Mass		Fr. Bechtel is away, so no daily Mass or Adoration this week.	
Wednesday 9/4	No Mass			
Thursday 9/5	No Mass			
Friday 9/6	No Mass			
Saturday 9/7	4:15-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confessions In Memory of Mary Cleveland (Daughter, Mary)		
Sunday 9/8	8:30am	In Memory of Katie Brennan (Tom & Linda Sampson)		

The Sanctuary Candle is offered in Memory of
Katie Brennan (Tom & Linda Sampson)

The Week Ahead

MONDAY, September 2, 2019

Rectory Closed

TUESDAY, September 3, 2019

Bible Study – 9:00am, Parish Center

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

WEDNESDAY, September 4, 2019

ChristLife Team Meeting – 6:30pm, Parish Center

THURSDAY, September 5, 2019

Cards & Games – 12:00pm, Parish Center

Catechist Meeting – 6:30pm, Parish Center

FRIDAY, September 6, 2019

Rectory Closed

SUNDAY, September 8, 2019

Secular Carmelites Meeting – 11:30am, Parish Center

Samaritan House Volunteer Dinner – 3:00pm, Parish Center

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

This month's food pantry items are: Pork & Beans and canned fruit. A donation box can be found at the entrance of the church.

GOODIES FOR OUR TROOPS

This month's Goodies for our Troops items are: *foot aids, eye drops, lip balms, sunscreen, trail mix, flavored sunflower seeds, beef jerky, slim jims, Oreos, tootsie pops, lollipops & personal notes*. A donation box can be found at the entrance of the church.

ST. THOMAS/ST. CATHERINE MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday 7:00pm, St. Catherine, Westfield

Sunday 10:30am, St. Thomas, Elkland

Ministers of the Altar Schedule

September 7th/8th

5:00pm

Altar Servers: A.Osborn, J.Poirier, W.Poirier

Lectors: L.Gordon, D.Gordon

E. Min.: M.Osborn, G.Poirier, V.Anthony, T.Straniere

8:30am

Altar Servers: J.Grab, L.Singer, Z.Singer

Lectors: N.Bickham, T.Delmott

E. Min.: A.Singer, D.Stager, L.Stager, L.Whitney

Sacramental Information

Baptisms - Parents anticipating the birth of their first child are asked to attend baptismal instructions classes before the birth of their child, if possible. Note: Baptisms cannot be scheduled until all the necessary paperwork is completed. Contact the Rectory to schedule.

Confirmation - Confirmation is administered every year to all 8th grade students in our Parish Religious Education program. Children wishing to receive Confirmation must be enrolled and participating in the program for two years before they are eligible to receive the sacrament.

Marriages - In order to complete the necessary paperwork, couples are asked to contact the Rectory at least one full year in advance of the proposed marriage date.

Anointing of the Sick - Please contact the Rectory if a member of your family has become sick or hospitalized.

Monthly Visitations - Any parishioner who is homebound and wishes to receive the Eucharist on a monthly basis is asked to contact the Rectory to schedule a visit.

Rite of Christian Initiation in Adults - R.C.I.A. prepares those who are unbaptized for full initiations into the Catholic Church. The program is adapted to the needs of each person. Contact the Rectory for more information.

Parish News and Activities

REGISTER NOW FOR RELIGIOUS ED



Registration information has been mailed to all returning students. Please fill out the registration form and return by September 8th. If you have a new student or did not receive the mailing, please call or email the Religious Education office and information will be mailed to you.

RELIGIOUS ED KICK-OFF SUNDAY

Mark your calendars. Catechetical Sunday is September 15th and will be the first class for students in grades Pre-K through 12th grade. Following the 8:30am Mass, students will report to their classrooms and a short parent meeting will be held in the church. At the conclusion of the parent meeting, we will be joined by the students to kick off the year with donuts and coffee/juice on the lawn for everyone.



SAVE THE DATE FOR FALL SALE

St. Peter's annual fall rummage sale will be held October 1st – October 3rd. When you are fall cleaning, please consider donating household items, books and clothing. If you have any questions regarding donations, please call Mary Lasko 570-439-7706 or Pat Gorda 570-404-8919.

The schedule for the sale is as follows:

September 29th – Donations accepted 11:00am–3:00pm
 September 30th – Set up & Donations accepted 8:00am–5:00pm
 October 1st – Sale Hours 8:00am–6:00pm
 October 2nd – Sale Hours 8:00am–5:00pm
 October 3rd – Sale Hours 8:00am–3:00pm

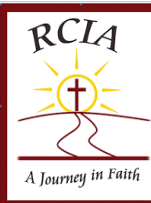
Take what you want for a donation on October 3rd!
No Early Sales! Please, no donations of televisions.

Bake Sale: We will be selling homemade baked goods during the sale. *Donations of baked goods would be greatly appreciated* and can be dropped off at the Parish Center on Sunday and Monday during the hours above.

Volunteers Needed: We are also looking for volunteers to help set up and tear down the sale. If you are willing to donate ANY time; please call Mary or Pat.

INTERESTED IN THE CATHOLIC FAITH?

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the process by which adults are welcomed into the Catholic Church. It begins with a period of inquiry in which you may ask questions before you make a commitment to become Catholic.



An informational meeting will take place on Sunday, September 29th at 9:30am following the 8:30am Mass, in the Church. Please call the Rectory to register or for more information.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY NEEDS YOUR HELP

Do you knit or crochet? If so, please consider helping someone in need of your love by making them a simple prayer shawl. When they are alone or cold, when they need to feel the love of someone who cares, they can snuggle under a prayer shawl. Directions are simple and easy. *Knitting: use needles size 11 or 13, cast between 54-63 stitches, knit 3, purl 3 to end of row, repeat. Crocheting: use a size P hook, chaining 48 loosely hooks, turn and double chain and repeat. The shawl should measure approx. 50" x 24" and optional fringe can be added to each end. Variegated Lion Brand yarn is wonderful to use. Yarn can be provided.*

Please call Jan Bernethy 307-267-0677 for more information.

SCHEDULING 2020 MASS INTENTIONS

Scheduling Mass intentions for 2020 will begin on September 3rd, through the parish office, during regular business hours. **The following are the established guidelines for scheduling intentions:**

1. One weekend Mass on each weekend must be celebrated for the intentions of the parish. This is required by Canon Law (c. 534). Because of this we only have one weekend Mass for which we can accept an intention. Due to this limited availability of weekend Masses, no family may schedule more than ONE WEEKEND MASS PER QUARTER, or four weekend Masses per year.
2. There is no limit to the number of DAILY MASS INTENTIONS, including those Masses said at the nursing homes each month, which may be scheduled by each family.
3. Canon 948 states, "Separate Masses are to be applied for the intentions of those for whom a single offering, although small, has been given and accepted." Therefore, only one intention may be scheduled for any given Mass. However, for pastoral concerns to better accommodate the needs of the parishioners, we will adhere to the following: Up to three first names with the same last name (i.e. John, Paul and Mary Smith) or two last names only (i.e. Scott and Smith Families) will be allowed per intention.
4. The stipend given for a Mass intention is \$10. While we are willing to take requests over the phone, your Mass Intention will be not be scheduled until we are in receipt of your donation.
5. Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and All Souls Day Masses are always for the individual intentions listed by parishioners on their envelope.
6. The Sanctuary Candle, burning in memory or honor of someone, is available on a weekly basis with no limit to the number each family may reserve.

CHANGE TO UPCOMING MASS TIME

Please note that the Mass time for Saturday, September 21st has been changed to 7:00pm, to accommodate Fr. Bechtel's Elkland schedule.

RELIGIOUS ED VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The Religious Education Program is in need of classroom aides, Children's Liturgy Leaders, and substitute catechists to share their faith and spread the Word of Jesus Christ with the children of our parish. Help inspire students to be true disciples of Jesus! If you would like to be a part of this important ministry, please see Melissa Mann or contact the Religious Education Office at stpreled@ptd.net. All teaching materials are provided.



SAFETY AND SECURITY UPDATE

As part of our ongoing safety and security evaluation and implementation, there will be a change in when the church building will be open. The time has come to lock the church doors during the evening and overnight hours. Beginning in September the church doors will be unlocked and open from 8:00am – 5:00pm on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; 7:00am – 7:00pm on Tuesday; 4:00pm until after Mass on Saturday; 8:00am until after Mass or Religious Education classes are over on Sunday. All other hours, the doors will be locked and you will not be able to enter the building. While this is a big change for us, and one that may take some getting used to, it is a necessary step in our ongoing safety and security efforts, and we appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

Liturgical Reflection ~ 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING: Sirach 3:17-18, 20, 25-29

Sirach, a Wisdom literature book, reflects on life experience and exhorts people on how to live well and in harmony with others and with God. This brief passage counsels the practice of humility so as to be admired by others. It also insists that the higher a person's status, the more one should practice humility, thus finding favor with God. Humility involves knowing one's limitations and living with them, while learning and being attentive to the wisdom of sages and wise ones, most especially the wisdom revealed to us by God. The final bit of advice suggests that as water quenches fire, so alms to the poor atone for sins. Such exhortation to humility and concern for the poor finds resonance with Jesus, the Wisdom of God present among us.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 68

The Responsorial Psalm praises the Lord for his goodness, especially in the way the Lord treats the poor. The Lord is the one who provides a home for those who are homeless and forsaken. There is no refuge except in God. When we feel the fields of our heart are dry and barren, we have to turn to God who will shower his love upon us.

SECOND READING: Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24

The selection from the Letter to the Hebrews compares the reactions of the people to the covenant on Mt. Sinai with the end of time fulfillment of God's covenant relationship with all humanity. Even though the Sinai covenant was one of mutual love and relationship, the way it was delivered and experienced, (fire, darkness, storm, trumpet), brought fear and trembling upon the people that they wanted the experience to end. The end-time fulfillment of that covenant will involve all humanity in a festive gathering on Zion, God's holy mountain. There, all the just and those who have gone before us will be present, with God as judge of all and with Jesus as the mediator of the fulfilled covenant. Such a festive gathering awaits all God's people.

GOSPEL: Luke 14:1, 7-14

Jesus uses meal scenes to teach important lessons to all who would be disciples. Observing the jockeying for places of honor at table, Jesus' parable counsels humility and the choice of a lower place, lest embarrassment ensue when your host asks you to move because someone more honorable has arrived. In this fashion, you will be honored by the host and by our God, one who loves reversal of human patterns and thoughts. Jesus' second parable instructs hosts to invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, people who cannot repay the favor. Honor and God's reward is yours for choosing to abide by God's way of doing things and not ours. God exalts all who humble themselves, while humbling all those who exalt themselves.

Stewardship

Sunday Collection for August 25th: \$5,966.00

Weekly Goal to Meet Expenses: \$5,800.00

Difference: \$ 166.00

Year-to-Date Budget Variance: (\$ 899.65)

We are grateful to all those who financially sacrifice every week to support our parish and its ministries!

A Prayer for Labor Day

Lord on this Labor Day, we thank You for the blessing of work. We ask for strength to complete each day. We ask for rest when we are weary. We ask for Your guidance and hope for everyone seeking employment. We ask that you be with those who faces we might never see, but who work tirelessly each day for the good of all of us. Amen

That's The Way It Is



This week I wanted to explain the titles of Mary and what they mean. Mary is called “Co-redemptrix.” This, probably of all the titles of Mary is what Protestant fundamentalists find most offensive. It sounds like we are placing Mary on a par with Christ. We aren’t. Remember: Mary is who she is because Christ is who he is. Everything Mary is and has depends on Christ and exists because of Christ. Apart from Christ, Mary is nothing; we are nothing.

In order to understand redemption we have to understand The Fall. When humanity fell, humanity fell with a woman and a man working in tandem. The Fall did not happen through the sin of Eve alone, nor did The Fall happen through the sin of Adam alone. The Fall happened through the cooperation of a woman and a man, Adam and Eve. Thus, redemption works the same way. Just as humanity fell through the cooperation of a woman and a man, so also redemption happens through the cooperation of a woman and a man. Mary is the second Eve, Jesus the second Adam. Mary’s act of obedience, Mary’s “Yes” to God’s call stands in stark contrast to the disobedience of Eve. Eve’s disobedience paved the way for Adam’s sin. Mary’s obedience undoes the disobedience of Eve and paves the way for the Second Adam, Jesus, to come into the world and redeem us. Hence, Mary is “Co-redemptrix.” Redemption parallels The Fall: redemption happens through the work of a woman and a man working in tandem. In calling Mary the “Co-redemptrix” that is what we mean.

Mary is called the Seat of Mercy and the Seat of Wisdom. To understand this, we have to understand the Ark of the Covenant in the Old Testament. It was by means of this Ark that God dwelt among his people in the Old Testament. The Ark was a chest overlaid in Gold. Inside the Ark were the 10 Commandments, Manna and the staff of Aaron. On top of the Ark was a lid and on top of the lid were images of Angels facing each other. The images of the Angels were overlaid in Gold. The angel’s wings created something like a throne. The presence of God dwelt in the middle of the angels on top of the throne created by the angel’s wings. This throne like structure created by the angel’s wings was called the Mercy Seat. It was from this “Mercy Seat” that God dispensed Mercy to His people on the Day of Atonement. In the New Covenant, Mary is the Mercy Seat for it was through her that God came into the world and “dispensed” Mercy. Mary is called The Seat of Wisdom because she is the mother of Wisdom: Jesus. Jesus is the wisdom of God incarnate. Mary, therefore, is the seat of Wisdom.

Mary is the Gateway to Heaven. Jesus is heaven itself incarnate. Jesus brought heaven to Earth through Mary, therefore Mary is the gateway to Heaven. Mary is the Queen of Heaven. All kingdoms have queens. The queen rules alongside her husband. When kings were not married, their mother took the place of the queen. Mary is the “queen mother.” Jesus is not married, therefore his mother takes the place of the queen and rules alongside her son. Hence, Mary is “Queen of Heaven.” Note that Mary’s Queenship depends upon the Kingship of Christ. Mary’s Queenship only exists because of Christ’s Kingship. Mary does not rule independently of Christ but only alongside Christ. Mary’s rule is subservient to that of Christ.

Why we call Mary the Mother of God should be obvious: Jesus is God. Mary is the Mother of Jesus; therefore Mary is the Mother of God. That is just simple logic. Some fundamentalists reply that “Mary cannot be the mother of God because God pre-existed Mary. In calling Mary the Mother of God, you are saying that Mary is the Mother of the Trinity.” Um, no we aren’t. Mary is the mother of the Word of God incarnate in the Divine Person of Jesus Christ. Mary is not the Mother of the Trinity, nor is Mary the origin of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Finally, what about a saint saying that there is none more merciful than Mary, not even God? Well, what of it? This is a poetic; if not over the top way of saying that the power of judgment belongs to God alone. Mary and by extension of the Church cannot judge sinners. Therefore Mary and by extension the Church know only mercy. God alone judges sinners. What must be understood is that the language of devotion is akin to poetry. It is analogous to “I would swim a thousand oceans for you” “Your face would launch a thousand ships” “My love for you is deeper than the deepest ocean, wider than the universe.” When it comes to the saints and the family of God, the same applies in an analogous sense when it comes to devotions. The language is exaggerated and over the top, but the context of the language is devotional love. Statements from the saints need to be kept in context. When speaking the language of devotional love, the language is not going to be theologically or even doctrinally precise.

Consider: if a fundamentalist says to their child “I love you more than anyone else” does the fundamentalist mean to deny that we are to love God above all things? No. If a fundamentalist says to his wife “You are my life, my all. I can’t live without you” does the fundamentalist mean to suggest that his life depends on his wife and not God or that his wife is more important to him than God? No. The language of Catholic devotion is analogous. Catholic devotional language is poetic language of love. Therefore we should not be surprised to find that it is exaggerated, over the top and theologically imprecise. The devotions are not meant to take away the praise, honor and glory that is due God and God alone, anymore than such language used in reference to a spouse or a child is meant to take away the praise, honor and glory due God and God alone. That’s the way it is, The Rev. David W. Bechtel, Pastor

News from the Vatican



CHURCH A 'FIELD HOSPITAL' THAT CARES FOR SICK

Continuing his catechesis on the Acts of the Apostles, Pope Francis reflected on how Jesus strengthened the early Christian community to serve those in need, especially as seen in the ministry of St. Peter. The Lord, said the Pope, was generous with Jesus' disciples, who worked many signs and wonders and the early Church is depicted as "a field hospital that takes in the weakest people: the infirm." "The sick hold a privileged role in the Church and in the priestly heart of all the faithful," said Pope Francis. "They are not to be cast aside. On the contrary, they are to be cared for, to be looked after. They are the objects of Christian concern."

The Holy Father said Peter emerges as the head of the apostles, as his Pentecost preaching and ministry of healing shows. Peter, like Jesus, is drawn to people suffering illness and infirmity, so he acts in persona Christi, allowing Christ to operate in his actions. "Peter carries out the work of the Master," said Pope Francis. "Looking at him with faith, we see Christ himself." "In the wounds of the sick and in the diseases that impede us from moving forward in life, Jesus' presence, and His wounds, is always there," he added. "Jesus calls each of us to look after them, to support them, and to heal them." "This is the great Christian response," he said. "It means listening to God without hesitation." *Vatican News Service*

SIN AGES THE SOUL, THE SPIRIT KEEPS IT YOUNG

"A Christian 'is always young,'" said Pope Francis and when the heart of a Christian begins to age, so does his Christian vocation. Either you are young in heart and soul, or you are not fully Christian." Daily dialogue with the Spirit allows us to go forward. There is sorrow and pain in all of our lives. This is where the "youthful" part comes in as youth looks ahead with hope. But to be able to have this youthful attitude, he added, we need a daily dialogue with the Holy Spirit, who is always with us. "It is the great gift that Jesus left us: this support, which allows us to go forward." Sin makes the soul grow old, the Spirit keeps it young. In life there are difficult moments, but in these moments we feel that the Spirit helps us to move forward and to overcome difficulties. Let us ask the Lord not to lose this renewed youthfulness, not to be Christians who have retired and have lost their joy. A Christian never retires, a Christian lives because he is young - when he is a true Christian.

Diocese of Scranton News

RETREAT WEEKENDS BEING OFFERED

Finding the Gift of God's Mercy in our Everyday Lives will be directed by Rev. Richard Nalepa, CP of St. Paul of the Cross Monastery, Pittsburgh. The retreat begins Friday, September 6th at 7:00pm and departs after the noon meal on Sunday, September 8th.

Praying the Passion is a more silent experience for both men and women and will be directed by Rev. Curtis Kiddy, CP. The retreat begins Friday, October 18th at 7:00pm and departs after the noon meal on Sunday, October 20th.

Both retreats are held at St. Gabriel's Passionist Retreat Center, 631 Griffin Pond Road, Clarks Summit, PA and cost \$140 per person. For more information, call the Retreat Office 570-586-4957 or email kporter@epix.net

2019

Diocese of Scranton

DIOCESAN

ANNUAL APPEAL

SERVING *faith* IN WITH HOPE AND GRATITUDE

The Annual Appeal begins in Parishes this September

NEW in 2019

- More direct support to parishes for Social Justice Grants & New Faith Formation Grants
- Increased support for Catholic Social Services
- Opportunity to designate your Appeal gift to the ministry of your choice
- Unique videos featuring parishioners & clergy showing the Appeal at work in your region

Gifts to the 2018 Appeal touched thousands of lives.

<p>4,143</p> <p>Families served in Catholic Social Services Food & Clothing Pantries</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Seminarians receiving tuition & living expenses</p>	<p>16,555</p> <p>Nights of Shelter & Support</p>
<p>104</p> <p>Retired & Ill Priests Received Care</p>	<p>44 Parishes</p> <p>using Social Justice Grants to serve countless</p>	<p>15,000 Children in Religious Education & 4,500 in Catholic Schools</p>
<p>118 Parishes receiving support in all aspects of Parish Life</p>		

Share your blessings. Support the Appeal.

GIFTS to the APPEAL support Diocesan ministries & will not be used to defray legal fees or fund the Survivors Compensation Program.

"We ask for the grace not to be lukewarm Christians, living on half measures, letting love grow cold." Pope Francis

Priests for Life

"In a pluralistic society, people disagree. It is arrogant to insist that the Church does not have the right to her own teaching. Certainly, a politician has the freedom to reject Church's teaching. But let's be honest. To choose to be pro-choice is to reject the Gospel of life. It is to be not faithful to Church teaching. The Church teaches that the right to life is fundamental. Without life, there are no other rights. Today not only is the taking of so many innocent lives alarming, but no less unsettling is the darkening of conscience among so many who find it increasingly difficult to distinguish between good and evil in what concerns the basic value of human life. Why should the Church not have a right to voice her teaching on this important issue in the public square? She must speak and speak often. Abortion may be for some just a political issue. But, for the innocent child, it is a matter of life or death." -- *Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, S.T.D., S.S.L., D.D., Bishop of Paterson*

Reflection on the Readings - Being pro-life is really all about the humility of which today's first reading and Gospel speak. Humility allows us to see each other and ourselves honestly, as neither more nor less than what we are. Because we see the worth of our own lives and those of our neighbors, we are not led by pride to either oppress or ignore those lives. Rather, humility leads us to serve those lives. Humility keeps us from being fooled by appearances, and led to pay more attention to those who are more rich, famous, or powerful. Instead, we respect and serve the small and lowly. We don't determine their value, and neither does the law. We are to evaluate today's choices in the light of what will happen on the last day. This applies perfectly to our service of the unborn. Of anyone we can serve, they are the least able to repay us, or even to know of our efforts on their behalf. Doing the work of the pro-life movement is the most selfless of all kinds of love, for we are loving those who cannot love us back. Moreover, we are loving those whom today's psalm calls the forsaken. We are imitating God.

Do you love to pray? But recently prayer seems dry, God seems distant, and you feel like you are in a spiritual desert? Lay Carmelites meet monthly, live by the Rule of St. Albert, study writings of Carmelite Saints, and participate fully in the Life of the Church. Come and see if God is calling you to the Carmelite Third Order as we nourish each other on the contemplative journey. Call Dolores 570 659 5320 or Chris 570 337 7668 for more information.

Virtus Training will be held at Holy Child Church on September 6th starting at 6:00pm. Any adult Volunteers that have regular and repeated contact with youth is required to attend this training.

Notice Regarding Reporting Sexual Abuse of a Minor

It is the policy of the Diocese of Scranton to report any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor to law enforcement. If you are a victim of sexual abuse committed by a priest, deacon, religious or lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton, you are encouraged to immediately report the matter to law enforcement. If any priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton has cause or reason to suspect that a minor has been subjected to any form of abuse, including child sexual abuse, the matter will be reported to law enforcement. It is also the policy of the Diocese to adhere to all civil and state regulations. In accordance with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Laws, reports of suspected child abuse should also be made immediately by phone to the 24-Hour Child Abuse hotline (ChildLine) at 1-800-932-0313 or electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis. To this end, the Diocese is equally committed to adhering to the norms of the Code of Canon Law and to upholding the tenets of the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which includes supporting victims of sexual abuse in their pursuit of emotional and spiritual well-being. As such, information regarding an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor should also be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator, Marv Beth Pacuska at (570-862- 7551).

DO YOU KNOW YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH?

Why Do Catholics Confess Their Sins to a Priest instead of Directly to God? God knows I'm sorry, isn't that enough?






Well, the quick answer is because that's the way God wants us to do it. In James 5:16, God, through Sacred Scripture, commands us to "confess our sins to one another." Notice, Scripture does not say confess your sins straight to God and only to God — it says confess your sins to one another.

In Matthew, chapter 9, verse 6, Jesus tells us that He was given authority on earth to forgive sins. And then Scripture proceeds to tell us, in verse 8, that this authority was given to "men"...plural. In John 20, verses 21-23, what is the first thing Jesus says to the gathered disciples on the night of His resurrection? "Jesus said to them, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.'" How did the Father send Jesus? Well, we just saw in Matthew 9 that the Father sent Jesus with the authority on earth to forgive sins. Now, Jesus sends out His disciples as the Father has sent Him...so, what authority must Jesus be sending His disciples out with? The authority on earth to forgive sins. And, just in case they didn't get it, verses 22-23 say this, "And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'"

Why would Jesus give the Apostles the power to forgive or to retain sins if He wasn't expecting folks to confess their sins to them? And how could they forgive or retain sins if no one was confessing their sins to them?

The Bible tells us to confess our sins to one another. It also tells us that God gave men the authority on Earth to forgive sins. Jesus sends out His disciples with the authority on earth to forgive sins. When Catholics confess our sins to a priest, we are simply following the plan laid down by Jesus Christ. He forgives sins through the priest...it is God's power, but He exercises that power through the ministry of the priest.

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Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord and
Let the Perpetual Light Shine Upon Them.

Thomas Evert, Calvin Cobb

Lord, this we know, no matter how difficult life may be at this time, we know you will not stop loving us and will always hold us in the palm of your hand. We are reaching to you, Lord, to hold us, comfort us, and heal us. Lord, this we know, you are faithful in your love for us today and forever. You are with us, and we are with you. Amen.