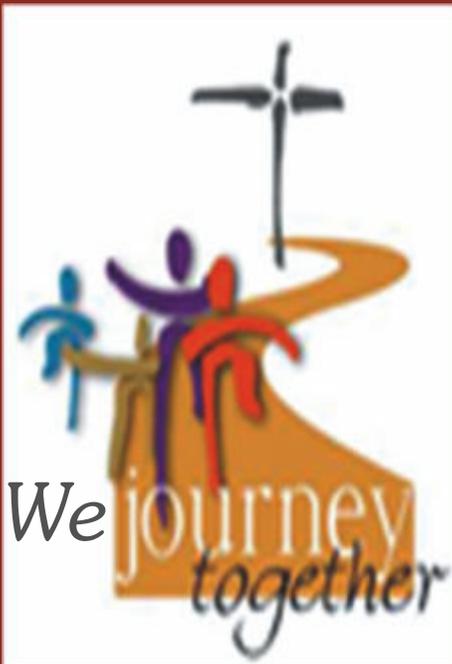


Lent 2020



ST. JOHN NEUMANN PARISH

Nativity of Our Lord Church
 633 Orchard Street, Scranton

Holy Name of Jesus Church
 1414 E. Elm Street, Scranton

Phone: (570) 344-6159
Email: office@stjnparish.org
Website: stjnparish.org

Parish Office Hours:

Monday 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Tuesday 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Wednesday 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.
Thursday CLOSED
Friday 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 3:30-4:00 p.m.
Nativity Lower Church.
 Anytime by appointment.

LENTEN REFLECTION – To See as God Sees

In May of 1996, Fr. Christian de Chergé and six other French-born monks of the Trappist religious order were kidnapped and murdered by radicalized Islamist militants in Algeria. Prior to their killing, Fr. Christian and the other Trappists were aware of the growing tensions in Algerian society. Yet they decided to remain in northern Africa, expressing their loving solidarity with the many peaceful villagers and Muslim friends in the nearby town.

Two years before he was martyred, Fr. Christian wrote a letter to his family members back in France. In his powerful testimony, the humble priest was quite blunt about the prospect of being killed by extremists. Despite the fear and uncertainty, Dom Christian knew how he wanted to approach his inevitable death. He wanted to see all people, including his own executioner, with eyes of mercy: *"This is what I shall be able to do, God willing: immerse my gaze in that of the Father to contemplate with him His children of Islam just as He sees them.... And also you, my last-minute friend, who will not have known what you were doing...in God's face I see yours."* Incredible... to see as God sees!

This is the type of sight and vision that Jesus wants to restore for us. As we hear in today's gospel, Jesus condemns the religious leaders who are spiritually blind. Their hearts have become darkened and dim. Instead of recognizing the work of God's love being accomplished in their midst, the religious leaders of Jesus' time have narrowed their focus to self-preservation. They have neglected to respond in love to those who struggle and walk in darkness.

All of us suffer from this spiritual blindness. Particularly during this outbreak of Corona Virus, we are aware of our common blind spots. We have witnessed selfish hoarding. Others have promoted fear, anxiety, and misinformation. And then there are individuals who appear not to think much about the elderly and vulnerable populations who are susceptible to this virus.

Yes, it is true. We all still suffer from some form or another of spiritual blindness. However, if we are humble enough to admit our need for conversion and forgiveness, then Jesus will certainly help us regain our spiritual sight. Jesus will help us to see as God sees. Rather than being selfish, we will gaze upon others with mercy and provide for their needs. Instead of fearmongering, we can become people of peace and hope. When we see as God sees, we will care for the least of our brothers and sisters among us without judgement.

This year's Lenten journey remains very unusual, but our hearts are always in need of transformation. If, like Dom Christian and the Trappist monks of Algeria, we maintain our focus on Jesus and seek to see others with the lens of love, then we will never walk in darkness. We will never be blind. We will be able to see as God sees.

— Fr. Ryan





Effective immediately, and until further notice, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera has suspended the celebration of Masses open to the public and all public gatherings in all diocesan parishes, worship sites, college campuses, chapels and health care facilities in the eleven counties of the Diocese of Scranton. (See page 5)

WELCOME

Your presence is an encouragement to our parish community. It is our hope that you have experienced the joy of our Eucharistic Celebration and that you feel welcome with a desire to join us again. If you are new to the community and wish to join our parish, call the parish office at 570-344-6159.

BIENVENIDOS

Su presencia es un gran animo hacia nuestra comunidad de la parroquia. Es nuestra esperanza de que hayan gozado la experiencia de nuestra Celebración Eucarística y que se sientan bienvenidos con el deseo de unirse a nosotros otra vez. Si usted es nuevo en la comunidad y desea unirse a nuestra parroquia contacte la oficina al numero 570-344-6159.

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

We the people of St. John Neumann Parish see the Eucharist as source and summit of our joyful faith. Our united purpose is building a deeper spirituality through loving neighbor and witnessing the Gospel to the world.

ANNIVERSARY PRAYER



Loving and gracious God, we praise and thank you for the many gifts you have given us in Saint John Neumann Parish. Teach us to live worthily in the spirit of our Baptism which makes us all children of God and sisters and brothers of Jesus Christ, the first-born of the family of God.

Through the intercession of Saint John Neumann, we ask that we may be open to hear and embrace the truth of Your Living Word through our Worship and our dedication to Service and Community. May we be inspired during this Tenth Anniversary Year to proclaim the good news within our own lives and circumstances as Stewards and Leaders of our Parish. We ask this in your name, Our Holy Redeemer. Amen



So we physically pause on our Lenten Journey Together. But spiritually and pastorally, we continue to engage each other in prayer and hope. Do not hesitate to contact myself, Fr. Ryan, Sr. Suzie and Deacon Al if any need arises. We continue to serve you in any way that is possible.

We plan to videotape a Sunday liturgy that you can view on our parish webpage or Facebook beginning at 8:00 AM on Sunday mornings.

I read recently that every experience of our lives is a parable, which Jesus uses to enter into a deeper relationship with us. May we be especially attentive to how God needs us to care for one another and make our world more loving and just.

Peace,
Fr. Michael

PRAYER PARTNERS

We had a wonderful response to our Lenten Prayer Partner program! If you picked a card with the name of another parishioner, please keep them in prayer and know they are praying for you!

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

The parish welcomes new members to serve as Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Cantors and Servers. Consider volunteering your time to serve in one of these ministries. To volunteer, see one of our ministry team members listed below.

CANTOR PRACTICE

Cantor practice has been cancelled until further notice. Please watch future bulletins for more information.

MINISTRY TEAM

Rev. Michael Bryant, Pastor
Rev. Ryan Glenn, Assoc. Pastor
Deacon Albert Giacometti
Sr. Susan Armbruster, IHM

EMAIL ADDRESS

mbryant@stjnparish.org
rglenn@stjnparish.org
albgia@msn.com
sarmbrusterihm@gmail.com

WORD

COMMUNITY



FAITH FORMATION

ALL Classes, programs and parent meetings are postponed until further notice due to the restrictions announced by the Diocese and State in compliance with the CDC.

Communicating through these uncharted days!

We will try as best as possible to communicate with you regarding changes and updates with parish life. There are 3 current ways that we keep parishioners and parents current with our updates.

1. **Our Facebook page:** St. John Neumann Parish Scranton PA
2. **The Parish Website:** stjnp parish.org
3. **The Remind App:** The Faith Formation program, which includes sacramental prep classes; EP1, EP2, CP1, CP2, RCIC2 and RCIT as well as classes for grades K,3,4,5 and 6 will continue to be updated through the REMIND app. This is especially necessary for ALL children preparing for sacraments this Spring. If for some reason you are not connected through REMIND, it is *extremely important* that you do this so as to keep informed.



FIRST EUCHARIST RETREAT for March 22 has been cancelled.

THE WAY and VIA CRUZ for Good Friday has been postponed until next year.

THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU time for reconciliation is cancelled.

SENIOR LUNCH *Lunching Together* scheduled for April 8 is postponed. Hopefully we will see you in May.

WOMEN OF FAITH prayer and tea for April is postponed. Hopefully we will see everyone in May.

SENIOR ADULT RETREAT/Day of Reflection "Springs of Living Waters" scheduled for April 1 is postponed. A future date will be decided for early May.

LENTEN SOUP SUPPER scheduled for Friday, March 27 is cancelled. We will schedule some fun gathering soon! We may have to do a cookout and not hot soup!

EXCERPT FROM THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON CORONAVIRUS UPDATE (3/12/20):

The health and safety of our parishioners, staff, students and families are of paramount interest to the Diocese of Scranton. While there is much to learn about the coronavirus, based on what is currently known about the virus, spread from person-to-person happens most frequently among close contacts (within about six feet). Current evidence suggests that the coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made of a variety of materials.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus a pandemic, because of its severity and the rapid rates at which it has spread. **However, the WHO stressed that deliberate preventative actions can stop the virus from spreading.**

We ask that all members of our parishes, schools and social service agencies assist with the prevention of spreading viruses by following the following recommendations:



- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Avoid touching** your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.
- **Stay home** when you are sick.
- **Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue**, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- **Clean and disinfect** frequently touched objects and surfaces.

WATCHMAN PROGRAM CARING FOR OUR SENIOR PARISHIONERS

With a growing population of senior adults in our parish, we are offering the "Watchman Program". Help us identify seniors (75+) who would benefit from a friendly phone call. Secondly, we are asking volunteers from the parish community who are willing to be the caller and friendly voice of STJN. Calls can be once a week or bi-weekly, and you may want to call one individual or you may have time to call 2 or 3 individuals. We live in a busy time and so often our busy days keep us from reaching out to our neighbors; our seniors. If you would be willing to be a volunteer caller, please contact Sister Suzie 344-6159 ext. 161. If you know of a senior that would benefit from a friendly call each week, contact Sr.Suzie with name of person and phone number. We will follow up with the senior.

STEP UP TO THE PLATE (C.I.C. Dinner)

Each month different parishioners volunteer to cook a meal or something towards a meal for those who visit **Community Intervention Center**. The dinner is typically the 3rd Saturday of every month. If you are able to cook a dish for this meal, you are welcome to drop off donations directly to CIC at: **445 N 6th Ave. Scranton PA 18503. They will welcome drop-off items at any time.** Some suggested items are: casseroles, pasta dishes, chili, soups, whimpies with rolls, homemade desserts such as brownies or cookies. They feed between 50-75 people a day, and they appreciate all meal items. Please call the parish office, or call Terry Millard at 570-430-1690 or Anne Talerico at 570-614-3633 if you can volunteer to prepare a dish. We have spoken with CIC, they will remain open through this health crisis and definitely welcome donations. Our April date is Saturday, April 18. NO DROP-OFFS at rectory please.

BAGS OF BLESSINGS (Lenten Project)

We still have a few zip-lock bags to fill. Gallon size zip lock bags containing a list of requested items are located in the church office. We ask parishioners to "take and fill" a bag and then return filled bags to laundry basket in back of church or to the parish office. These are distributed to homeless in our area shelters. Our hope is to fill 100 bags during the Lenten season. If you can't fill a whole bag and would rather purchase suggested items to be inserted in bags, we are looking for hand warmers, toe warmers, small flashlights (with batteries), bars of soap, tooth brushes, tooth paste, deodorant, socks, gloves, rain ponchos, small packs of tissues, mints/candies that come in small tins and other items that would be helpful to those who have no place to call home. Most items can be purchased at the Dollar Tree. Judy and Molly White are our parish coordinators for this Lenten project.

BROWN BAG MINISTRY

Brown Bag Ministry is being postponed for April 5th until we figure a creative way to do this without gathering a crowd. Check in with parish office, website or FB page for updated information or call Carl or Trish Kmiec at 570-961-1555.

INCOME / EXPENSE REPORT

March 8, 2020	March 10, 2019
Tithe \$ 3,892.00	\$ 4,972.00
Loose \$ 728.19	\$ 615.91
Other \$ 10,499.00*	\$ 7,384.34*
Total \$ 15,119.19	\$ 12,972.25



* includes Scr. Sch. Distr. Rent & LPI Rebates (each year)
Mar.2-8 Expenses paid from gen. acct. \$ 15,685.33



There will be no Sunday collections until further notice, but we still need your support to pay our bills.

We have a "One-Time" online giving option for folks to tithe during this challenging time. Simply go to our homepage, scroll down to online giving, and follow the remaining instructions. Or, simply mail your contribution to: Saint John Neumann Parish, 633 Orchard St., Scranton PA 18505. Or, drop off your tithe envelopes at the parish office mail slot, located at the side door of the rectory. Thank you for your cooperation.

The New Pot of Gold Club!

Join the next Pot of Gold Club!
New Club starts on April 1, 2020
Membership numbers on sale now!



You may choose your own number until March 30 (if it is still available). After that, you may pick a sealed envelope for your number. Call for details 570-344-6159.

GET YOUR LUCKY NUMBER TODAY!!

Your number does not automatically renew to you.

ARE YOU A GERRITY'S SHOPPER?

Thank you to all Gerrity's shoppers who linked their Gold Card to our parish. For those who shop at Gerrity's (or any ShurSave Store) and have not linked their Gold Card to our parish since 2018, **please** consider doing so! The parish receives a donation every time you shop!

SIGN UP - IT'S FREE!! www.escrip.com



FAITH QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Adults: What are you doing in your life right now to move toward light rather than darkness?

Kids: How can you let the light of your faith in Jesus shine for others to see?



GIFT CARD PROGRAM

Win a \$10.00 Gift Card EVERY MONTH!

HOW? It's simple! Every month we will enter (into a drawing), the names of everyone who purchased Gift Cards through our Gift Card Program that month. Please be sure to give your full name when making your purchase. One winner will be drawn per month. The winner will receive their choice of one \$10.00 Gift Card. Every month is a new opportunity to get involved in the Gift Card Program and another chance to Win!

We would like to thank
MIKE BURKE PLUMBING, HEATING & DRAIN CLEANING
for sponsoring an ad in our bulletin.

March 16, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Effective immediately, and until further notice, I have suspended the celebration of Masses open to the public and all public gatherings in all diocesan parishes, worship sites, college campuses, chapels and health care facilities in the eleven counties of the Diocese of Scranton.

Churches of the Diocese will remain open daily for individual private prayer. The timeframe for each parish is to be determined by its pastor or parish life coordinator. The dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass during this time remains in effect.

Scheduled sacramental celebrations such as weddings, baptisms or funerals will be permitted, but attendance will be limited to immediate family members and follow any guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The sacraments of the Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation will be available, when requested individually, by the faithful in cases of serious need.

It deeply saddens me to take this temporary action, knowing the depth of your faith and your desire to celebrate the Holy Eucharist on a regular basis. In light of continued concerns surrounding COVID-19, and upon the advice of medical experts, it is clear that we, as a faith community, must do our part in order to help slow the spread of this virus.

The number of faithful souls who filled our churches this past weekend, even with the dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass, was deeply consoling to me. As you always have, so many of you are turning to your faith as the surest place where we will find God's peace, consolation and hope.

Unfortunately, the presence of such great numbers of worshippers in our churches is not serving our efforts to help mitigate the spread of the Coronavirus. In an effort to prevent overwhelming our hospitals and health care facilities, national, state and local leaders have urged people to avoid large gatherings of people and keep appropriate social distancing from one another.

As your bishop, in addition to the care of souls, the safety and health of all of our faithful parishioners, friends and those we welcome through our outreach and service, is of utmost importance to me. As such, the decision that I have announced, while difficult, is the best way for us to work together to serve the common good of all, both in our parishes and in our communities.

During these challenging times, it is also crucial that we not forget who we are as Christians. May we continue to offer, in whatever way we can, care and concern for those who are most vulnerable, including the poor, our senior citizens and those who are ill. I also urge those who can do so to maintain support for your parishes during these difficult days in order to sustain the ministries and outreach services for parishioners and those most in need.

Despite the suspension of public Masses, a private Mass will be celebrated daily in the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, and made available on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton. On weekdays, the Mass will be broadcast at 12:10 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. On weekends, the Saturday Vigil Mass will be broadcast at 4:00 p.m. and rebroadcast on Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. The Masses will also be streamed on the Diocese of Scranton's website (www.dioceseofscranton.org), made available on the Diocese of Scranton's social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and will be accessible on the Diocese of Scranton's YouTube channel.

Additional resources for individual parishioners to deepen their faith during Lent are also available on the Diocese of Scranton's website.

During this sacred season of Lent, we are being asked to sacrifice more than ever before – particularly with the loss of cherished religious practices, most especially the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. May we do so mindful of the selfless sacrifice of Jesus and for the sake of our brothers and sisters who are most vulnerable and in need of our help.

The Diocese of Scranton continues to monitor the rapidly evolving health situation regarding the coronavirus. We are constantly monitoring directives from national, state and local officials. This policy will be reassessed on a regular basis, in addition to the plans for Holy Week and Easter.

God bless you and keep each of you in His care. Let us continue to pray for one another.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

† *Joseph C. Bambera*

Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.
Bishop of Scranton

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