



MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday:

4:00pm - Saints Peter & Paul

5:30pm - Saint Benedict

Sunday:

8:00am - Saints Peter & Paul

10:30am - Saints Peter & Paul

Eucharistic Adoration:

(at Saints Peter & Paul)

First Friday of every month Noon - 3:30pm

Confession:

Saturday 3:00pm - 3:30pm

SAINTS PETER & PAUL

13 Hudson Road, Plains, PA 18705-2015

CONTACT US

13 Hudson Road

Plains, PA 18705-2015

Phone: 570-825-6663

Fax: 570-823-4556

Email: parishoffice@sspeterandpaulplains.com

www.sspeterandpaulplains.com

Office Hours:

Monday: 8am - 7pm

Tuesday: 8am - 4pm

Wednesday: 8am - 7pm

Thursday: 8am - 4pm

Friday: 8am - Noon

Closed daily Noon - 12:30pm

Reverend John C. Lambert M.S.W.

Pastor

Email: pastor@sspeterandpaulplains.com

Deacon Don Crane

Permanent Deacon

Email: deacon@sspeterandpaulplains.com



SAINT BENEDICT

155 Austin Ave., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705-2603

Like us on Facebook!

[Facebook.com/sspeterandpaulplains](https://www.facebook.com/sspeterandpaulplains)

STEWARDSHIP

SUNDAY STEWARDS

Contributions for week ending
November 8, 2020
Saints Peter and Paul
\$8,467

Saint Benedict
\$2,101

Mass Schedule – Effective August 24, 2020

Saints Peter and Paul
Monday - Communion Service 7am

Tuesday - Friday 7am

Wednesday/Friday 12:15pm

Saturday-4:00pm

Sunday-8:00am & 10:30 am

Saint Benedict

Saturday-5:30pm

God has entrusted us with many gifts:

Time, Talent & Treasure. We hope and pray that all members will share their gifts, and continue to share the Good News of Jesus with all people.

SAINTS PETER & PAUL LOTTERY

Nov. 2	#782	JoAnn Chukinas
Nov. 3	#224	Saints Peter and Paul
Nov. 4	#647	Saints Peter and Paul
Nov. 5	#231	Mary Jones
Nov. 6	#436	Saints Peter and Paul
Nov. 7	#366	Saints Peter and Paul
Nov. 8	#724	Saints Peter and Paul

For the safety of all our parishioners...

1. If you are not feeling well please stay home.
2. Please practice proper social distancing.
3. Everyone must wear a mask.
If you do not have one, we can provide you with one.
4. Sanitize appropriately.

**33rd Sunday
In Ordinary Time**

We Await In Hope The Return
of the Lord



LIVING A
STEWARDSHIP
Life

It is all about your heart...
Everything we have is a gift from God
that we are to use to help others.

WORSHIP

WE REMEMBER

MASSES AT SAINTS PETER & PAUL

Monday	11-16	7am	Communion Service
Tuesday	11-17	7am	Edward & Isabelle Neishell by Son Josephine Loomis by Family
Wednesday	11-18	7am	Genevieve Klepadlo (A) by Family Mary Ryan by Mr. & Mrs. Paul Monseur
Thursday	11-19	7am	Joseph Biniek, Sr. by Stephen Yarina & Family Dorothy Stucker by Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Filipowich
Friday	11-20	7am	Janet Johnson by Kenneth Johnson Frank Krokos, Sr. by Florence Swantek

WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE SAINTS PETER & PAUL

Saturday	11-21	4pm	All Souls' Day
Sunday	11-22	8am 10:30am	All Souls' Day Frank & Ann Tressa by Ernest & Dolores Tressa

WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE SAINT BENEDICT

Saturday	11-21	5:30pm	All Souls' Day
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Bulletins are not allowed to be distributed in Church.
The bulletin will continue to be on our website.

SAINTS PETER & PAUL PARISH

Sanctuary Candle

Stanis & John Kunicki

Lady of Lourdes

Paul Binker, Jr.



Holy Family Votive

Stanis & John Kunicki

WORD

MINISTRY OF THE MONTH—NOVEMBER

Each month, a Ministry of the parishes will be highlighted. You are asked to prayerfully consider each ministry, and to participate in whatever capacity that suits your availability, interest, and needs.

Chess Club

Academy of Chess, LLC sponsors a chess club during the school year for students in grades 2 through 8. We meet in the Parish Center of Saints Peter and Paul Church. Students DO NOT need to know how to play chess before signing up. Our formal chess curriculum teaches everything from names of the pieces and how they move to advanced strategy and tactics. Students learn sportsmanship, critical thinking, positional analysis and concentration. There is a formal instruction period at the beginning of each meeting, followed by the informal, over the board chess matches.

Contact: Frank Procopio, certified chess coach. Please call the Parish Office if you are interested when meetings resume.

WEEKLY READINGS

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday

Prv 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31;
1 Thes 5:1-6;
Mt 25:14-30 or 25:14-15, 19-21

Monday

Rv 1:1-4, 2:1-5;
Lk 18:35-43

Tuesday

Rv 3:1-6, 14-22;
Lk 19:1-10

Wednesday

Rv 4:1-11;
Lk 19:11-28 or, for the Memorial
of the Dedication, Acts 28:11-16, 30-31;
Mt 14:22-33

Thursday

Rv 5:1-10;
Lk 19:41-44

Friday

Rv 10:8-11;
Lk 19:45-48

Saturday

Rv 11:4-12;
Lk 20:27-40

Faith Formation

Bishop's Youth Award will be celebrated on November 22, 2020 at 10:30AM Mass

Honored Students from Saints Peter & Paul are

Seniors: Vaughn Rudloff & Brandon Minet

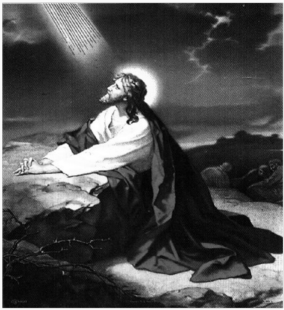
8th Grade: Jack Heisler



The Sunday Good News

CHURCH OF SAINTS PETER & PAUL / SAINT BENEDICT

NOVEMBER 15, 2020



*Dear God,
I
Kneel down before
You at this
moment.
Please enlighten
what is dark in me,
strengthen what is
weak in me,
heal what is sick in
me,
and revive
whatever peace
and love that has
died in me.
This is my prayer
for me,
for my family,
friends,
my enemies
and even those who
hate me.

Amen*

THIRTY -THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

An encomium for a good and worthy wife, this passage from Proverbs extols all the virtues which a worthy wife possesses – fidelity, industriousness, skill, charity to the poor, and fear of the Lord.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

Once again, Paul reassures the Thessalonians, who are anxious about the coming of Christ, that they need not fear being unprepared because they are “children of light.”

Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus narrates the parable of the talents – in the story, the silver pieces given to the three men. Two of the men invest their coins and double their worth, but the third buries his coins in the ground and earns no return. The message of Jesus is that we must use to the fullest the talents we have received.

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON THE SUNDAY READINGS

HIS WORD TODAY by Rev. William J. Reilly

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time November 15, 2020

“She reaches out her hands to the poor, and extends her arms to the needy. Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting, the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her a reward for her labors, and let her works praise her at the city gates... Well done my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters I will give you great responsibilities.”

The proverbs of Solomon offer us the opportunity to reflect on gifts and virtues written so long ago, and yet are lived so well today. The value of a worthy one is beyond pearls.

Consider the heroic witnesses of Christ in our own country who established schools and orphanages, provided for the immigrant, the sick and children. Our history is written by Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Mother Catherine Drexel, Rose Duchense. Their ministry makes real the words of the old testament king.

Today, other outstanding witnesses mark our church. The four American churchwomen, martyred in El Salvador or Sister Dorothy Stang, murdered in Brazil, women committed to justice for the poor. Single mothers, working more than one job and raising their children are among our present day heroes who reflect values beyond pearls. The nurses and doctors sacrificing because of the virus, all serve not only in small matters but carry out great responsibilities. May we have courage to admire, praise and thank them.

SERVICE

We are Called to Serve...

*"Do you understand what I just did for you?
You address me as 'Teacher' and 'Lord' and fittingly
enough, for that is what I am. But if I washed your
feet—I who am Teacher and Lord—then you must wash
each other's feet. What I just did was to give an
example: as I have done, so you must do."*

(John 12:2-15)

Loaves and Fishes

For the month of **November** will be collecting **canned soups**

Food Pantry

Anyone in the Plains, Miners Mills, and Parsons area in need of food can contact Pauline at 570-592-6798 to register. Food is distributed to the community on the third Friday of every month. **Non perishable** food donations are always accepted. Please place them in the basket in the vestibule of the Church.

Treasures

We are now accepting clean, gently used **Fall/Winter clothing** for men, women, and children. Donations may be dropped off during business hours only.
Mondays from 6-8pm and Fridays 10am-12 pm.

Prayer Shawls

can be given to anyone for many reasons! Comfort, illness, occasions, friendship & joy. If there is anyone that would like to receive a shawl or request one for someone, please contact the Parish Office at 570-825-6663 or call Mary Jo at 570-825-6969.

Saints Peter & Paul and Saint Benedict Ministries

Pauline Makowski, Food Pantry

Janet Soller, Quilting

Mary Jo Marek, Prayer Shawl

Laura Rudloff, Treasures

Irene Martin, Women's Society of Saints Peter & Paul

Barbara Zimhelt, Council of Catholic Women

Kathy Grinaway, Hospitality

Donna Mansfield, Hospitality



Message from the Food Pantry...

Thanks to everyone who generously donated to the food pantry. May God bless you for your generosity, which is greatly appreciated. If anyone would like to help with our **Thanksgiving Give Away**, we are in need of the following foods: chicken broth, evaporated milk, pie crust mix, stuffing mix, box mashed potatoes, cranberries, canned yams (large), and gravy. Thank you!

Suppression of Saint Benedict's Parish

In June 2017 Saint Benedict Parish, Wilkes-Barre, was linked to Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Plains, with the Reverend John C. Lambert serving as Pastor of both parishes. The buildings of Saint Benedict Parish in Wilkes-Barre consist of Saint Dominic's Church and Rectory. Following extensive consultation among its members and in consideration of its desire to maintain its primary mission of service, a request has been made of the Bishop of Scranton to close Saint Benedict Parish. The parishioners previously belonging to Saint Benedict Parish will now belong to Saints Peter and Paul Parish, and the new territorial boundaries of Saints Peter and Paul Parish will take in the previous territorial boundaries of Saint Benedict Parish. The Church of Saint Dominic will remain open as a secondary worship site of Saints Peter and Paul Parish.

Memorial Donations The following donations/memorials have recently been given to our parish **Food Pantry**

\$100 Robert & Kathleen Savitsky

\$75 Joanne Olejnick

\$50 June Olszewski

In Memory of Susan Zbierski

\$10 Kelly & James Cunningham

In Memory of John Wolczyk

\$20 Catherine Bonita

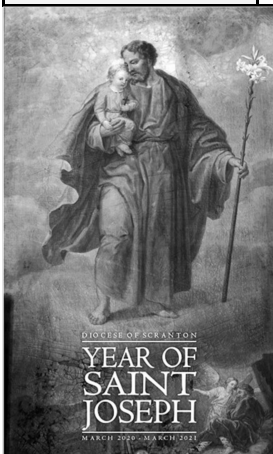
\$50 Rose Anne Jones

May God bless you all for your generosity.

SERVICE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
15	16 Treasures 6-8pm	17	18	19 Food Pantry Prep	20 Food Pantry Treasures 10-12pm	21
22	23 Treasures 6-8pm	24	25	26 Thanksgiving Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12



Year of Saint Joseph This year marks the 150th Anniversary of Pope Pius IX's decree naming Saint Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and foster-father of Jesus, as the Patron of the Universal Church. In commemoration of this anniversary and recognizing the fitting time for the Church to invoke the intercession of this guardian, His Excellency, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera has declared this year as a "Year of Saint Joseph" to be observed in the Diocese of Scranton from March 19, 2020 to March 19, 2021. Bishop Bambera states, "Just as Saint Joseph watched over and protected the Lord Jesus while he was on earth, we need Saint Joseph to watch over and provide for the Church today. His intercession on behalf of the Universal Church is vital as the world faces so much upheaval and pain, and particularly as it confronts the uncertainty and pain of the coronavirus epidemic."

COMMUNITY

Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Pittston will be holding a Gift Card Giveaway for the month of November -- a chance to win gift cards for stores, restaurants, and online shopping valued at \$50 per day from November 1-25, along with a special prize to be awarded on Thanksgiving Day, November 26. A \$10 donation will enter your name in the fundraiser! Drawings will be shown daily during videos that will be posted on the parish Facebook page, and winners will be notified by phone. If you would like to enter the drawings and receive a calendar showing the prizes, please e-mail msowa@stjohnspittston.com or call the parish office at 570-654-0053. All returns must be made by Friday, October 30 to Saint John's parish office at 35 William Street, Pittston, PA 18640

SAINTS PETER & PAUL AND SAINT BENEDICT STAFF

Pastor

Rev. John C. Lambert

pastor@sspeterandpaulplains.com

Permanent Deacon

Deacon Don Crane

Parish Secretary

Mary Ann Gottlieb

parishoffice@sspeterandpaulplains.com

Nina Cinti

Faith Formation Coordinator

faithformation@sspeterandpaulplains.com

Cemeteries

cemeteries@sspeterandpaulplains.com

Scholarships

scholarships@sspeterandpaulplains.com

Business Office

businessoffice@sspeterandpaulplains.com

Youth Ministry

Jason Garcia

youthministry@sspeterandpaulplains.com

Music Ministry

Scott Coates - Music Director

music@sspeterandpaulplains.com

Gina Macaravage –Organist

Jay Garcia –Organist

Jill Fiedorczyk –Organist

Steve Chronowski –Organist

Tom Zurla –Organist

Maintenance

Greg Day

Michael Lambert

Sacristan

Ben Berrini

Ministers Scheduler

Dave Loiacono

dav1040@comcast.net

Ushers

Paul Muczynski

pmuczynski@epix.net

Altar Servers

Nathan Smith

Combined Pastoral Council

Kathy Grinaway, *Chairperson*

Donna Mansfield, *Vice Chairperson*

JoAnn Chukinas, *Secretary*

Barbara Gubbiotti

Debby Zuzelski

Harold Golomb

Jack Keeley

Joanne Brague

Lou Zuzelski

Steven McGough

Saints Peter & Paul Finance Committee

Don Prescavage, *Chairman*

Ben Berrini, *Vice Chairman*

Charlotte Dominick, *Secretary*

Gerald Cross, *Capital Budget Chairman*

Tony Dente, *Online Giving Coordinator*

Tracy Schooley, *Human Resources*

Saint Benedict Finance Committee

Steve Yenchak, *Chairman*

Ed Yenchak

Jodi Gunari

Saints Peter & Paul Mission Statement

As members of Saints Peter and Paul, we have as our mission the sharing of our faith and our talents.

We proclaim the Word of God through compassion for our community and sharing of our treasures as Disciples of Christ.

Saint Benedict Mission Statement

Building a Catholic Community where all are welcome, respected, needed & appreciated; where we incorporate and share the word of God in our daily lives and the lives of others.

Every donation counts !!!

If you have not yet pledged, please....

Help us reach our Annual Appeal Parish Goal!

Saints Peter & Paul is at

10.10%

We are grateful to the parishioners who supported the 2020 Annual Appeal to date. If you have not yet given your support, please:

- Call the Development Office at 570-207-2250 to make a pledge or give a gift by credit card
- Mail a check to the Diocesan Appeal Office at 300 Wyoming Ave., Scranton, Pa 18503 or
- Give online at www.DiocesefofScranton.org

Every donation counts !!!

If you have not yet pledged, please....

Help us reach our Annual Appeal Parish Goal!

Saint Benedict is at

8.64%

We are grateful to the parishioners who supported the 2020 Annual Appeal to date. If you have not yet given your support, please:

- Call the Development Office at 570-207-2250 to make a pledge or give a gift by credit card
- Mail a check to the Diocesan Appeal Office at 300 Wyoming Ave., Scranton, Pa 18503 or
- Give online at www.DiocesefofScranton.org

2020

Diocese of Scranton

DIOCESAN

ANNUAL APPEAL

BOUND TOGETHER IN

Hope

Join us with a gift on

APPEAL ONLINE COMMITMENT

WEEKEND

November 21 & 22

Support our Diocesan Ministries and Help

Our Parish Reach its Annual Appeal Goal

Go to

<https://annualappeal.org/donate-now/>

or

Scan the QR Code

at Right

Using the Camera on

your Smartphone.



Thank you for your kind generosity!

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 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, Mary Beth Pacuska at 570-862-7551

VISION 2020

Seeing a Future Full of Hope

SHAPING A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE OF THE DIOCESE

In Today's homily for the Second Sunday of Advent, Bishop Bambera explained to us that it is time for the whole Church of Scranton to take a good look at the life of our parishes and to project a future vision in response to God's call today.

Your Pastors have taken first steps in this conversation in recent deanery meetings, and now it is essential to broaden this conversation to include all of the faithful. Bishop Bambera Pointed out to us the reality of change in our world and in our local communities, and so we know that we will continue to face and respond to change within the church. "I'm inviting all of the faithful," he said, "to simply focus on how we best engage the mission of the gospel in these changing times." Some of these changes include shifting demographics, differing attitudes about formal church participation, and diminishment in numbers of ordained priests available to serve as full-time pastors.

In the coming year, then, Bishop Bambera is asking us to continue working together to fashion a "blueprint" if you will— a pathway for our local Church, tailored to each deanery and to each parish—for how we will meet both the challenges and opportunities we will face in the next ten year period.

In his Homily he stressed that, "while every parish is similar in what is being asked to do and to be, each parish will respond to this process in ways that are unique to its situation and circumstances.

PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR EACH DEANERY

Guiding the overall process are these planning assumptions as common elements across the Diocese:

- The benchmarks for vibrant parishes are in accord with the vision expressed in Bishop Bambera's Pastoral letter, especially pages 7-13
- In every local circumstances, efforts are made to best utilize the particular ministry gifts of the clergy and, at the same time, to mobilize the gifts of all the baptized.
- Each deanery blueprint implementation is unique, and may consider such questions as: number of worship sites, Mass schedules and wise investment of resources.
- No deanery is planning in isolation—the circumstances in one may occasion change in another.
- Parish pastoral plans are respected and help to inform deanery level plans.
- Recommendations from deaneries or parishes are brought to Diocesan review.
- Parishes in linked relationship, sharing a Pastor, will be given additional planning support to evaluate and craft the best path forward.
- Every parish calls forth those individuals whose capacity for pastoral leadership could be developed through vocational discernment for priesthood, religious life, lay ministry or permanent diaconate.

We are located in the Wilkes-Barre Deanery, which consists of the following parishes:

Sts. Peter & Paul (Plains), St. Benedict (Wilkes-Barre), Our Lady of Fatima at St. Mary's (Wilkes-Barre), St. Nicholas (Wilkes-Barre), Our Lady of Hope at St. Mary's (Wilkes-Barre), St. Andrew at St. Patrick's (Wilkes-Barre), St. Andre Bessette (Wilkes-Barre), St. Robert Bellarmine at St. Aloysius (Wilkes-Barre), Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Hanover), St. Leo/Holy Rosary (Ashley), Holy Family (Sugar Notch), St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (Swoyersville), Our Lady Help of Christians - St. Mary's (Dorrance), St. Jude (Mountaintop)



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

300 WYOMING AVENUE
SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18503-1279

Diocese of Scranton adds eight names to list of credibly accused individuals

The Diocese of Scranton announces that eight additional names have been added to its list of individuals who have been credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor.

Bishop Joseph C. Bambera has consistently asserted that the abuse of minors cannot be tolerated. In maintaining his and the Diocese of Scranton's commitment to protect children and young people, the Bishop stated that it is his hope that the publication of these additional names will be a step forward in the healing process for survivors.

In August 2018, the Diocese published on its website a list of all clergy, staff and volunteers who had been credibly accused of child sexual abuse. Since that time, eleven additional names were added to the list in January 2019 and two more names were added in October 2019. The most recent additions to the list involve allegations of abuse submitted to the Independent Survivors Compensation Program (ISCP).

The Diocese assesses the credibility of allegations of abuse utilizing a process that includes, as appropriate, assessments by outside counsel and investigation by a former FBI agent. In addition, the Diocesan Review Board, an independent, consultative body comprised of members of the laity, a religious sister and one priest, performs a case-by-case review. The Diocese also takes into account the determination by the Administrators of the ISCP, for allegations that were submitted in that program. All allegations are submitted to the appropriate District Attorney's Office. Allegations that are corroborated by secular legal proceedings, canon law proceedings, admission by the accused, and/or other information or evidence are deemed credible.

These names have been added to the list of credibly accused individuals:

DIOCESAN CLERGY

Byrne, Edmund F.
Conboy, Joseph T.

Corcoran, Francis P.
Ferrett, Walter L.

Kelly, Joseph P.
McGroarty, Hugh Harold

MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS

Reiner, Julius (C.P.)

LAITY

Major, Mark

All but one of the Diocesan Clergy listed above are deceased. The sole living credibly accused clergy, Monsignor Joseph P. Kelly, entered into retirement prior to the conclusion of the Independent Survivors Compensation Program. After notification of multiple allegations received through the ISCP, the Diocese of Scranton enacted the *Essential Norms* of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and placed Monsignor Kelly on administrative leave, prohibiting his ability to publicly celebrate the sacraments or present himself as a priest.

The Diocese of Scranton urges any individual who has been sexually abused by a priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese to report abuse directly to law enforcement. If you are aware of additional allegations of wrongdoing or any information that should be included on this list, please contact our Victim Assistance Coordinator Mary Beth Pacuska at (570) 862-7551. If you have suffered abuse by clergy or anyone working on behalf of the diocese, you are encouraged to contact Mary Beth Pacuska.



Report on the Independent Survivors Compensation Program in the Diocese of Scranton

October 29, 2020

INTRODUCTION

On January 22, 2019, the Diocese of Scranton launched its Independent Survivors Compensation Program (ISCP) to promote healing and recovery for survivors of clergy sexual abuse. The Program was purely voluntary and open to individuals who had submitted a complaint of sexual abuse to the diocese before the Program was first announced as well as individuals who had not previously submitted a complaint.

Survivors of abuse committed by Diocese of Scranton priests, members of religious communities and by lay employees of the diocese were able to submit claims. The Program confronted a dark and difficult chapter in the history of the Church. The diocese created the ISCP in order to publicly recognize the harm caused to survivors of abuse, demonstrate the Church's commitment to those survivors and hopefully to provide validation and a measure of healing.

HOW DID THE ISCP WORK?

The ISCP has been completely independent from the Diocese of Scranton. Kenneth Feinberg and Camille Biros, two nationally recognized claims administration experts, administered the ISCP. Their prior experience involved handling the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund, BP Deepwater Horizon Disaster Victim Compensation Fund and similar compensation Programs for numerous other Catholic dioceses.

In addition, the Program has been monitored by an Independent Oversight Committee comprised of Robert Gillespie, Jr., former Luzerne County District Attorney, Ralph H. Meyer, President and Chief Executive Officer Emeritus with Guthrie Healthcare System and Robin Engels, MA, MSW, LCSW, a licensed clinical social worker.

The Program administrators retained complete and sole discretion over eligibility and compensation offers to eligible survivors who participated in the Program. The Diocese of Scranton could not reject any of the administrators' final determinations regarding eligibility and/or compensation.

Serving as independent administrators, Mr. Feinberg and Ms. Biros worked with individuals who had previously submitted a complaint of sexual abuse to the diocese. These individuals were invited by letter to participate in the Program.

Individuals who had not previously filed a complaint with the diocese could register to participate in the Program through a website that was established. New complaints of abuse received through the Program must also have been reported to the appropriate District Attorney's Office.

Individuals were invited to provide any documentation and corroborating information to substantiate the claim. This information aided administrators in making fair and accurate determinations. Claims were handled in the order in which they were received and administrators used information submitted to process and pay claims. One of the most important aspects of the Program was its confidentiality.

RESULTS OF THE ISCP

Total claims submitted:	295
Claims determined ineligible:	46
Total eligible claims:	249
Offers that remain outstanding:	25
Rejected offers:	11
Total claims paid:	213
Total paid to claimants:	\$24,460,000

The Administrators have processed all claims and have sent determination letters to the claimants. More than 85% of claimants accepted their offers and less than 5% rejected their offers. Under 10% of the claims remain outstanding. The diocese anticipates that these outstanding claims will be resolved in the near future.

Before accepting compensation through the ISCP, all individuals were required to consult with an attorney for the purpose of reviewing documents and understanding agreement language. If the claimant did not have an attorney, the administrators provided an independent attorney for consultation free of charge. By choosing to accept the offered compensation, the individual waives any future legal claim against the Diocese of Scranton related to their sexual abuse claims.

HOW WAS THE ISCP FUNDED?

The Program was primarily funded by the sale proceeds of the Diocese of Scranton's three long-term care facilities in 2019, which was planned long before the ISCP was created. The Diocese received approximately \$26 million from the sale of the properties and subsequent transfer of

assets held by these three facilities. In addition, some funding for the Program was provided by Diocese of Scranton insurers and contributions from other religious orders.

The diocese did not use any funds that had been given by the faithful to support parishes, schools, the Diocesan Annual Appeal, Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton or any donor-restricted contributions.

DIOCESAN RESPONSE TO CLERGY CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The Diocese of Scranton maintains a zero tolerance policy for clergy, lay employees and volunteers who engage in misconduct with minors and takes immediate action when an accusation is made. Any allegation of abuse is reported immediately to law enforcement and any substantiated allegation against a member of the clergy results in immediate and permanent removal from ministry.

The Diocese of Scranton formally established a “Policy Concerning Clerics Accused of Sexual Abuse of Minors” in March 1993. When the bishops of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted a comprehensive plan on this issue in 2002, the Diocese refined and expanded its procedures. After prayerful reflection, extensive research and study, and purposeful review by several external and internal entities, including the Diocesan Review Board, the most recent policy, the *Diocese of Scranton Policy for Response to Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors*, took effect in 2015. A copy of the policy is provided to all members of the clergy and seminarians. The policy is made available to all diocesan employees and members of the general public on the diocesan website.

The Diocese of Scranton continues to address this serious issue with vigilance and fidelity so that its policies, procedures and practices achieve genuine transparency and true accountability. The Diocese’s Safe Environment Program has a multi-faceted approach, including:

- **Background Checks** – Ensuring a thorough background screening is completed for all clergy, paid employees and volunteers that have direct contact and routine interaction with children.
- **Adult and Youth Training** – Providing training, prevention and educational programs in recognizing and reporting any suspicions or knowledge of child abuse to appropriate civil and Church authorities. As of October 2020, more than 31,340 individuals have completed VIRTUS training since 2003.
- **Code of Pastoral Conduct** – A document holding all clergy, employees and volunteers accountable to a Christ-centered, pastoral code of conduct.
- **Office of Victim Assistance** – The role of the Victim Assistance Coordinator is to facilitate the immediate pastoral care of persons that claim to have been sexually abused by a cleric when they were minors. The Victim Assistance Coordinator provides support and services, including arranging for counseling or spiritual direction and referrals to support groups.

- **Diocesan Review Board** – An independent, consultative body comprised of members of the laity, a religious sister and one priest, which performs a case-by-case review of allegations of sexual abuse of a minor, reviews diocesan policies for responding to the accusation of sexual abuse of a minor by Church personnel and advises the bishop in his determination of suitability for ministry of the accused.

The Diocese has passed independent audits of its child protection procedures every year since the policy was adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002. The audit evaluates each diocese's efforts to ensure the protection of children.

CONCLUSION

The Independent Survivors Compensation Program fulfills two promises made by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera. First, to promote the healing and recovery of survivors. Second, to directly confront a scandal that robbed many of the most vulnerable of their innocence and peace. While nothing can take away their pain, several survivors have commented that their participation in the Program has provided a measure of solace and an opportunity to move forward. Many survivors have also expressed an appreciation for the privacy that the Program provided.

The Diocese of Scranton continues to urge any individual who has been sexually abused by a priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese to report abuse directly to law enforcement or the Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator.

While the Program has concluded, the Diocese's outreach to survivors of clergy sexual abuse continues. The Diocese of Scranton is committed to learning from the mistakes of the past and moving forward with renewed resolve to protect all children from abuse.