A procession of over 300 dignitaries. Delegates from 102 colleges and universities. An audience of 2,100 distinguished guests.

And all for one purpose: The Inauguration of Rev. Scott R. Pilarz, S.J., as the twenty-fourth President of The University of Scranton.

It wasn’t just the numbers that were impressive. There were eloquent words of poetry and prose, wisdom and wit, reflection and resolve.

“This University, this miracle in the mountains, began as an engine of opportunity, a gateway to the American dream,” Fr. Pilarz said, reflecting on the University’s founding during his remarks at the September 26 Inauguration Ceremony.

The engine behind the University’s early days was fueled by the same vision that shaped northeastern Pennsylvania.

“Like the city of Scranton and the region of northeastern Pennsylvania, The University of Scranton has always welcomed those who were looking to find their place in the world, to find their place as full participants in our society,” said Fr. Pilarz.
One of those people was Stanislaus Milewski, an emigrant of Poland and grandfather of Suzanne Strempek Shea, who delivered the keynote address and received an honorary degree at the Inauguration Ceremony held in the Byron Recreation Complex.

While her grandfather settled here about 100 years ago to work in the coal mines, Ms. Strempek Shea told the audience that this was her first visit to the area. The author described Scranton as “a city of new starts.”

“Scranton. To me, it stands for that - new starts,” said Ms. Strempek Shea. “And the new president of The University of Scranton inaugurated on this day could hardly be a more qualified miner - good, kind, benevolent, energetic, faith-filled, going into this with eyes wide open, bearing the tools of pen, prayers, poems and promise.”

The ceremony marking Fr. Pilarz’s “day of a big new start” was attended by a long list of dignitaries that include Most Reverend James C. Timlin, D.D., Bishop Emeritus of Scranton, Rabbi Aaron Lewis Peller, former Governor William W. Scranton, U.S. Rep. Paul E. Kanjorski, Scranton Mayor Chris Doherty and Pennsylvania’s Auditor General Robert P. Casey, Jr. Former University Presidents Rev. Joseph M. McShane, S.J., and Rev. J.A. Panuska, S.J., were joined by presidents of 24 other colleges and universities, as well as other representatives from 102 colleges, Provincials of the New York and Maryland Provinces, and organizations from throughout the nation.

The numbers – and the words – were equally impressive at the Inauguration Eucharist held September 25, also in the Byron Recreation Complex.

A crowd of about 1,000 people listened earnestly to a homily delivered by Rev. Dean Bechard, S.J., Assistant Professor of Theology at Fordham University. He based his homily on the “salt of the earth” quotation from the first book of Timothy. In his homily, Fr. Bechard explained that salt is regarded by many as a new beginning and is symbolic of new wisdom.

“The power of wisdom, like that of salt, is nothing magical,” said Fr. Bechard. “Its origin is both human and divine; its formation is slow and gradual; its constancy is the reward of those who live human lives blessed and infused with love.”

There were also words sung during the World Premiere Composition at the Inauguration and the Inauguration Concert on September 27. During these two events, the University Symphonic Band and Concert Choirs performed Lawrence Wolfe’s original composition “All in Every Part” based on text from “Of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar” by Jesuit martyr St. Robert Southwell, S.J., (1561-1595).

St. Southwell’s poetry has not been performed to music since the 16th century. Yet some 400 years later, it resonated with remarkable clarity in a celebration of what Fr. Pilarz described as “a priceless ineluctable mystery” and “this miracle in the mountains” – The University of Scranton.
“The University of Scranton is richly blessed in so many ways and by so many people – students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, alumnae and trustees. We are grateful that we can now add you to our list of blessings.”

- Jean W. Harris, Ph.D.
  Associate Professor of Political Science,
  Past President of Faculty Senate

The University Symphonic Band and Concert Choirs performed the World Premiere of Lawrence Wolfe’s composition “All in Every Part” based on text by St. Robert Southwell, S.J.

ROTC student T.J. Hromisin placed first in the Inauguration 5K Run/Walk. More than 150 people turned out for the event.

Suzanne Strempek Shea, keynote speaker and honorary degree recipient, was welcomed to Scranton by U.S. Rep. Paul E. Kanjorski (left) and Frank J. McDonnell, Esq. ’60, Chair of the University’s Board of Trustees.
“May Father Pilarz bring to his tenure as President a heightened sense of Christian humanism which calls us to know ourselves, to rule ourselves and, above all, to give ourselves to one another as You have given yourself to us.”


An excerpt from the Benediction

“Georgetown has sent us Father Pilarz
Now he’s the newest of the president stars
When he arrived, the heavens sent Mars
And now there’s more spaces for parking our cars”

- Hon. William W. Scranton H’63,
former Governor of Pennsylvania (1963-1967)
and Ambassador to the United Nations (1976-1977)

One of several lighthearted limericks celebrating Father Pilarz, and past presidents, Father McShane and Father Panuska

Quick Facts About Inauguration

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Attendance (approximate numbers)</th>
<th>World Premiere at Inauguration: Lawrence Wolfe’s original composition “All in Every Part,” based on text from “Of the Blessed Sacrament of the Aultar” by Jesuit martyr St. Robert Southwell, S.J. St. Southwell’s poetry has not been performed since the 16th century.</th>
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<td>Total for all events: 6,425</td>
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<td>Inauguration Ceremony: 2,100</td>
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<td>Inauguration Mass: 1,000</td>
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<td>Inauguration Concert: 900</td>
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<td>Inauguration Run/Walk: 150</td>
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<td>Most Distant University Represented: Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome</td>
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<td>Inauguration Student Ball: 2,000</td>
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<td>Community Welcome: 275</td>
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<td>Number of Colleges and Universities Represented: 102</td>
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<td>Number of School Presidents in Attendance: 24</td>
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<td>Keynote Speaker: Author Suzanne Strempek Shea</td>
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To view video excerpts, the full text of speeches and additional photos from Inauguration, visit the Web site at www.scranton.edu/inauguration
Since it is a mystery, the precise nature of Jesuit higher education will remain elusive because of the built-in flexibility born out of the nimble imagination of Ignatius Loyola. As educators in the Jesuit tradition we must read the signs of the times and respond accordingly, always honing our mission to meet the needs of an ever-emerging world. As Jesuit educators we can never slavishly imitate what has been done in the past. Ignatius Loyola's spiritual and education legacy liberates us “from the perpendicular, from straight lines, blocks, boxes and binds of thought.” Instead, we must “yield to a direction of significance and accept the becoming thought... never humbling reality to precept,” admitting that we “have perceived nothing completely,” especially not the inexhaustible mysteries of God and God’s love for us.

Confident that the same God can be sought and found in all things, we at Scranton welcome what is to come. The American transcendentalist, Ralph Waldo Emerson, believed that in the world there are really only two parties, the party of memory and the party of hope. We educators in the Jesuit tradition, we here at The University of Scranton, we are and must remain the party of hope.

We, on this campus, insist that a Scranton education, a Jesuit education, is a priceless ineluctable mystery and ultimately, the work of God’s good grace. The interaction between a student and a professor is a rare and precious commodity. It partakes of the sacred, and its worth is impossible to measure. How can the value of pursuing truth ever be quantified? In the words of the poet John Donne: “on a huge hill, cragged and steep, truth stands, and he that will reach her, about must and about must go, and what the hill’s suddenness resists, win so. Yet strive so... Haed deeds, the body’s pains; hard knowledge too the mind’s endeavors reach, and mysteries are like the sun, dazzling, yet plain to all eyes. [so] keep the truth which thou hast found.”

The hill upon which our university sits is not so intimidating as the one Donne describes. Nevertheless, our pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God is no less difficult an exercise. It demands no less of us, but the heights we will reach together at Scranton will be no less dazzling.
Almost 100 years ago, a Polish emigrant named Stanislaus Milewski settled in Scranton to work in the coal mines.

On September 26, 2003, Mr. Milewski’s granddaughter, Suzanne Strempek Shea, made her first trip to Scranton to deliver the keynote address at the Inauguration ceremony of Father Pilarz. In her address, the award-winning author of several books, including Selling the Light of Heaven, Hoopshoopi Donna and Songs From a Lead-lined Room, reflected on Scranton as “a city of new starts” for her grandfather, Stanislaus Milewski, and her friend, Rev. Scott R. Pilarz, S.J.

“How could I be in Scranton for the first time - to receive an honorary degree - how could I be here in the city that fueled my dziadziu’s (grandfather’s) story and not point out how that figured in my own history.

Scranton.

I see it as a place of starts - and here I am, finally, on this day of a big new start for Fr. Scott Pilarz, for The University of Scranton. I stand here with renewed admiration for the friend who has come to these same hills to which my dziadziu journeyed a century ago. Unless there’s something weird about his office, Scott will be toiling above ground, but will be doing a version of what Stanislaus did here – reaching, searching, hoping to find, working to locate the stuff that can fuel. He will be mining this institution, these students’ minds, this community’s soul, all in the hope of moving all in a better direction, toward a brighter, more promising future. The work will be hard, tiring, all-encompassing. But it also will be done joyously – hand in hand with others who hold the same goals of education, inspiration, betterment of self, of this world.”