

First Sunday of Advent



November 29, 2020

ST. MICHAEL

CATHOLIC PARISH

(covering worship sites in Ralston, Canton & Troy)

Reverend Joseph P. Kutch, MA, Pastor

106 N. Washington Street, Canton, PA 17724 - Office phone: (570) 673-5253

e-mail: stmichaelparish@frontiernet.net website: www.stmichaelscanton.com

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 8 am - 3:30 pm, Thursdays 8 am - 1 pm

Anointing of the Sick

Through this sacrament the believer is strengthened by Christ's grace through the anointing of Holy Oils. All who are seriously ill, hospitalized, or having surgery can receive this sacrament. Please contact the parish office if you wish to receive this sacrament.

Baptism

The sacrament of Baptism is celebrated by appointment. All parents must attend a baptismal preparation meeting prior to the Baptism. Please call the office to schedule dates.

Eucharistic Adoration

Wed: 6 pm, St. Michael Church
following 5:30 pm Mass
Benediction at 7 pm

First Friday: Following 7 am Mass until 7 pm, St. Michael Church

Matrimony

A meeting with the parish priest should precede all other wedding plans. Couples contemplating matrimony should contact the parish office six months to a year before the celebration of the sacrament.

Reconciliation

Sat: 3:15 - 3:45 pm St. Michael
Wed: 6:15 - 6:50 pm St. Michael
(also available by appointment)

First Fridays

To all elderly and homebound, if you would like a visit from Father Joe on First Friday, please contact the Parish Office and let us know by the week before First Friday.

C.C.D.

(Religious education classes
held during the school year)
Sun: 8:15 am St. Michael hall
10:00 am St. John Nepomucene hall

Are You Watching ... ?

"Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. ...

And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!" (Mk 13:33, 37)



ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

"As members of the parish community of Saint Michael, Saint John and Saint Aloysius, we are rooted in a relationship with Jesus Christ passed on to our Holy Father and in communion with our Bishop. We joyfully proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and his real presence in the Eucharist. We serve the Lord through acts of faith, hope and charity by the graces given through the Sacraments. It is our intention to carry out this mission so that we may be the face of Jesus Christ in the world."

*Pastoral Council: David Brann, Beth Cole, Leslie Debach,
Will Hawrylo, Jean Herman, Ralph Lepper, Sherry Vargson,
Donna Wolf, Anna Bradford-youth representative*

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday, November 28 Weekday
Vigil - 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
4:00 pm, Canton † Lucille Piselli and Loretta DeStefano
(Tony Piselli)

Sunday, November 29 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8:00 am, Ralston - A special intention
(Alden & Rosemary Fitzwater)
9:30 am, Canton † Alvin "Lefty" Shanley
(Jerome & June Wynne)
11:15 am, Troy † Pro Populo

Monday, November 30 Advent Weekday
7:00 am, Rectory † Carol Ann Gergel (James Gergel)

Tuesday, December 1 Advent Weekday
5:30 pm, Troy - For the special intentions of Gary &
Mary Jane Scranton (John & Pat Rushin)

Wednesday, December 2 Advent Weekday
5:30 pm, Canton † Mimi Fosnocht (Tom & Nan Gergel)

Thursday, December 3 Saint Francis Xavier, Priest
No Mass

Friday, December 4 (First Friday) Advent Weekday
7:00 am, Canton † Herman & Catherine Kilburn
(Alden & Rosemary Fitzwater)

Saturday, December 5 Advent Weekday
Vigil - 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
4:00 pm, Canton † Lefty Shanley (James & Joyce Maloney)

Sunday, December 6 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8:00 am, Ralston † Pro Populo
9:30 am, Canton † Helen Kropf (Joe & Joanne Kropf)
11:15 am, Troy † Deceased members of the
Knights of Columbus



The sanctuary lamps in all three churches burn this week for all the faithful: May the Lord help us build a culture of life in vigilant expectation of His return.

Sanctuary lamp intentions may be requested by contacting the parish office.

SAINT MICHAEL PARISH PRAYER LIST

Barby, John Adams, Carol Asbury, Allura Booker, Betty Brown, Carol Davis, Carlene Eck, Dorland Eck, Becky Evans, Douglas Greene, Melissa Gowan, Robert Dale Hostetter, Ginny Jones, Karleigh Jones, Wanda Jones, Ben Kopetan, Sherry Lambert, Creighton MacGill, Patti Madigan-Pessoni, Darlene McCurdy, Bunny Meuse, Marie Miele, Cathy Ostaszewski, Debbie Pawlak, Pauline Pazzaglia, Ronald Rudnicki, Jody Schefsky, Dr. Scott, Mike Slocum, Andrea Smith, Sadie Smith, Bonnie Spencer, Rich Stankiewicz, Cassie Twist, Wanda Wennerholt, Steven Wilber, Anthony Wolf, Donna Wolf, Nicholas Wolf, Barb Yanak

Contact the parish office to add a name to the prayer list. Names remain on the list for 3 months per request.

FROM FATHER JOE'S DESK

INTERESTED IN BECOMING CATHOLIC, OR REFRESHING YOUR MEMORY?

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) has begun. We are currently in the inquiry phase. It's culmination is the inquirer's decision to enter the catechumenate, the period of formal preparation for entrance into full membership in the Catholic Church. This phase may last a few weeks. The next session will be on Monday, November 30th at 7 pm in the rectory.



NOVEMBER 30– DECEMBER 6 READINGS

Mon - Rom 10:9-18 Ps 19:8-11 Mt 4:18-22
Tues - Is 11:1-10 Ps 72:7-8, 12-13, 17 Lk 10:21-24
Wed - Is 25:6-10a Ps 23:1-6 Mt 15:29-37
Thurs - Is 26:1-6 Ps 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a
Mt 7:21, 24-27
Fri - Is 29:17-24 Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14 Mt 9:27-31
Sat - Is 30:19-21, 23-26 Ps 147:1-6
Mt 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6-8
Sun - Is 40:1-5, 9-11 Ps 85:9-14 2 Pt 3:8-14 Mk 1:1-8

NEWS FROM THE KNIGHTS

FOOD PANTRY COLLECTIONS are continuing in all three churches until further notice. Local pantries are in great need



**FOOD
DRIVE**

due to the pandemic. Your donations of nonperishable food items are greatly appreciated.



WORKING ON THE MARGINS

Support the
Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

Thank you for your generous support last week for the collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development! If you missed the collection, it's not too late to give! Visit www.usccb.org/nationalcollections.

SAINT MICHAEL'S PARISH OFFERINGS NOVEMBER 16 - 22, 2020

Weekly Offerings:	1,818.00
Electronic Offerings:	495.00
Other Parish Income:	105.50
Total Parish Income:	\$2,418.50
Average weekly expenses:	3,762.36
Difference:	(1,343.86)



C.C.H.D.: 120.00
Care & Education of Priests: 23.00

Thank you for your continued support

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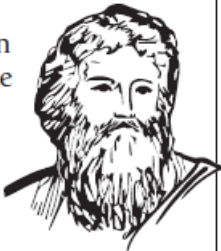
December 2020

St. Michael Parish

One Minute Meditations

Holiday advice

The holiday season is an important time in the Church but, in the midst of a pandemic, it can also be a time when health worries, money worries, family worries, and every kind of worry intrudes. Instead, try to follow this advice from St. Paul, *"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."* (Philippians 4:8).



Unborn joy

"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb ..." (Luke 1:40). Even in the womb, John was filled with joy to serve God. With the coming of Christmas, look for ways to do God's will and then leap for joy as you fulfill His plan.

"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).



God is love

We call God "Creator," "Savior," "Father," yet when we really want to understand who He is, one word is enough. God is love.

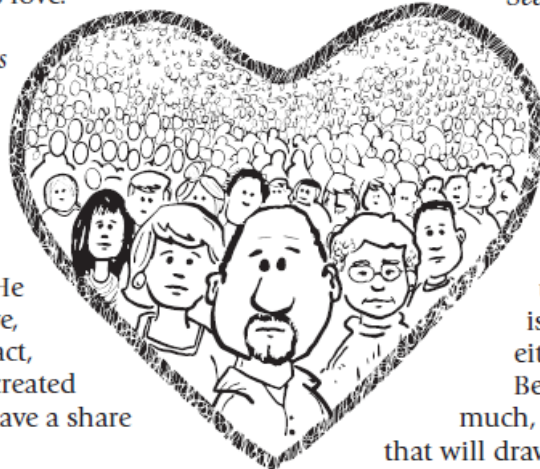
"Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love." (1 John 4:8). Love is the very nature and essence of God Himself. He doesn't just love, He is love. In fact, that's why He created us, so we can have a share in that love.

We are not simply swept up in the good will God has toward all his creations. He loves each of us as individuals and that love is never-ending and unconditional. *"Can*

a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you.

See, upon the palms of my hands I have written your name" (Isaiah 49:15-16). This is not necessarily because we are good; we can't possibly earn the vast love He has for us. But the good news is we can't lose it either.

Because He loves us so much, He denies us nothing that will draw us closer to him and to life in Heaven. *"For God so loved the world,"* Jesus declared, *"that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16).



Why Do Catholics Do That?

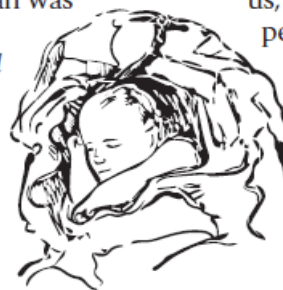
Why do Catholics believe in a "virgin birth?"

Before Jesus was born, Isaiah was told, *"the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel"* (Isaiah 7:14). The virgin birth was documented in Luke 1:34.

Had Jesus been conceived like the rest of

us, He could not have been a perfect sacrifice for our sins.

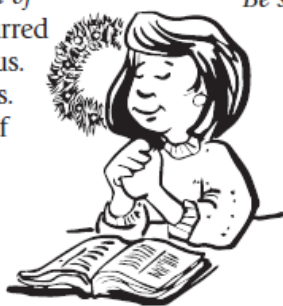
"And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).



Awaken to the presence of God on Christmas morning

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). An amazing truth occurred at the first Christmas; God came and lived among us. Even more amazing, He continues to live among us. During Advent, take steps to become more aware of His presence.

Begin each day in his presence. Before you get out of bed in the morning, place yourself in His presence. Take a few minutes to focus on a sacred picture or an image that will help you to



"Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

Seek God's Word. Start your day with Scripture such as the daily Mass readings (found on www.usccb.org) or another reading you choose. Ask God to teach you during the day from that selection.

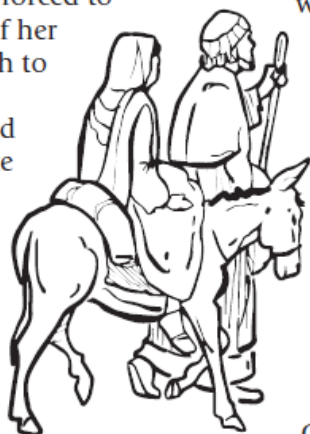
Speak to him throughout the day. Picture the Lord next to you throughout your day and talk with Him as you experience the day together. Brother

Lawrence, a 17th century monk, suggested prayer shouldn't be confined to formal times.

from Scripture

Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23, God chooses each of us in a special way.

Mary and Joseph were forced to travel in the last stages of her pregnancy from Nazareth to Bethlehem. On foot or donkey, it was a dirty and exhausting journey. Once there, they had no option for decent housing and had to stay in a stable with animals. Young Mary gave birth in crude conditions with no friend or family to help.



were no friendly faces to greet the family once they arrived and they had to make their own way in an unfamiliar land.

Refugees all over the world flee violence like the Holy Family. Catholics have a special charge to protect them and those who are vulnerable: children, elderly, and poor.

Like Mary's and Joseph's, God has a special place for each of us in his plan of salvation. Prayerfully ask God what he wants you to do for him and his kingdom.

Feasts & Celebrations

Dec. 14 – St. John of the Cross (1591). As a Carmelite, St. John led a reform in the Order to encourage more prayer and simplicity. Briefly jailed over a misunderstanding, some of his best spiritual writing came from this experience.

Dec. 21 – St. Peter Canisius (1597). Born in Holland, he was ordained into the Society of Jesus and vigorously safeguarded the Catholic faith through writings and teaching. His work, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, is still used today.

Dec. 26 – St. Stephen (first century). A deacon of the early Church, St. Stephen preached that God can be found everywhere, not just in one place like the temple. He angered the Jewish authorities and became the first martyr of the Catholic Church.

Dec. 27 – The Holy Family (1st century). On the feast of the Holy Family, we celebrate the family life of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. By their love and support of one another the Holy Family is a model for all Christian families.



Q & A How do Catholics benefit from praying the Rosary?

The Rosary is a simple prayer adapted from the complex prayers of medieval monks. It's a powerful prayer because in it, we ask Mary—whose prayers are never refused—to pray for us. In addition, the mysteries of the Rosary introduce us to the lives of Jesus and Mary. Each mystery is associated with a fruit. For example, the fruit of the mystery of the Annunciation is humility. Praying the Rosary opens us to the graces to be more Christ-like.

A prayer with roots in Scripture, the Rosary begins with the Apostles' Creed, which summarizes the great mysteries of the Catholic Faith. The Our Father that introduces each mystery is from the Gospels. The first part of the Hail Mary that follows is from the angel's words announcing Christ's birth and Elizabeth's greeting to Mary. St. Pius V officially added the second part of the Hail Mary.

The repetition in the Rosary is meant to lead one into restful and contemplative prayer related to each Mystery. The gentle repetition of the words helps us to enter into the silence of our hearts, where Christ's spirit dwells. The Rosary can be said privately or with a group.

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible)



POPE QUOTE: “We were not created to dream about vacations or the weekend, but to make God’s dreams come true in this world. God made us capable of dreaming, so that we could embrace the beauty of life. The works of mercy are the most beautiful works in life.”

POPE FRANCIS’S PRAYER INTENTION:

DECEMBER: FOR A LIFE OF PRAYER: We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

PERSONAL MISSAL PROGRAM

Purchase your personal copy of the 2021 *Breaking Bread* by calling 1-800-548-8749. Order online at: <https://www.ocp.org/en-us/missals/BB/breaking-bread>.

Make sure your name is on the book and please take it with you after Mass so that nothing is left in the pews.

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve, December 24, 2020

4:00 pm, Saint Michael’s Church, Canton

6:00 pm, Saint Aloysius Church, Ralston

9:00 pm, Saint John Nepomucene Church, Troy

Christmas Day, December 25, 2020

9:30 am, Saint Michael’s Church, Canton

In obedience to Bishop Bambera, we are limited to 25% of capacity of each site and will continue to follow social distancing and mask guidelines. Due the popularity of these Masses, reservations are needed. You may make your request:

- by phone at 570-673-5253
- by email at stmichaelparish@frontiernet.net.

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You May Make a Gift to Your Parish or to the Diocesan Annual Appeal Directly From Your IRA

If you are 70½ or older and have a traditional individual retirement account, you can use all or part of your *required minimum distribution* to support your parish or the Diocesan Annual Appeal without having to count the transfers as income for federal tax purposes.

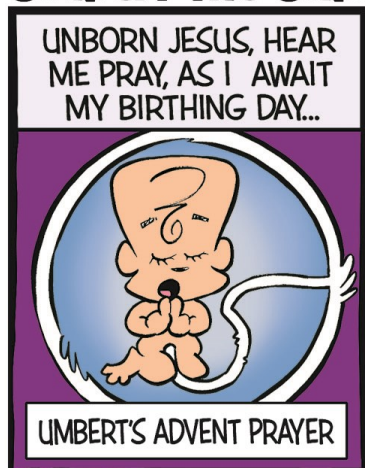
Distributions must be sent directly to your parish or the Diocese by the plan administrator of your IRA.

For information, please contact
Jim Bebla,
Diocesan Secretary of Development,
Jim-Bebbla@DioceseofScranton.org
570-207-2250

Our Parish Goal for the
2020 Diocesan Annual Appeal is \$12,000.00.
As of 11/13/2020 we have reached 38% of our goal.
Thank you to everyone who has contributed thus far.

Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi





Knights of Columbus Council #5517

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See Dates to Remember for
next meeting date,
time & location.

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come new members.

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*In loving
memory of
Carol Ann Gergel*

Saint Jude, Pray for us.

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Advent 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November 29 Buy or make an Advent wreath. Bless it and light the first candle tonight and every night this week. Read Mark 13:33-37.	30 Advent is about waiting for the Savior to come. Offer a simple prayer of praise anytime you have to wait during Advent.	December 1 The presence of Jesus reminds us to hope in God's mercy. Make a list of reasons for your hope today.	2 Pick one habit that is keeping you from holiness. Identify your "go-to sin" and resolve to conquer it during Advent.	3 Add 20 minutes of daily prayer during Advent. Set an alarm to remind you to pray for 10 minutes each morning and night this month.	4 In gratitude that God provides for your needs, set aside gently used clothing and give it to the poor. Add a piece you love as a special sacrifice.	5 Perform an examination of conscience today. Then go to Confession, if your parish offers it, to get ready to greet the Savior.
6 At sundown tonight, light two violet candles in the Advent wreath and read Mark 1:1-8.	7 St. Nicholas was a generous man and a courageous bishop. Today, make at least one generous act of love in his honor.	8 The feast of the Immaculate Conception celebrates Mary's freedom from Original Sin. Attend or stream Mass and pray a Rosary.	9 Today, let nothing discourage you in honor of St. Juan Diego. He never gave up, placing his trust in Jesus and his Mother.	10 In your Christmas cards write a note about the blessings you received this year as a witness to God's love.	11 Buy Christmas gifts from merchants that carry "fair trade" items to support workers in developing countries.	12 To honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, place a rose in a vase in your home and pray a "Hail Mary" whenever you pass it.
13 Gaudete Sunday-Joy! Celebrate the halfway point of Advent. Light two violet candles and the rose one. Read John 1:6-8, 19-28.	14 Spend time in silence today. Say "no" to unnecessary distractions. In silence and peace, you will be open to God's will.	15 Think of Biblical accounts of God's mercy to sinners. Ask forgiveness from someone you have hurt and forgive those who wronged you.	16 In honor of Las Posadas remembering the Holy Family's trek to Bethlehem, pray for all those who have been forced from home.	17 Send a card to someone who lost a loved one in the last year. Offer your thoughts and prayers for healing and comfort.	18 Pray for the men and women in the armed services who won't be able to spend Christmas with their families.	19 Pray the Angelus at 6:00 am, 12:00 pm, and 6:00pm every day until Christmas.
20 Light all four candles in the wreath tonight and all week. Read Luke 1:26-38.	21 This can be a sad time for those who are alone, especially in a pandemic. Pray for anyone you know who will be alone on Christmas.	22 As a gift to the coming Savior, repair a relationship with a friend or family member that needs healing.	23 Make an effort to share God's love today. Say a kind word or listen with compassion to someone who is suffering.	24 Even if you live alone, put up and decorate a Christmas tree. Light it as a symbol of Christ, the Light of the World.	 Rejoice! Read the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1-20 and meditate on each miraculous detail. Think of how joyful it will be to meet Jesus when he comes again.	25



ADVENT CALENDAR 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
November 29 The First Sunday of Advent Begin your Advent journey by blessing your Advent wreath. Light the first violet candle and sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."	30 Make a resolution at the start of this liturgical year that will bring you closer to Christ.	December 1 Today is Giving Tuesday! Many of our parishes have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Consider making a recurring gift to your parish.	2 Use this Advent season to ready your heart for Jesus. In what ways can you improve your relationship with him?	3 Memorial of St. Francis Xavier, Priest In honor of St. Francis Xavier, one of the first Jesuits, try the practice of the Daily Examen . (Pope Francis, <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> , no. 106)	4 "Social friendship and universal fraternity necessarily call for an acknowledgement of the <i>worth of every human person</i> , always and everywhere." (Pope Francis, <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> , no. 106)	5 Advent is a season of waiting and anticipation of the birth of Christ. It can be easy to lose sight of this, focusing more on gift giving and receiving. Set aside time to pray with your family, even virtually, to refocus on the greatest gift.
6 The Second Sunday of Advent Today, churches hold a special collection for retired religious . Pray for these dedicated servants of Christ as you light the second violet candle on your Advent wreath.	7 Today is the Memorial of St. Ambrose, one of the Doctors of the Church. He baptized St. Augustine and is the patron saint of catechumens. Today, pray for those seeking to join the Church.	8 On this Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception , attend Mass and pray the Hail Mary before meals. As Mary is also the patroness of the U.S., take time to pray for our country today.	9 This year has been challenging for many. Bring joy to someone today. Text or call a friend, help a stranger in need, or share today's Gospel with your loved ones.	10 Walking with Moms in Need encourages us to "walk in the shoes" of local pregnant and parenting women in need and to learn how we can help. Take the pledge today!	11 "In some areas of our cities, there is still a lively sense of neighborhood. . . . Where people experience a closeness marked by gratitude, solidarity and reciprocity." (Pope Francis, <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> , no. 152) Seek out volunteer opportunities in your neighborhood this week.	12 On her feast day, pray to Our Lady of Guadalupe , that she may "help us never to see others as burdens," especially migrants to our country and communities.
13 The Third Sunday of Advent Today is Gaudete Sunday when we shift our reflection from "the Lord is coming" to "the Lord is near." Rejoice as you light the pink candle on your Advent wreath.	14 Memorial of St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church There are 10 days left in Advent. In honor of a saint known for his deep spirituality and compassion, reflect honestly on your own spiritual journey so far this season.	15 "As couples or friends, we find that our hearts expand as we step out of ourselves and embrace others." (Pope Francis, <i>Fratelli Tutti</i> , no. 89) How can you embrace others today?	16 Las Posadas , a reenactment of Mary and Joseph seeking shelter before the birth of Jesus, traditionally begins today. Pray for migrants seeking shelter around the world.	17 Today marks the beginning of the " O Antiphons ." This tradition, which comes from Evening Prayer, has been around since at least the eighth century.	18 In today's Gospel we are reminded of St. Joseph's courage. Reflect on how God is calling you to demonstrate courage in serving him.	19 What's your favorite Christmas movie? Gather your friends or family (in-person or virtually) and watch a Christmas classic .
20 The Fourth Sunday of Advent "Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.'" (Lk 1:38) Mary had complete trust in God, saying "yes" to his will. How would you describe your trust in God?	21 St. Francis of Assisi made the Christmas crèche, or manger, for Christmas Eve of 1223. Gather your loved ones, and bless your family's crèche . (Lk 1:38)	22 "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph themselves were refugees in Egypt . . . with whom Christian migrants and refugees throughout the ages can identify, giving them hope and courage." (USCCB, <i>Strangers No Longer</i> , no. 26) How can you welcome the stranger today?	23 According to custom, the Christmas tree is set up just before Christmas and remains in place until the Solemnity of Epiphany. Share this blessing with your family and friends.	24 "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; for he has come to his people and set them free." (Lk 1:68)		