

DECEMBER 3, 2023



# FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT 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: [office@stmichaelscanton.com](mailto:office@stmichaelscanton.com)

website: [www.stmichaelscanton.com](http://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.

### Confessions

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

### 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.

### Eucharistic Adoration

Wed: 6:00 pm, St. Michael's Church  
following 5:30 pm Mass,  
Benediction at 7:00 pm

First Friday: Adoration after 7 am Mass  
until 7 pm, St. Michael's Church

### 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 the month before.

### C.C.D. (2023/24)

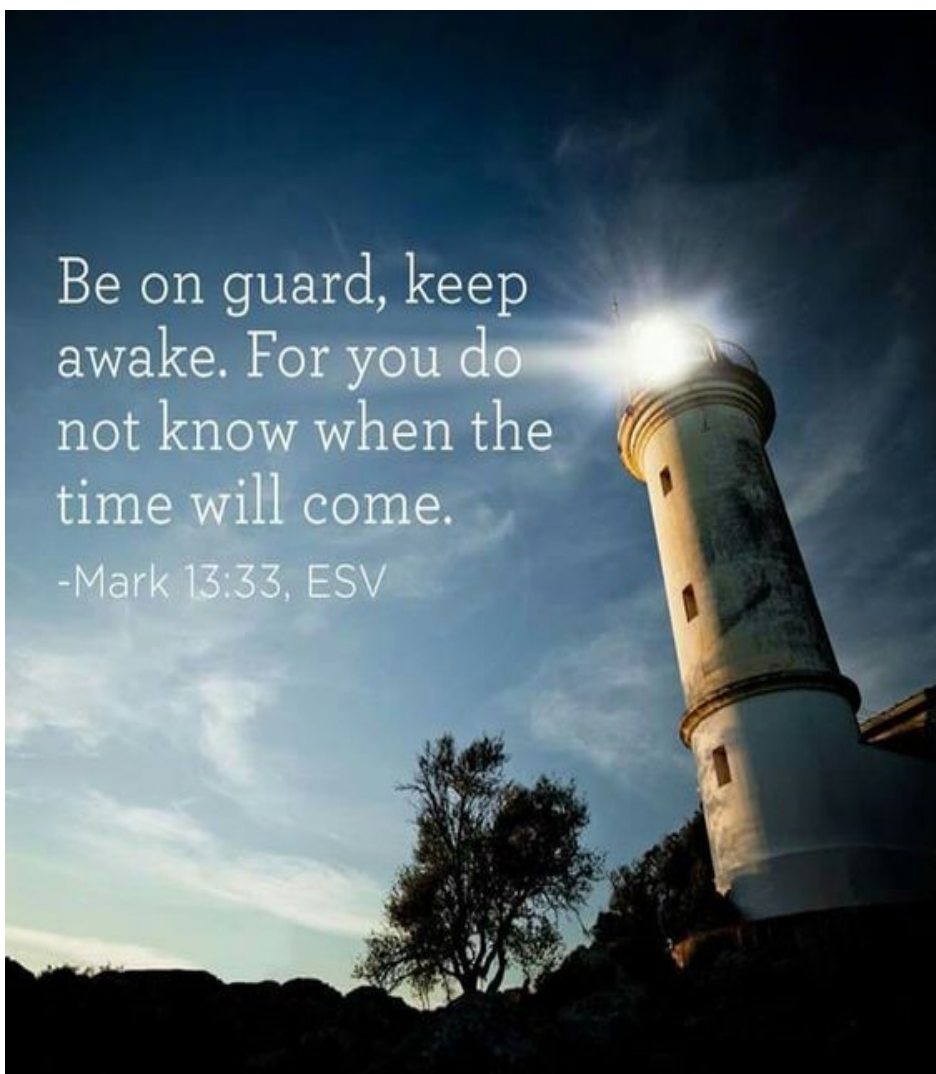
(Religious education classes  
held during the school year)

Sun: 8:15 am, St. Michael Church hall

Sun: 10:15 am, St. John Nepomucene  
Church hall

Be on guard, keep  
awake. For you do  
not know when the  
time will come.

-Mark 13:33, ESV



### Pastoral Council

David Beahm, David Brann, Leslie Debach, Will Hawrylo,  
Jean Herman, Ralph Lepper, Sherry Vargson,  
Sarah Watson - youth representative

### 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."

## LITURGY SCHEDULE

<b>Saturday, December 2</b>	Weekday
VIGIL: FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
4:00 pm, Canton † Pro Populo	
<b>Sunday, December 3</b>	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8:00 am, Ralston † Carol Asbury (Cathy Asbury)	
9:30 am, Canton † Robert Spencer (Jeff & Beth Cole)	
11:15 am, Troy † John Hamburger (The Bradford & Hamburger Families))	
<b>Monday, December 4</b>	Advent Weekday
7:00 am, Rectory † Kathryn Kilborn & Mike Acresti (Jeff & Beth Cole)	
<b>Tuesday, December 5</b>	Advent Weekday
5:30 pm, Troy - For the healing of Alan Cole (Jeff & Beth Cole)	
<b>Wednesday, December 6</b>	Advent Weekday
5:30 pm, Canton † Gary & Claudia Blaney	
6:00 pm, Holy Hour (Jeff & Beth Cole)	
<b>Thursday, December 7</b>	Saint Ambrose, Bishop, No Mass Doctor of the Church
<b>Friday, December 8</b>	THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
7:00 am, Canton † Robert Fleury (The Fleury Family)	
<b>6:00 pm, Troy † Mary Watkins</b> (St. Andrew's Altar & Rosary Society)	
<b>Saturday, December 9</b>	Advent Weekday
VIGIL: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
4:00 pm, Canton † Richard O'Neal (John & Pat Rushin)	
<b>Sunday, December 10</b>	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
8:00 am, Ralston † Judy Callahan (Bridget & Shawn)	
9:30 am, Canton † Robert Fleury (The Family)	
11:15 am, Troy † Pro Populo	


Fellowship is held in St. Michael's Church hall following the 9:30 am Mass each Sunday.



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

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

### SAINT MICHAEL'S PARISH OFFERINGS November 20 - 26, 2023

Weekly Offerings:	2,834.90
Electronic Offerings:	515.00
End of year donation:	4,500.00
Other Parish Income:	330.10
 Total Parish Income:	8,180.00
Average weekly expenses:	4,211.61
Difference:	3,968.39
Care & Education of Priests:	80.00

*Thank you for your continued support.*

## Advent Penance Services



Sunday, December 3rd

**2 pm - St. Michael's Church, Canton**  
4 pm - St. Basil's Church, Dushore.

Sunday, December 10th

3 pm - Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Towanda

Sunday, December 17th

2 pm - Church of the Epiphany, Sayre



# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

The Knights of Columbus thank you for your generous donations to the Thanksgiving Food Drive.

### SAINT MICHAEL PARISH PRAYER LIST

Barby, John Adams, Peggy Adams, Tom Ambruch, Karl Barton, April Bilbrey, Joseph Blaszc, Gus Branish, Joy Brann, Betty Brown, John Chapman Jr., Dennis & Barbara Clarke, Todd Congdon, Carlene Eck, Dorland Eck, Leon English, Melissa Gowan, Cassie Hamburger, Gary & Erin Hamilton, Cody Heim, Robert Dale Hostetter, Victoria Johnson, Beatrice Jones, Antoinette King, David Kule, Jo Kule, Mike Losey, Joyce Maloney, Tom McBlane, Darlene McCurdy, Bunny Meuse, Bernadette Moore, Orlando Moralez, Delina Morgan, Leo Parchesky, Ramona Parker, Gary Polly, Dee-Dee Ramsey, Patricia Rogers, Rich Stankiewicz, Mary Catherine Taylor, Joe Turk, Matthew Warren, Glenda Watson, Steven Wilber, John Wilcox, Anthony Wolf, Donna Wolf, Nicholas Wolf

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



Scan to donate  
or visit  
[annualappeal.org](http://annualappeal.org)



As of November 17th, we are at 47.75% of our \$12,000 parish goal. \$5,730 has been donated or pledged. 38 families have donated thus far, which is a participation rate of 24.31% of 144 active families in the parish. Thank you to everyone who has contributed thus far, both financially and with your prayers.

# Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

December 2023

St. Michael's Parish

## One Minute Meditations

### St. Edmund Campion

Born to a Catholic family in 16th century England,

St. Edmund left

a brilliant academic career at Oxford to become a Jesuit missionary – a death sentence, since Catholics were being heavily persecuted under Queen Elizabeth I. He traveled around, secretly ministering the Sacraments to English Catholics, until he was betrayed by an informer and arrested. Despite efforts to persuade or threaten him, St. Edmund remained true to his faith. He was martyred with two companions at Tyburn.



### Mary's "Yes"

When the angel appeared to Mary and told her what God was asking of her, she didn't have to agree. God gave all of us free will to allow us to make our own choices. Mary said "yes" to God out of love. Her reward (and ours, too) is eternity with her Son.

*"And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon Him"*  
(Luke 2:40).



## A "Christ-centered" Christmas is a joyful one

For Catholics, the weeks leading up to Christmas are a sacred time to prepare our hearts for Christ's coming. For a joy-filled Christmas, try these ideas:

**Encourage joyful anticipation.** As disciples of Jesus, it is our role to help others to believe and hope in the power of God to change the world as He transforms hearts and minds. *"But as for me, I will look to the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me"* (Micah 7:7). Look for opportunities to share your confidence in His love.

**Focus on prayer.** Become an Advent prayer intercessor praying for every

soul to come home to God, especially at this time of peace. Ask that that He gives everyone the grace to live a new life reflecting glory on the Messiah.

**Serve.** Pope Francis said during Advent, "We are so busy with all the preparations, with gifts and things that pass, but let's ask ourselves what we should do for Jesus and for others! What should we do?" The pope said we should continuously ask God

what we should do to contribute to the good of the Church and society. We can do "something concrete, even if it is small" to help others. He suggested visiting the lonely, the elderly, the sick or someone in need.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

### Why do Catholics celebrate the "Immaculate Conception?"

In 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed that Mary, by a special grace, was preserved from original and personal sin from her own conception in her mother's womb, in view of her role as the

Mother of God. This grace bore immeasurable fruit for all of us in Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross. On December 8 – a Holy Day of Obligation – we ask Mary to pray for us, so we, too, receive Jesus into our hearts with a faithful love like hers.

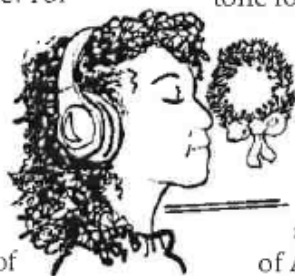




# Have a peaceful, Merry Christmas!

Do you aim for an idyllic Christmas celebration complete with a warm fire, joyful music, and tinsel-covered tree? For many of us, Christmas comes at the end of weeks spent shopping, wrapping, and spending, and is wrought with family tensions, obligations, and exhaustion. Try these steps to keep your sanity and your Savior in your Christmas celebration:

**Be realistic.** It isn't the goal of the season to make everyone happy. If you don't overspend and over extend before Christmas, you'll be in a better frame of mind when it arrives.



**Soothe the beast.** Beautiful music can set a soothing tone for your celebration. Pick your favorite holy hymns to put yourself in the Christmas frame of mind.

**Reach out.** Want to make your own problems seem small? Take on someone else's. Do at least one good Christmas deed for someone needy.

**Seek the eternal.** Jesus gives us peace, purpose, and perspective. Spend time with Jesus each day of Advent and Christmas to remind yourself of what is most important about Christmas.

## from Scripture

### Luke 2:22-40, Encountering God in the ordinary

To the uninformed observer, Jesus' birth was unremarkable, and His family was quite ordinary. In fact, when it was time to present Jesus in the temple, His parents couldn't afford the customary offering of a lamb, and instead made the offering of the poor - two pigeons. As faithful Jews, they did all that was required by their faith to thank God for the gift of their child.

Yet, when Joseph and Mary presented their new baby in the temple, Simeon immediately recognized Him as the Messiah.



Inspired by the Holy Spirit, he prophesied that Jesus would be *"a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel"* (Luke 2:32).

Simeon was not alone in recognizing the Lord in the temple. Anna was also filled with the Holy Spirit. Her faith in God's promises gave her hope. The hope God places in our hearts gives us a desire for the kingdom of Heaven. The Holy Spirit reveals the presence of the Lord to those who want to know Him, receive Him, and to be happy with Him forever.

## Q & A How can I make Christmas joy last?

The Church's real Christmas season starts on Christmas Day and lasts until the Baptism of Our Lord. By celebrating the whole season, you can make your Christmas joy last long after you've taken down the tree. Here are some highlights of the season:



**Feast of the Holy Family, December 31.** Gather for a meal with loved ones, or contact out-of-town friends or family.

**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, January 1.** Dedicate a Rosary to the Blessed Mother, asking her to help you grow in love and trust.

**Epiphany, January 7.** The example of the Magi honoring Jesus has become a symbol of sharing Him with the world. This is our chance to think about the way we live so that we can better reveal Christ to our world.

**The Baptism of Our Lord, January 8.** Baptism is our entry into the Kingdom. Take time this day to renew your Baptismal vows and decide what you can change in your life to help you live as Christ did.

## Feasts & Celebrations

**December 3 - First Sunday in Advent.** We anticipate Christ's birth and His coming on the last day. Catholics everywhere light candles in an Advent wreath to signal the coming of the light of Christ.

**December 12 - Our Lady of Guadalupe (1531).** The Blessed Mother appeared as a Native American maiden to St. Juan Diego. She asked St. Juan to carry roses to the bishop as proof. When the roses were emptied from his *tilma*, it retained the image of the Blessed Mother.

**December 15 - St. Maria di Rosa (1855).** Born into a wealthy family in Brescia, Italy, Paula was renowned for holiness, generosity, and concern for the sick. She founded the Handmaids of Charity in 1840. She took the name Sr. Maria Crucifixa di Rosa.

**December 27 - St. John the Beloved (1st Century).** As an apostle and friend of Jesus, St. John was known for his fiery temper. Scholars believe he is the "beloved disciple" who sat by Jesus at the Last Supper in John's Gospel.



### Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax

<http://www.growinginfaith.com>

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

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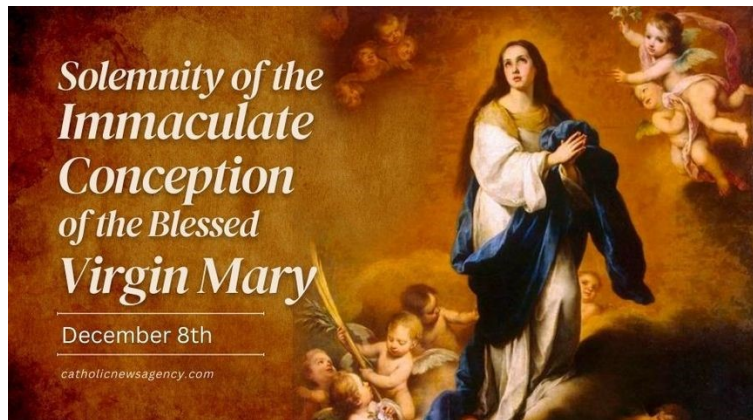
# 2023 Advent Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>3 December</b> Light the first violet candle in your Advent wreath and pray with today's Gospel, <i>Mark 13:33-37.</i>	<b>4</b> Choose a way you can grow closer to Christ in Advent: more mental prayer, penance, almsgiving, Sacraments.	<b>5</b> Display the stable for the Nativity Scene. Add figures gradually throughout Advent.	<b>6</b> St. Nicholas of Myra Perform a simple act of kindness for someone today in honor of this generous saint.	<b>7</b> On the Memorial of Saint Ambrose, bishop and teacher, pray for all clergy in the Church.	<b>8</b> The Immaculate Conception of Mary Celebrate by attending Mass and praying a Rosary for our country.	<b>9</b> Prepare heart and soul to welcome Christ. Make an examination of conscience and attend Confession.
<b>10</b> Light the second violet candle and meditate on <i>Mark 1:1-8.</i>	<b>11</b> Offer a small sacrifice out of love for Jesus, who offered Himself up for love of you.	<b>12</b> Today is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Pray for all pregnant women and thank God for the gift of new life.	<b>13</b> Advent is a busy time for parishes. Call or email your parish office and ask how you can serve.	<b>14</b> In prayer, forgive someone who has hurt you. Ask for the grace to let go and move on.	<b>15</b> Call Catholic Relief Services (877-HELP-CRS or <a href="http://www.catholicrelief.org">www.catholicrelief.org</a> ) to see how you can contribute.	<b>16</b> Las Posadas begins today honoring Mary's and Joseph's search for shelter. Gather friends and go caroling.
<b>17</b> <i>Gaudete Sunday</i> Light two violet candles and the rose one for joy. Pray with <i>John 1:6-9, 19-28.</i>	<b>18</b> Put a lamp or candle in a window to welcome the Christ Child. Light it every night until Christmas.	<b>19</b> Feed the hungry. Look for someone who is physically hungry or hungry for human kindness.	<b>20</b> Review your "Advent resolutions" and renew your commitment to them.	<b>21</b> Spend time before the Blessed Sacrament today to ready your heart for the arrival of the King.	<b>22</b> Reflect on how your relationship with Christ grew this Advent. Thank Him for the graces you received.	<b>23</b> Make an effort to see everyone with loving eyes today.
<b>24</b> The fourth week of Advent lasts only one day. Meditate on the great news the angel brought (see <i>Luke 1:26-38</i> ).	<b>25</b> <i>Rejoice!</i> Place the Christ Child in the manger. Go to Mass today and rejoice!	<i>"In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn" (Luke 2:1-7).</i>				

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains holy days of obligation this way:

On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are to refrain from engaging in work or activities that hinder the worship owed to God, the joy proper to the Lord's Day, the performance of the works of mercy, and the appropriate relaxation of mind and body.

Family needs or important social service can legitimately excuse from the obligation of Sunday rest. The faithful should see to it that legitimate excuses do not lead to habits prejudicial to religion, family life, and health [CCC 2185].



**HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION**  
**Friday, December 8, 2023**

7:00 am, St. Michael Church, Canton  
6:00 pm, St. John Nepomucene Church, Troy

The Immaculate Conception refers to the dogma that the Blessed Virgin Mary was conceived without any stain of Original Sin in preparation for becoming the Mother of God, the Son Jesus Christ.

The Church has celebrated the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary with a feast since perhaps as early as the fifth century, and it was made a Holy Day of Obligation in 1708.



Sundays are ALWAYS HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION  
The 4th Sunday of Advent, 2023 is also Christmas Eve.  
Christmas is a HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION.

The Mass schedule is as follows:

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23RD**  
**VIGIL OF THE 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

4:00 pm, St. Michael's Church  
6:00 pm, St. John's Church

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24TH**  
**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
8:00 am, St. Aloysius Church  
9:30 am, St. Michael's Church



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24**

**CHRISTMAS VIGIL MASSES**

4:00 pm, St. Michael's Church

7:00 pm, St. Aloysius Church

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 25**

**CHRISTMAS MASSES**

12:00 am (Midnight), St. John's Church

9:30 am, St. Michael's Church

All of our blessings come from God. If you have been missing Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation, take advantage of this new Liturgical Year to resolve to change that, starting with the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

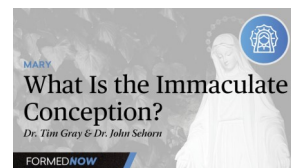
**SEE YOU AT MASS!**



**WEEK OF DECEMBER 3, 2023**

**WHAT IS THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION?**

Join Drs. Tim Gray and John Sehorn as they examine Mary under her title of the Immaculate Conception. This dogma of the Catholic faith, promulgated in 1854 by Pope Pius IX, speaks of Mary's conception and what it means to the Church.



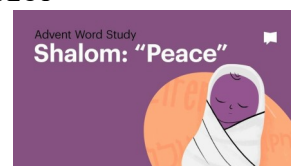
**ST. NICHOLAS DAY | CATHOLIC ALL YEAR AT HOME W/ KENDRA TIERNEY**

Kendra shares her favorite recipes and traditions for celebrating the feast of St. Nicholas (a.k.a. Santa!). Learn how to make mulled wine and cider, speculaas cookies, and deep-fried Dutch meatballs.



**SHALOM/PEACE | ADVENT: WORD STUDIES**  
**THE BIBLE PROJECT**

"Peace" is a very common word in English, that means different things to different people. It's also a very important word in the Bible that refers not only to the absence of conflict but also to the presence of something else.



*Set up your free account by visiting [formed.org/signup](https://formed.org/signup)  
Use zip code 17724 to find our parish*





### POPE FRANCIS'S DECEMBER PRAYER INTENTION

FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: We pray for the Holy Father; as he fulfills his mission, may he continue to accompany the flock entrusted to him, with the help of the Holy Spirit.



### SAINT MICHAEL'S ALTAR & ROSARY SOCIETY CHRISTMAS BAZAAR & CAFÉ

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 8 AM UNTIL 3 PM  
SAINT MICHAEL'S CHURCH HALL

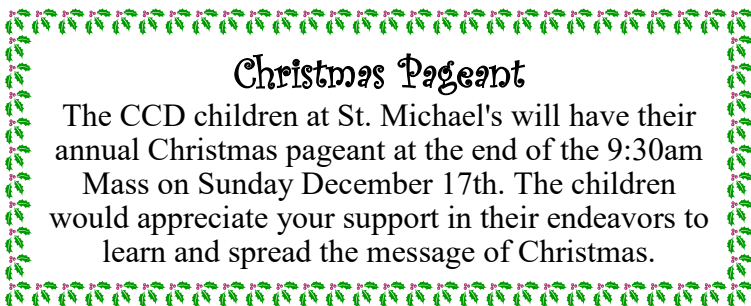
We have 31 tables of Holiday Crafts  
made by talented Artisans!

Take a chance on our beautiful **Quilt Raffle!**

**The Chinese Auction** has a variety of products and gift cards, including local gas, food and other businesses!

**The Christmas Café** features delicious, homemade soups and BBQ sandwiches. Eat-in or take-out.

**Santa Claus** is coming to town from Noon to 2 pm!



### Christmas Pageant

The CCD children at St. Michael's will have their annual Christmas pageant at the end of the 9:30am Mass on Sunday December 17th. The children would appreciate your support in their endeavors to learn and spread the message of Christmas.

### CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

St. Michael's Altar & Rosary Society will host the annual Christmas Party for children, infants to age 12, after the 9:30 am Mass on Sunday, December 17th. All children are invited. A sign up sheet is next to the bulletins in St. Michael's Church for children who are not in the St. Michael's CCD program. Please sign up by December 10th.

### DECEMBER 4 - 10, 2023 READINGS

**Mon** - Is 2:1-5 Ps 122:1-9 Mt 8:5-11

**Tues** - Is 11:1-10 Ps 72:1-2, 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** - Gn 3:9-15, 20 Ps 98:1-4 Eph 1:3-6, 11-12

Lk 1:26-38

**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

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ASAP

Aid and Support After Pregnancy (ASAP) is a featured program of the Knights of Columbus supporting mothers and their children, born and unborn, by serving pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes. St. Michael's KOC is hosting a drive for the Endless Mountains Pregnancy Care Center, Canton this December. To participate, please bring new items to the drop box in the back of the church. You can also purchase items on the Amazon.com registry that has been established - see below.



#### ITEMS REQUESTED:

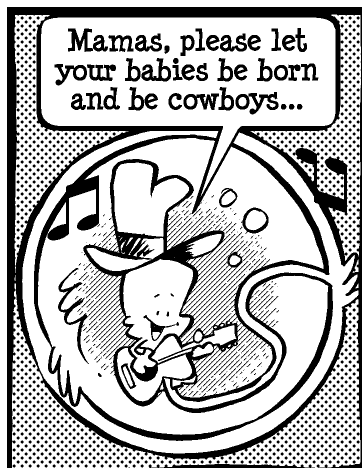
- NCVI Breast Pump 8782 – 4 items
- Boys and Girls Pull-ups: sizes 2T-3T, 3T-4T, 4T-5T – 5 boxes each
- New outfits (any season): Boys and Girls; sizes 0-3 months, 2T – 10 each
- New Sleepers: Boys and Girls; sizes 0-3months, 2T – 10 each

#### TO PURCHASE ONLINE:

Go to [https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/3OQIQ5SDNI3WA?ref=gr\\_search\\_page\\_result](https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/3OQIQ5SDNI3WA?ref=gr_search_page_result) (a link is on the parish website under News from the Knights) Items will come up to choose from. You can have items delivered to you and then bring them to church, or you can have items delivered to the St. Michael Registry address (David Beahm's home). Everything will be delivered to the Endless Mountains Pregnancy Care Center, Canton at the end of December.

## Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi



www.umberttheunborn.com

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### Knights of Columbus Council #5517

Looking for new members.  
Meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of the Month at 7:15 in St. Michael's Hall.



4423 Leona Road  
Columbia Crossroads, PA 16914  
Phone/Fax: 570-297-4711  
Email:  
hawthornridge@gmail.com  
PA030014  
St. Michael Parish member

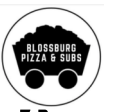


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