DECEMBER 1, 2024



THE 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 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.

<u>Baptism</u>

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

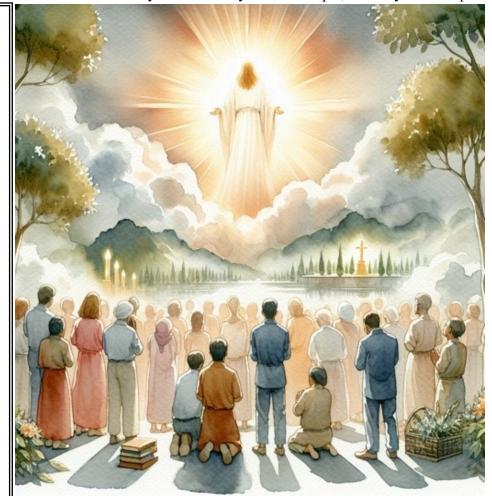
Wednesday: 6:00 pm, St. Michael's Church following 5:30 pm Mass, Benediction at 7:00 pm First Friday: Adoration after 7 am Mass until 7 pm, St. Michael's Church

<u>First Fridays</u>

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.

<u>C.C.D. (2024/25)</u>

(Religious education classes held during the school year) Sunday - 8:15 am - 9:15 am, St. Michael Church hall



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 S	SCHEDULE
	SAINT ANDREW, APOSTLE
	NDAY OF ADVENT
4:00 pm, Canton † Pro Popu	
<u>Sunday, December 1</u> 8:00 am, Ralston † Rita Cha	
9:30 am, Canton † Kathryn I	(Anna Marie Mimlitsch) Kilburn & Mike Acresti (Jeff & Beth Cole)
11:15 am, Troy † Michael D	
Monday, December 2 7:00 am, Rectory † Carol As	Advent Weekday sbury (Cathy Asbury)
Tuesday, December 3 5:30 pm, Troy † Michael Da	Saint Francis Xavier, Priest wison (St. Michael's A&R)
Wednesday, December 4	Advent Weekday
5:30 pm, Canton † Mark and	l Marty Kaczmarek (Jeff & Beth Cole)
6:00 pm, Holy Hour	(Jell & Bein Cole)
<u>Thursday, December 5</u> No Mass	Advent Weekday
First Friday, December 6	Advent Weekday
7:00 am, Canton † Betty Jea	
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	(Marge & Dale Morgan)
<u>Saturday, December 7</u>	Saint Ambrose, Bishop, Doctor of the Church
VIGIL: SECOND SI	UNDAY OF ADVENT
4:00 pm, Canton † Pro Popu	lo
Sunday December 8	Second Sunday of Advent
8:00 am, Ralston † Carol Da	lton (Tim & Cathy Bogaczyk)
9:30 am, Canton † Gary Bla	
11:15 am, Troy † Richard K	
(The	Bradford & Hamburger Families)
Fellowship is held in St. M hall following the 9:30 am	
	.)
	ps in all three churches burn , inspired by the example of
	have the courage, like
	God's gift of human life.
	tentions may be requested
	ig the parish office.
	<i>Il three lamps for a weekend.</i>
	Parish Offerings
	18 - 24, 2024
Weekly Offerings: Electronic Offerings:	2,275.00 475.00
One-time donation:	4,800.00
Other Parish Income:	_90.50
Total Parish I	
Average wee	,

Average weekly expenses:4,124.61Difference:3,515.89Care & Education of Priests:10.00Thank you for your continued support.

Advent Penance Services

Sunday, December 8th **2:00 pm - St. Michael's Church, Canton** 4:00 pm - Ss. Peter & Paul Church, Towanda Sunday, December 15th 2:00 pm - St. Basil's Church, Dushore. 4:30 pm - Church of the Epiphany, Sayre

Saint Michael's Marketplace & Café Saturday, December 7, 2024 8:00 am until 3:00 pm Saint Michael's Church Hall 107 North Washington Street, Canton, PA We have 30 tables of New Ideas and Christmas Craft items! Chinese Auction & Christmas Café Santa Claus is coming to town from Noon until to 2 pm!

Take a chance on our beautiful quilt raffle! If you can donate home-baked goods or fudge for the Altar & Rosary's *Sweets Table* this year, please bring them to the hall on Friday, December 6th between Noon and 5:00 pm or early Saturday morning.

Retirement Fund for Religious.

Aging religious need your help. "Your support acknowledges that we continue the mission of Christ even in our retirement," says Sister Celeste Burgos, 80. Donations provide for the care, medicine, and daily needs of over 24,000 senior religious who have dedicated their lives to service. Envelopes are next to the bulletins for next weekend's second offering.

SAINT MICHAEL PARISH PRAYER LIST Barby, John & Peggy Adams, Karl Barton, Cassi Blaney, Joseph Blasz, Gus Branish, Joy Brann, Betty Brown, Dennis & Barbara Clarke, Kiran Dhawan, Dorland & Carlene Eck, Leon English, Ben Flood, Douglas Greene, Melissa Gowan, William Hall, Robert Dale Hostetter, Victoria Johnson, Beatrice Jones, David Kule, Jo Kule, Bob Lutz, Joyce Maloney, Tom McBlane, Bunny Meuse, Bernadette Moore, Orlando Moralez, Delina Morgan, Mary Nybeck, Pamela Porter O'Brien, Leo Parchesky, Ramona Parker, Gary Paquette, Lori Pellegrini, Pat Rushin, Cristy Schmelzle, Anthony Shipula, Sharon Snyder, Carl E. Steffon, Elias Vroman, Calvin Watson, Steven Wilber, John Wilcox, Anthony Wolf, Nicholas Wolf, Fran Zizza



December 2024

St. Michael Parish

One Minute Meditations

Born in Castile, Spain, St. Juan de Yepes lived in poverty. St. John embraced poverty and suffering throughout his life. In 1563, he entered the Carmelite Order. He befriended St. Teresa of Ávila, who encouraged and supported him in his efforts at reform. He faced opposition and he was imprisoned in a tower. From this experience came the mystical poetry and inspired writings on the interior life that made him a Doctor of the Church.

Close to the Infant Jesus

"You are nowhere but close to the Infant Jesus, trembling with cold in the stable of Bethlehem...Therefore, I beg you to love the crib of the Child of Bethlehem...stay close to him and be sure that Jesus is in the midst of your hearts more than you could believe or imagine." St. Padre Pio

"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory" (John 1:14).

The best gifts come on Christmas

Christmas brings a joy that goes beyond presents—it's a season rich with the gifts God offers: love, hope, family, and the promise of Heaven. These gifts touch every heart, young and old, and hold profound meaning.

The gift of love. – God chose to come into the world as a baby, sharing in our human experience. His love surpasses anything we could imagine. He invites u

imagine. He invites us to embrace His love and let it transform us.

The gift of hope. Although we have moments of sin and can turn from God, the Child born on that first Christmas offers freedom from sin and the hope of a brighter future. This hope renews us and promises a better path forward.

The gift of family. Family provides strength, comfort, and support. Baptism welcomes us into Christ's divine family, where we are bound by an unbreakable

connection. "See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God" (1 John 3:1).

The gift of Heaven. The most awesome gift is Heaven itself. Without Jesus'

miraculous birth, Heaven would be out of reach. He bridged the gap between Heaven and Earth, offering the promise of eternal joy. This Christmas, we can cherish the enduring gifts of love, hope, family,

and Heaven that make the season truly

The tradition of displaying nativity scenes began with St. Francis of Assisi, who was awed that God humbled Himself to be born in humility and poverty. To illustrate, he

displayed a manger scene in a cave near the Franciscans' chapel —

Why Do Catholics Why do Catholics Do That display nativity scenes?

meaningful.

complete with donkey and ox. He celebrated Christmas Mass and, according to an eyewitness, the wax figure of the Christ Child came alive. This pious tradition continues, reminding us that "the

Word became flesh and dwelt among us"(John 1:14).

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Growing in Faith™

Two Advent practices for a joyful Christmas

Each Advent, God invites us to deepen our friendship with Him and draw closer to His love. The key to a joyful Christmas lies in responding to this invitation by dedicating daily time to God and helping those in need.

Do the one thing needful: Pope Francis encourages us to "waste time" with God through prayer, even for just 15–20 minutes. This could be offering daily prayers for a special intention, meditating on the Christmas Story a verse at a time, or simply being peacefully

from cripture

The Feast of the Holy Family (December 29) includes the story of finding Jesus in the Temple, a story of love and obedience. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover, as was the custom for Jews of that time. They traveled in a large group for protection against bandits who infested the hill country. So it wasn't surprising that His parents didn't miss Jesus as they started the return trip. Upon discovering Him missing, they hurried back to Jerusalem.

On the third day of searching, they found Jesus in the Temple. He was



December 1 - 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 4 – St. John Damascene (749). A Doctor of the Church and the last of the Greek Fathers, St. John was born in Muslim-ruled Syria and was counselor to the caliph. He is known for his writings in favor of the use of sacred images for devotion.

December 9 - Immaculate

questioning the priests and amazing them with His understanding.

Luke 2:41-52, Love and obedience

> However, Mary asked how He could have caused His parents so much worry and Jesus replied, "Did you not know I must be in my Father's house?"

Though they were puzzled by His

answer, Mary and Joseph took Jesus back to Nazareth. He remained there in obedience to His parents until it was time for His public ministry. We learn from this story to obey not only God but also those in valid authority over us.

Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We commemorate that Mary was conceived in St. Anne's womb without original sin, preparing Mary to be the Mother of God. Pope Pius IX declared this doctrine in 1854. This year, it's still considered a holy day of obligation and Mass attendance is required.

December 28 – Feast of the Holy Innocents (1st century). Today, we remember the infants massacred by King Herod's soldiers (Matthew 2:16-18). We also pray for the safety of unborn children. present to Him, who is always present to us. Continue spending time with Him after the season ends.

Go in haste to love: Just as Mary went "with haste" (Luke 1:39) to serve her cousin Elizabeth, we, too, are called to act quickly in love. While no one can do everything, everyone can do something. When we serve others even in small ways, we receive a greater gift in return (Matthew 25:40).

Embrace these practices for a deeper, more joyful Christmas open to God's love.

Q How do& I use anA Advent Wreath?

The Advent Wreath is a circle of evergreen branches, symbolizing God's eternal and unending love. It includes three purple (violet) candles and one pink (rose) candle. On the first Sunday of Advent, and each night that week, the first purple candle, known as the Prophet's Candle, is lit



to symbolize hope. On the second Sunday and throughout that week, light both the first and second purple candles.

The second candle, called the Bethlehem Candle, represents faith. The pink candle, lit during the third week, symbolizes joy and marks Gaudete Sunday. During the fourth week of Advent, all three purple candles and the pink candle are lit. The fourth candle, known as the Angel's Candle, represents peace.

Consider meditating on Scripture as you light the candles. Week 1 (hope) -Isaiah 9:2-7, week 2 (faith) - Micah 5:2-5a, week 3 (joy) - Luke 2:8-14, and week 4 (peace) - Luke 1:26-38.

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living. Success Publishing & Media, LLC Publishers of Growing in Faith™ and Partners in Faith™ (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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POPE FRANCIS'S DECEMBER PRAYER INTENTION FOR PILGRIMS OF HOPE We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

CCD CHRISTMAS/ADVENT PROGRAM

The children of Saint Michael Parish's Religious Education Program will give a presentation about Advent at the end of the 9:30 am Mass on Sunday, December 15th. The CCD program is a highlight of every Advent in our parish. You are cordially invited to attend this Mass and the Children's Christmas Party/ Fellowship that will follow.



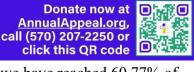
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Children's Christmas Party will be in St. Michael's Hall following the 9:30 am Mass on Sunday, December 15th. There is a sign-up sheet for the Children's Christmas Party in the back of Saint Michael's Church. All children, of any age, are invited, but we need to know who is coming so that we can have some-

thing for everyone. If you attend St. John Nepomucene or St. Aloysius Churches, please sign up by calling or emailing the parish office.







As of November 23rd, we have reached 60.77% of our \$19,238 parish goal. \$11,690 has been donated or pledged by 51 donors, which makes our current participation rate 18.9%. Thank you to everyone who has contributed thus far, both financially and with your prayers.

DECEMBER 2 - 8, 2024 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:** 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: Bar 5:1-6 Ps 126:1-6 Phil 1:4-6, 8-11 Lk 3:1-6

FORMED WEEK OF DECEMBER 1, 2024

30 MINUTES BC

30 Minutes BC creatively explores the profound emotions and intimate struggles of Mary and Joseph during the final 30 minutes before the birth of Jesus. As the



clock ticks down, the couple navigates a whirlwind of hope, joy, and uncertainty, turning to God amidst it all.

CHRISTMAS (PART 1) | WHAT CATHOLICS BELIEVE

Dr. Michael Barber answers some of the Internet's most asked questions about Christmas. Is Christmas a pagan holiday? Why is Christmas celebrated on De-



cember 25? What happened at the "first Christmas"? Find out the answers to these and more!

NICHOLAS: THE BOY WHO BECAME SANTA

Here is the fascinating story of the boy whose love for others make him one of the most popular figures of all times. Today, more than sixteen centuries later, the



entire world celebrates the kindness and generosity of the man we call Santa Claus.

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Advent Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 December	2	3 Practice the Heroic	4	5	6	7
Light the first violet candle in the Advent wreath, symbolizing Hope. Reflect on God's faithfulness and the hope of salvation. (See 1 Peter 3:15 for inspiration.)	How will you draw closer to Christ during Advent? Will you deepen your faith through intentional prayer, heartfelt penance, generous almsgiving, or a renewed focus on the Sacraments?	Minute as proposed by St. Josemaría Escrivá. Get out of bed immediately when you wake (don't press the "snooze" button) and offer the day to God.	Set out the stable and the empty manger from your Nativity scene. Slowly add the figures throughout Advent.	Advent is a busy time for Catholic parishes. Call or email your parish office and ask how you can help.	Attend First Friday Mass, in honor of Jesus' Sacred Heart. Pray, "O Sacred Heart of Jesus, make my heart like yours." And He will.	Perform a thorough examination of conscience today. Then attend Confession to ready your soul to greet the Savior.
8		10	11	12	13	14
Light two violet candles in the Advent wreath	Immaculate Conception	A loving gaze is one of the kindest gifts we can offer. Today, Look	Ask Jesus to heal	Our Lady of Guadalupe	St. Francis de Sales said, "Have patience with all	Gather friends and neighbors and go
each night this week. Sit in silence and enjoy the quiet. Read Luke 2:1-7.	God preserved Mary from sin to be Jesus' mother. Attend Mass and pray a Rosary in her honor.	at everyone through eyes of compassion and kindness, letting love illuminate each encounter.	from experiencing God's bountiful love.	To honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, place a rose in a vase and pray for expectant mothers.	yourself." Practice patience with everyone today, especially yourself.	Christmas caroling at a nursing home or homeless shelter.
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Gaudete Sunday Light two violet candles and the rose one for joy to mark the halfway point of Advent.	Reach out to your parish office to find out how you can make Christmas brighter for a family in need. Your kindness could be their Christmas miracle.	Put a lamp or candle in a window to welcome the Christ Child. Light it every night until Christmas.	Today, offer a small sacrifice out of love, just for God.	Visit the Blessed Sacrament, where Jesus promises to remain with us (Matthew 28:20). Renew your faith in His steadfast love.	Refusing to forgive can destroy our interior peace. Ask for the grace to let go and move on.	The King is coming! Tidy up your home and prepare to welcome Him.
2.2 Light all four candles in the wreath, including the last one for peace. Remember we are awaiting Christ and the peace He brings to those faithful to Him (Luke 2:14).	23 Read Luke 2:1-19 and decide how you can make room in your heart for Christ. What steps will you take to welcome His presence and live out His love each day?	24 Meditate on the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary or pray Evening Prayer tonight to ready your heart for the birth of the Messiah.	25 Rejoíce! Place the Christ Child in the manger and rejoice!	"In those days a decree wen enrolled. This was the first all went to be enrolled, each from the town of Nazareth because he was of the house trothed, who was with chill her child, and she gave bit clothes and laid him in a n	"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 Calilee 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 be- trothed, 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).	hat all the world should be was governor of Syria. So 1 too went up from Galilee 1 that is called Bethlehem, nrolled with Mary, his be- time came for her to have rapped him in swaddling place for them in the inn"

ADVENT ON FORMED°

Use FORMED to make this Advent extra special. Here are a few resources, brought to you courtesy of a parish subscription to FORMED. Set up your free account by visiting formed.org/signup. Use zip code 17724 to find our parish. You can download the FORMED App to enjoy FORMED wherever you have internet access.



This series guides Catholics through a daily Advent reflection using the Jesse Tree model traditionally practiced by families. Each seven-minute episode introduces the ancestors of Jesus Christ, shares a Scripture passage, and offers an engaging, practical reflection. Hosted by Dr. Scott Hefelfinger, Rooted helps viewers apply the passage and related teachings to each day of Advent, guided by the Church's teaching. Sign up here to receive these episodes straight to your inbox and to check out our other great Advent resources: *https:// daily.formed.org/advent*



Journey through the Bible with the whole family! Join art teacher Ms. Kim as she teaches children to draw different scenes from Scripture, including the Annunciation, the shepherds' visit, the Nativity scene, Jesus' Passion, Resurrection, and more. With compelling storytelling, Ms. Kim points out key details from Scripture and Catholic tradition.

As kids follow along and learn new art skills, they also learn to see the connections between the big picture of God's story and their place within it.



Brother Francis leads us on a daily journey in this special seasonal celebration of the coming of the Lord! Featuring meditations, prayers, and suggested activities to keep our focus on Christ this Christmas.

DAILY ADVENT REFLECTIONS WITH DR. TIM GRAY Grow closer to our Lord in the manger this Advent season with Dr. Gray as he leads viewers through the Mass readings every day during ADVENT & CHRISTMAS. Sign up for free at DAILY.FORMED.ORG.

PARISH CHRISTMAS PARTY AND MOVIE SCREENING

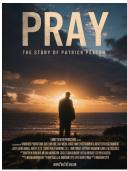
St. Michael's Parish Christmas Party will be on Monday, December 16th in the parish hall. The party will feature a screening of the movie PRAY. The party will begin at 6:00



pm and the movie will begin at 6:30 pm. The movie is just over an hour long, so the party will continue after the movie. Bring a dish/snack to pass.

ABOUT PRAY

A true story of a poor Irish immigrant who sets sail for America in 1928 with dreams of becoming a millionaire. Stricken with tuberculosis and miraculously healed through prayer, he spends his life, with the help of the most iconic celebrities of Hollywood, championing the message worldwide, "*The family that prays together stays together.*"



THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

AS PART OF FATHER PEYTON'S LEGACY In the fall of 1949, the first Rosary Rally in the United States was held in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Organized by "the rosary priest" Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., the Rosary Rally was an effort to re-ignite the untold benefits of devotion to the rosary and prayer to our Blessed Mother. Nearly 50,000 people gathered to pray the rosary on this special day.

Father Patrick Peyton devoted his priestly life to spreading devotion to Mary and encouraging family prayer, especially the rosary. He used radio, television, and film, and 540 Rosary Rallies worldwide to accomplish his mission.

FATHER PEYTON'S TIES TO THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

The reason he chose Scranton for the first Rosary Rally in the United States may have been his ties to the Diocese of Scranton. Patrick Peyton was working as a sexton in the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton when he heard the call to the priesthood!

2025 PARISH LITURGICAL CALENDARS

The 2025 Parish Liturgical Calendars are available in all three of our beautiful churches. Many thanks to James Gergel for again sponsoring the calendars in memory of his beloved wife, Carol Ann Gergel.



FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION

Happy New Year! Why not start the Liturgical Year by adding First Friday Adoration to your prayer routine?

Mass is celebrated in Saint Michael Church at 7:00 am, followed by Adoration until 7:00 pm. If you can commit an entire hour, contact Donna Wolf at (570) 995-5225.