

**FEBRUARY 1, 2026**



**THE 4TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME**



# 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: Monday & Wednesday 8 am - 3:30 pm, Thursday 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

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

### 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. (2024/25)

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

## The Beatitudes

- 1 Blessed are the poor in spirit:  
**the reign of God is theirs.**
- 2 Blessed are the sorrowing:  
**they shall be consoled.**
- 3 Blessed are the lowly:  
**they shall inherit the land.**
- 4 Blessed are the who hunger and thirst for holiness:  
**they shall have their fill.**
- 5 Blessed are they who show mercy:  
**mercy shall be theirs.**
- 6 Blessed are the single-hearted:  
**for they shall see God.**
- 7 Blessed are the peacemakers:  
**they shall be called sons of God.**
- 8 Blessed are those persecuted for holiness' sake:  
**the reign of God is theirs.**



[CatholicFaithStore.com](http://CatholicFaithStore.com)

**Pastoral Council:** David Brann, Leslie Debach, Ray Harrington  
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

**Saturday, January 31** Saint John Bosco, Priest

VIGIL: 4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

4:00 pm, Canton † Gerald Brann (Theresa & Joe Sheridan)

**Sunday, February 1** 4th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8:00 am, Ralston † Pro Populo

9:30 am, Canton † Jane Cawley (Jerry & Joy Brann)

11:15 am, Troy † Marshall Watkins  
(The Bradford & Hamburger Families)

**Monday, February 2** THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

7:00 am, Rectory † Hazel Dalton (The Dalton Family)

**Tuesday, February 3** Weekday

5:30 pm, Troy † Robert Garrison

(The Bradford & Hamburger Families)

**Wednesday, February 4** Weekday

5:30 pm, Canton † J. Jerome Wynne (St. Michael's A&R)

6:00 pm, Holy Hour

**Thursday, February 5** Saint Agatha, Virgin, Martyr  
No Mass

**First Friday, February 6** Saint Paul Miki and  
Companions, Martyrs

7:00 am, Canton † Gerald Brann

(Mrs. Wally Koval & Family)

**Saturday, February 7** Weekday

VIGIL: 5TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

4:00 pm, Canton † Jerome Wynne (Leslie & Chick Debach)

**Sunday, February 8** 5th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

8:00 am, Ralston † Pro Populo

9:30 am, Canton † Russell & Marie O'Neal

(John & Pat Rushin)

11:15 am, Troy † Julia Hamburger

(The Bradford & Hamburger Families)

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 sick, especially those nearing  
life's end, to be cared for with tenderness and  
compassion as they prepare to enter eternal life.

A Communal Rosary is prayed at 9:30 am on  
Thursdays in St. Michael's Church.  
All are invited to participate.



### SAINT MICHAEL'S PARISH OFFERINGS January 19 - 25, 2026

Weekly Offerings:	1,273.00
Electronic Offerings:	525.00
Other Parish Income:	23.50
Total Parish Income:	1,821.50
Average weekly expenses:	4,868.51
Difference:	(3,047.01)
Church in Latin America:	221.00
Care & Education of Priests:	5.00

*Thank you for your continued support.*

## FROM FATHER JOE'S DESK

### INTERESTED IN BECOMING CATHOLIC, OR REFRESHING YOUR MEMORY?



This Sunday, February 1st, we will  
celebrate the Rite of Acceptance into  
the Order of Catechumens during the  
9:30 am Mass in St. Michael's Church. This brings us into  
the catechumenate phase, the period of formal preparation  
for entrance into full membership in the Catholic Church.  
Celebrating the Rite will be three Catechumens, and three  
Candidates. The next session is at 7 pm on Monday, Feb-  
ruary 2, 2026 in the rectory.

*The Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Con-  
version will be held on Sunday, February 22, 2026 at 2:30  
p.m. at the Cathedral of Saint Peter, located at 315 Wyo-  
ming Avenue, Scranton.*



**Father Joe**  
celebrates his 64th  
birthday on Saturday,  
February 7th!  
When you see him,  
be sure to wish him a  
**Happy Birthday!**

### 2026 CHILI COOKOFF

Our annual chili cookoff will be held on Tuesday,  
February 17th. We will accept entries starting at 5 PM.  
If you would rather donate a desert we would appreciate  
those as well. We invite all to enjoy the entries starting  
at 5:30 we would like to conclude by 7 PM. The Saint  
Michael Cemetery association will award a cash prize  
for the best chili and a prize for favorite desert. The cash  
prize may be small, bragging rights are invaluable.

### SAINT MICHAEL PARISH PRAYER LIST

Barby, John & Peggy Adams, Roberta Arnold,  
Karl Barton, John Bilbrey, Cassi Blaney, Joseph Blaszc,  
Mary Blaszc, Gus Branish, Betty Brown, Dennis Clarke,  
Ezra Cole, Grace Cott, Anthony DeMarco,  
Kiran Dhawan, Philip Doud, Dorland & Carlene Eck,  
Colleen Eklund, Leon English, Wayne Ettinger,  
Aldie Fitzwater, Misty Frame, Theresa Gentile,  
Douglas Greene, Melissa Gowan, William Hall,  
Peter Hamburger, Barb Hinman, Maryllis Hughes,  
Victoria Johnson, Emily Jones, Lauren Kreager,  
David Kule, Jo Kule, Judy Lepper, Bob Lutz,  
Joyce Maloney, David Martinez, Tom McBlane,  
Ed "Buster" Merritt, Delina Morgan, Charlotte Morse,  
Mary Nybeck, Pamela Porter O'Brien, John O'Brien,  
Leo Parchesky, Ramona Parker, Gary Paquette,  
Lori Pellegrini, Olivia Perrotto, Giselle Phillips,  
Brittany Romaine, Elizabeth Ross, Joan Ross,  
Roger Rossi, Pat Rushin, Cristy Schmelzle,  
Marilyn Scott, Ahmed Hassa Sharief, Anthony Shipula,  
Christine Shipula, Bev Smith, Elaine Strange,  
Wayne Strange, Alyssa Van Zile, Elias Vroman,  
Steven Wilber, John Wilcox, Fran Zizza  
*Contact the office to add a name to the prayer list.*



# Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope** and **joy** in the Catholic faith.

February 2026

St. Michael Parish

## One Minute Meditations

### St. Onesimus

Born in Phrygia, St. Onesimus was enslaved to Philemon of Colossae in present-day Turkey. He encountered St. Paul during the apostle's imprisonment in Rome, where Onesimus had fled after stealing from his master. Moved by Paul's witness, he repented, was baptized, and later gained his freedom. Onesimus became a trusted companion and co-worker of St. Paul and was eventually martyred for the faith during the persecutions under Emperor Domitian.

### God's Valentine to us

If God sent a Valentine, it might sound something like this: *"My darling child"* (Jeremiah 31:20), *"You are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you"* (Isaiah 43:4). *"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love"* (John 15:9). *"Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends..."* (John 15:13-14). *"Do you love me?"* (John 21:16) That makes the Bible the world's longest love letter.

"God is not the enemy of our freedom but its ground. That is something we ought to relearn in these days. Only love that is almighty can ground a joy that is free from anxiety." Pope Benedict XVI

## "What do you seek?" (John 1:38)

Have you ever felt restless or quietly dissatisfied, sensing that something in your life needs changing? Lent offers that opportunity. It is a spiritual reset, inviting us to reorient our hearts toward Christ, the true source of peace, joy, purpose, and meaning. Here are practical ways to deepen your encounter with God and His love this Lent.

**Faith is relational, not informational.** The first disciples were not content with simply hearing about Jesus. They wanted to be with Him and to know Him personally. Christ extends that same invitation to us today. We respond by making room for Him through prayer and meditation, regular participation in Mass, and time with Scripture, not as duties to complete, but as ways of choosing a living relationship with the One who loves us most.

**Choose trust over control.** "Let Him lead and guide you," Pope Leo has urged. God's invitation to deeper friendship is renewed each day, and Lent is a privileged time to respond with intention. Begin each morning by

offering your day to God, placing your work, relationships, and uncertainties in His hands. This simple act of trust opens the door to genuine freedom.

Share what you have received. A true encounter with God naturally leads to what Pope Leo called "missionary

*"If you sense the Lord calling you, do not be afraid...He alone knows the deepest, perhaps hidden, longings of your heart — the path that will lead you to true fulfillment."* (Pope Leo XIV)

zeal," the desire to share with others what we have received. After meeting Christ, St. Andrew simply brought his brother, Simon Peter, to Him. Likewise, sharing your faith is often as simple as an honest conversation with a friend about the source of your hope. You are not persuading or performing; you are inviting someone you care about to meet the Friend who has changed your life.

This Lent, let renewal take root. Choose presence, trust, and generosity, and allow God to do the rest.

## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Why do Catholics give up meat on Fridays in Lent?

Abstaining from meat on Fridays in Lent is not merely a rule, but a reverent sacrifice rooted in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice on Good Friday. By giving up something we enjoy but do not need, we unite a small, bodily sacrifice to His offering on the Cross.

This "prayer of the body" strengthens the prayer of the soul, training our hearts in discipline and gratitude. It keeps our focus on Christ and serves as a quiet, outward sign of faith. For the same reasons, the Church encourages Friday penance throughout the year.

## When things go wrong, choose charity

When difficulties arise, our instinct is often to complain, assign blame, or turn inward with harsh self-criticism. These reactions rarely solve the problem. More often, they weaken charity, cloud judgment, and strain relationships. A more constructive response is to choose kindness deliberately, in thought, speech, and action.

**Practice kindness in thought:** When self-pity, resentment, comparison, or harsh self-judgment appear, treat them as temptations rather than truths. Pause and redirect your thinking. Replace them with a steady reminder such as, "This is difficult, but I can respond well." Offer yourself the same patience you would give a friend.

**Practice kindness in speech:** Before speaking, ask whether

your words will help or simply vent frustration. If you would not say something to or about someone you love, refrain. When emotions run high, bring your complaints to prayer first. Naming them before God can bring clarity and restraint.

**Practice kindness in action:** Focus on what you can do rather than what you cannot control. Choose one concrete act of goodwill: express gratitude, offer help, listen attentively, or perform a small, unnoticed kindness. These simple actions restore perspective and soften difficult moments.

Responding with kindness does not ignore problems. It creates the conditions for peace, clearer judgment, and constructive action to take root.

### from Scripture

#### Matthew 4:1-11, He chose us

In this passage, Jesus is tempted by the Devil. First, Satan tempted Jesus to satisfy His hunger with a miracle – to put physical needs above spiritual needs. Jesus showed us that spiritual needs come first, and to entrust both to God's care. Next, Satan commanded Jesus to jump from the temple roof, forcing God's hand. Again, Jesus refused: serving God means doing things God's way.

Finally, Satan offered to surrender all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would worship him. While horrible, it

promised a "painless" way to save the world. Jesus rejected it, choosing the Cross because it was the only way to save us. He chose us. When tempted to do what's "easy" versus what's morally right, ask for the strength to choose what's right.

The season of Lent is a powerful opportunity for spiritual renewal and growth in love. We can take comfort knowing Jesus faced the same temptations we do and conquered them. If we stay close to Jesus, He will lead us to victory.

also a day of abstinence from meat and fasting – one regular meal and two small meals that together don't equal a full meal.

**February 22 – St. Margaret of Cortona (1297).** St. Margaret's conversion came after the sudden death of the man she was having an affair with. Shaken, she repented and became a Franciscan tertiary. She founded a hospital and an order of Tertiary sisters — *le Poverelle* — to operate it.

**February 22 – The Chair of St. Peter.** Today marks St. Peter's establishment of the Holy See, the "seat" of authority, in Rome. We thank God for His Church and pray for its holy preservation.

### Q & A What to do with dryness in prayer

**A** God never leaves us, yet our experience of prayer can ebb and flow. There are times of joy and peace, and others marked by dryness and difficulty. While dry seasons can be discouraging, that is often when our faith can grow the most. Don't avoid them, but live them well.

**Ask why.** Dryness in prayer can point to areas that need attention. Chronic stress, lack of rest, constant busyness, excessive screen time, or unresolved sin can weaken our attentiveness to God. Examine your habits and ask what may be interfering with prayer.

**Remember the good times.** When times are tough, memory sustains love. Follow Mary's example, who "*kept all these things, pondering them in her heart*" (Luke 2:19). Recall the ways God has acted in your life. Remembering His faithfulness restores confidence.

**Renew your "yes" daily.** Mary's consent to God's will was a daily surrender, even amid suffering. Resist the temptation to abandon prayer. Each day, echo her words: "*Let it be done unto me according to your word*" (Luke 1:38).

### Feasts & Celebrations

**February 5 – St. Agatha (c.251).** Born to a noble Sicilian family, St. Agatha dedicated herself to God at the age of fifteen. The governor Quintianus was determined to marry her and threatened her if she refused him. She kept her vow despite torture, and imprisonment. God sent her a vision of St. Peter to comfort her, heal her, and fill her dungeon with heavenly light.

**February 18 – Ash Wednesday.** The first day of Lent. The ashes of old palms are placed on the forehead in the shape of a Cross, as a sign of penance. It's

#### Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.  
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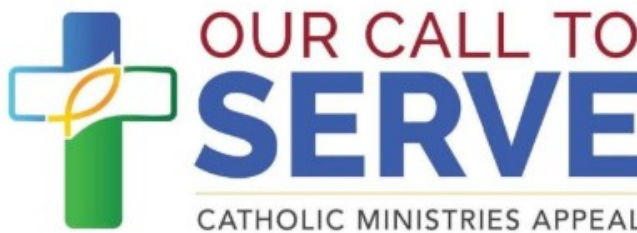




**POPE LEO XIV**  
**FEBRUARY PRAYER INTENTION**  
 FOR CHILDREN WITH INCURABLE DISEASES  
 Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON  
**LENTEN**  
**HOLY HOUR**  
*with* Bishop Bambera  
**Thursday, February 19**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish**  
**245 State Street, Wyalusing, PA 18853**  
 2026 Theme: "Finding Peace in Challenging Times"



**OUR CALL TO**  
**SERVE**  
 CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL  
 As of January 24th, we have reached 79% of our \$20,283 parish goal. \$16,185 has been donated or pledged by 59 donors, which makes our current participation rate 22%. Thank you to everyone who has contributed, both financially and with your prayers.


**FEBRUARY 2 - 9, 2026 READINGS**  
**Mon:** 2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5 Ps 96:1-3, 7-8a, 10 Mk 3:22-30  
**Tues:** 2 Sm 6:12b-15 Ps 24:7-10 Mk 3:31-35  
**Wed:** 2 Sm 7:4-17 Ps 89:4-5, 27-30 Mk 4:1-20  
**Thurs:** 2 Sm 7:18-19, 24-29 Ps 132:1-5, 11-14 Mk 4:21-25  
**Fri:** 2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17 Ps 51:3-7, 10-11 Mk 4:26-34  
**Sat:** 2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17 Ps 51:12-17 Mk 4:35-41  
**Sun:** Zep 2:3; 3:12-13 Ps 146:6-10 1 Cor 1:26-31 Mt 5:1-12a

**THIS WEEK ON *formed*, WEEK OF FEBRUARY 1, 2026**

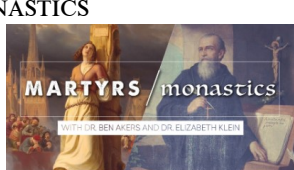
**THE PRESENTATION**  
 The Presentation is already foreshadowing the Cross. The offering Mary makes at the Presentation in the Temple becomes manifested and reaches its fulfillment at Calvary.



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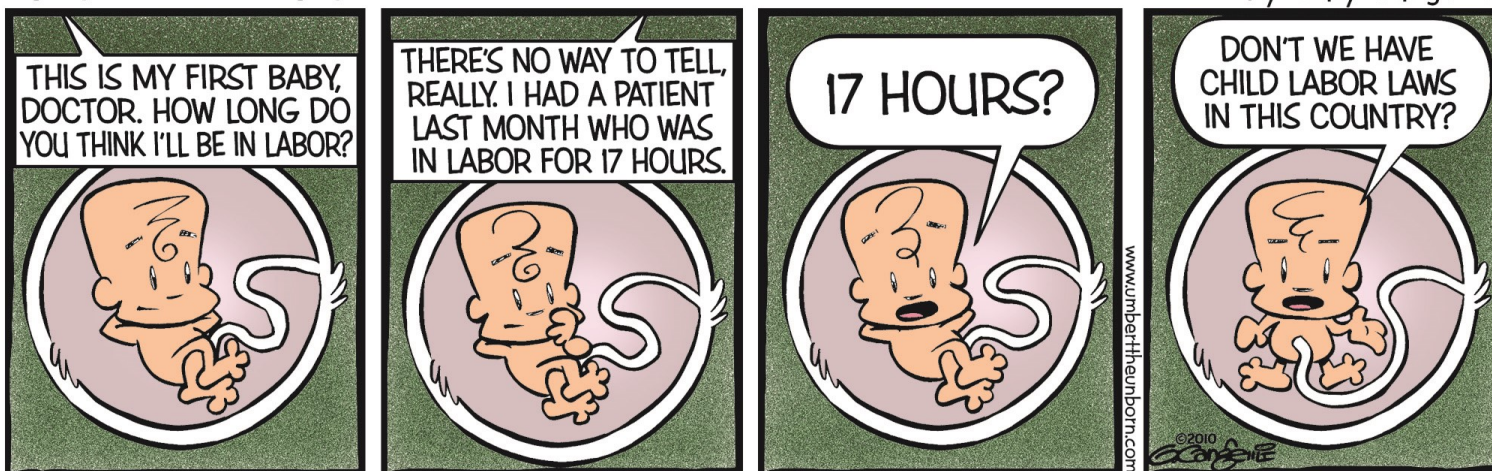
**MARTYRS AND MONASTICS**  
 Dr. Ben Akers sits down with Dr. Elizabeth Klein, Professor of Theology at the Augustine Institute Graduate School, to discuss her Short Course: Martyrs and Monastics. Who are the early Church martyrs? What fueled their witness to the faith? How did monasticism develop? These questions and more are addressed in this show.



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## Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi



THIS IS MY FIRST BABY, DOCTOR. HOW LONG DO YOU THINK I'LL BE IN LABOR?  
 THERE'S NO WAY TO TELL, REALLY. I HAD A PATIENT LAST MONTH WHO WAS IN LABOR FOR 17 HOURS.  
 17 HOURS?  
 DON'T WE HAVE CHILD LABOR LAWS IN THIS COUNTRY?

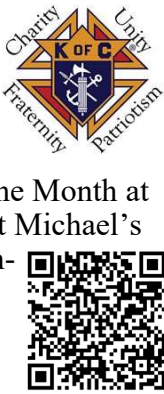
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# Knights of Columbus Council #5517

Meetings are the second Wednesday of the Month at 7:15 pm in Saint Michael's Hall. New members are always welcome. Join online here:



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**SAINT MICHAEL'S ALTAR & ROSARY SOCIETY**  
Saint Michael's Altar & Rosary Society is open to all women of the parish. We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in Saint Michael's Church hall at 1:00 pm. We always welcome new members.

**BARRETT LAW OFFICES**  
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Jim Ross, Chairperson  
(570) 651-0489  
[huckleberrycow@yahoo.com](mailto:huckleberrycow@yahoo.com)

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