

# St. Michael's Catholic Church

Outreach in LOVE  
ALL BELONG.



## Winter 2021 Bulletin

### Happy Valentine's Day!

Hi all! We are wishing you a loving Valentine's Day! When we began to research St. Valentine for our Winter Bulletin, we were surprised to learn that not much is actually known about St. Valentine (there are stories of at least two different St. Valentines! See below for more information). So, while the traditional exchange of "valentines" is more the result of modern-day customs rather than the memory of St. Valentine, there is a Christian message that should be remembered every Valentine's Day: that the love of our Lord is a sacrificial, selfless, and unconditional. Such is the love that each of us is called to express in our own lives, for both God and neighbor. We love you all and are thankful for your friendship—now more than ever!



### Prayer for Winter

Lord:

In the midst of Winter, when the days are cold and wind can pierce, remind us of the warmth of your love. In the midst of Winter, when days are short, dawn comes late, and dusk arrives early, remind us that in the darkness your light still shines. In the midst of Winter, when the flowers of spring still lie hidden in the earth, when leaves are off the trees, and the world can seem bleak, remind us that Easter is but a short time away. And when in our lives we feel as if we are experiencing a season of winter, reach out to us with the power of your resurrection so that we may feel the warmth of your love and see your light that alone can take away the darkness.

Amen.



## Winter Feast Days

### **February is the Month of the Holy Family**

The month of February is dedicated by the Church to the Holy Family. Between Christmas and the beginning of Christ's death and resurrection at Easter, the Church calls us to remember the perfect example of the Holy Family as the ideal Christian family. The Feast of the Presentation in the Temple (February 2, also known as Candlemas) is a fitting transition from Christmas to Easter. The Presentation in the Temple was when the Christ-Child was presented to God while still a baby in His Mother's arms. February is an ideal time to honor the Holy Family and to thank God for our own earthly family.

### **February 3rd – Saint Blaise**

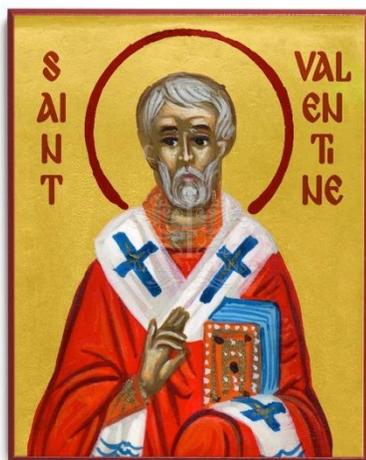
Saint Blaise was the bishop of Sebastea in Turkey, and a doctor. The first known record of the saint's life comes from the medical writings of Aëtius Amidenus, where he is recorded as helping with patients suffering from objects stuck in their throat. Saint Blaise is believed to begin as a healer then, eventually, became a "physician of souls." He then retired to a cave, where he remained in prayer. People often turned to Saint Blaise for healing miracles. The Church celebrates St. Blaise's Feast Day by offering a Blessing of the Throats to pray for physical healing.



### **February 14th – St. Valentine**

A bit surprisingly, not much is known about St. Valentine. History actually teaches us that there are at least two men who were named Valentine and died in the same year, 269, as a martyr because of their faith for Christ. However, the Church, when it revised the liturgical calendar in 1969, removed St.

Valentine from the General Roman Calendar since there is so little known about him that can be historically verified. What is for certain those is that these men, each named St. Valentine, showed heroic love for the Lord and His Church.



# flappy Valentines Days!

E N T C I J G R R W K A U Z G  
F M P F G Y B A C O T Y B P N  
G U O A H L G L J N G X A V I  
R K V S C G X U E D O G B T Z  
F N D I E M D C J E T H R X A  
U W W J X W I A W R A R R K M  
N A B X Z F A T V F N G E T A  
W W B N I V A C J U K Y E P G  
H D R N S U P E R L E R C X Y  
A A G B Y V J P Y T R F T W U  
T A F A N T A S T I C R X Y I  
M S U O L U B A F C A T J T U  
E Y S Y V C C I L M O P Y F R  
R W E J Q V C B S A H O H S C  
H A O R J R E K P W F R L Y M

We love because he  
first loved us.

1 John 4:19

*i think you're :*

AMAZING  
AWESOME  
COOL  
FABULOUS

FANTASTIC  
FUN  
MAGNIFICENT  
SMART

SPECTACULAR  
SUPER  
TERRIFIC  
WONDERFUL



This year, Valentine's Day is fittingly followed only a few days later by Ash Wednesday, which falls on February 17th. Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, a time of preparation for Easter Sunday and an opportunity to go deeper with God and to recognize his unending love for us.

***What are ways in which you can grow closer to God?***

### **Ash Wednesday Gospel Reading**

**Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18**

Jesus said to his disciples: "Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you."

In this passage, Jesus teaches us about prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These are the three traditional "pillars" of Lenten observance. During Lent, we are encouraged to focus on prayer. This can be done by adding or increasing silent prayer time each day, taking time to pray as a family, attending Mass more regularly, in addition to other options. We are also asked to fast during Lent, which includes abstaining from meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays, plus observing a day of fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. This also includes the tradition of "giving something up" for Lent. The purpose of fasting is to help us be detached from the pleasures of this world and focus our attention on God. Finally, almsgiving refers to acts of charity. This can include offering more of our time, talent, and/or treasure in service of God. With all these practices of Lent, Jesus in this Gospel passage calls us to be humble and do them with the right intention of serving and worshipping God.