



# SAINTS TO LIVE BY

ST. BONAVENTURE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE #72

DECEMBER 2022

## The Wait Begins!

The busy month of December is upon us and we turn our focus to the two important seasons during this month – the season of Advent and the season of Christmas.

The term 'advent' is from the Latin word 'adventus' which means 'coming'. During the season of Advent, which is 4 weeks long, we prepare our hearts and souls for the birth of Jesus, which is on Christmas Day.

Your family may have an Advent wreath which consists of a circular wreath with 3 purple candles and one pink one. Each candle represents the 4 Sundays leading up to Christmas.

The Creche, a stable with Mary, Joseph and Jesus, symbolizes Christmas.

How can we prepare our hearts and souls for Christmas? Perhaps you could say a few extra prayers during Advent or make some small sacrifices or rather than buying candy give that money to those in need. This extra effort will please Jesus very much!

The feast of the Immaculate Conception falls on December 8th, which honours Mary as being conceived without the stain of original sin. Not only is Mary the

mother of Jesus but Jesus gave her to us too!

As a caring mother Mary is happy to bring our prayers to her son Jesus. She never gets tired of hearing from us!

## St. Eligius

As a boy, Eligius was apprenticed to a goldsmith who was also master of France's royal mint. The boy had a flair for designing and crafting splendid jewelry. Once his apprenticeship was complete, Eligius took advantage of his master's royal connections and travelled to Paris, where he offered his services to King Clotaire II. To see what the young genius could do, Clotaire gave Eligius a mass of gold and a bag of precious stones and ordered him to make a throne. Using these materials, the clever metalsmith fashioned two thrones. Impressed by the beauty of the workmanship, the honesty of the artist and the unexpected pleasure of getting two thrones for the price of one, Clotaire made Eligius his goldsmith.

Other important commissions soon followed. Eligius created reliquaries

for the shrines of St. Martin de Tours, St. Denis, and St. Genevieve in Paris, and Saints Crispin and Crispinian of Soissons. Between royal patronage and working for some of the wealthiest monasteries in France, Eligius became a very rich man. His clothes were made of silk, embellished with gold threads and studded with jewels. But if he was a flashy dresser, he was also a man with a soft heart. He gave alms so lavishly that he could hardly set foot outside his house without being besieged by needy people.



Even after becoming first a monk, and then the bishop of Noyon, Eligius continued to make glorious gold and silver artworks for the Church.

Tragically, most of his major works were destroyed during the French Revolution.

The few that survived revealed that St. Eligius was a man of deep faith and unparalleled skill.

He is the patron saint of jewellers and his feast day is December 1.

**We wish a happy feast day to all those who celebrate their Saint's day in December. We pray your patron saints watch over you and guide you as you strive to be good people like them.**



## ST. PETER CANISIUS

Peter was born on May 8th, 1521 in Nijmegen, Netherlands and was made a Doctor of the Church in 1925. He is also the patron saint of Germany.

When he was a young man, he was the first Dutchman to join the newly formed Jesuit order of the priesthood. He worked in Germany, Austria, Bohemia and Switzerland at the height of the Protestant Reformation. He is known as a prolific Catholic theologian, preacher, teacher and evangelizer.

Renowned as a popular preacher, people



flocked to the churches where he was speaking and many converted to Catholicism after hearing him preach. He also founded the first German speaking Jesuit colleges and cared

for the sick, reputedly travelling over twenty thousand miles on foot or horseback!

He died in Fribourg in 1597 at the age of 76. We celebrate the feast of St. Peter Canisius on December 21st.

## Did you know...



St. Peter was asked to be a "secret agent" for the Vatican, smuggling copies of the decrees from the Council of Trent into the hands of all the bishops in Europe. The first envoy who tried to carry the decrees through territory of hostile Protestants and vicious thieves was robbed of the precious documents. Rome needed someone courageous but also someone above suspicion. They chose Peter Canisius. He did his job courageously and successfully.

## The Seven Martyrs of Samosata

We celebrate the feast of these seven great people who died for their love of Jesus on December 9th. They were alive in the 4th century. The experiences of these martyrs were written by a priest who was present at their martyrdom and who received their final blessing.

Two of these martyrs, Hipparchus and Philotheus, were magistrates of Samosata in Asia Minor and were devoted followers of Christ. When Emperor Maximus ordered a pagan victory festival and ordered all the citizens to attend, these 2 Christian magistrates refused to attend, and remained at home in prayer. While they were praying they were visited by 5 young men, named James, Paragus, Abibus, Romanus, and Lollianus, who were so inspired by their example that they requested baptism. A priest who was called inquired whether they were willing to suffer, and even to die, for Christ. They answered that nothing could separate them from the love of Christ. They were baptized by the priest, and given the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ.

When the Emperor discovered that these seven men refused to participate in the pagan festival, he ordered them to be brought before him. The men, however, remained steadfast and refused to participate

in the pagan practices. The Emperor ordered them to be put on a rack and tortured. Following this, they were sent to dungeons and fed only bread and water. Two months later they were brought before the Emperor and still refused to worship the idols, as ordered by Maximus. They were subsequently gagged and crucified. Maximus ordered their bodies to be thrown in the Euphrates River, but a Christian man named Bassus, bought their release from the soldiers, and all 7 of these great men were buried on his estate.

### St. Damasus

Of archaeology's two patron saints, only St. Helen was a digger. Today we would call

St. Damasus, a preservationist.

The son of a Christian family, Damasus was born in Rome at the end of the last major Christian persecution. The persecutions had resulted in martyrs by the thousands, perhaps even tens of thousands. Rome itself had witnessed the infamous deaths of St. Agnes (forced to stand naked in a brothel, then beheaded), St. Anastasia (burned alive) and St.

Sebastian (shot full of arrows). Damasus memorized the martyrs' stories during his youth. As a young priest he was assigned to the basilica built over the tomb of St. Lawrence who also died a horrific death. This served to strengthen Damasus' devotion to the saints who had given their lives for their faith.

In October 366, Damasus was elected Pope, and the project dearest to his heart was the restoration and beautification of the

tombs of Rome's martyrs. To enable more pilgrims to visit the underground burial chambers, he ordered new stairways to be constructed and shafts to be dug to bring natural light and fresh air into the tunnels. He had artists adorn the catacombs with marble, mosaics and frescoes, and Damasus himself wrote epitaphs for more than sixty of Rome's most beloved saints. St. Damasus, then, is patron of the type of archeologists who restore ancient sites and make them accessible to visitors. We celebrate his feast day on December 11th.



### ADVENT PRAYER

My little Lord Jesus, I love You and thank You for this Advent season. Please help me to understand all that You have done for me. Your loving mother held You in her heart and brought You into this world. Help me to do the same.

My loving Jesus, I choose You, this Advent, as my King and my God. Draw me close to You and help me to see my sins so that I can change the things that You want me to change.

Mother Mary, pray for me this Advent so that I may do all that God wants me to do. You said "Yes" to all that God asked of you. Please pray for me that I may do the same.

Come, Lord Jesus,  
Come, Lord Jesus,  
Come, Lord Jesus, come!  
I love You, Jesus.  
Amen

### Feast Days to Remember

St. Eligius Dec 1

The Seven Martyrs of Samosata

Dec 9

St. Damasus

Dec 11

St. Peter Canisius

Dec 21

Christmas Day

Dec 25

St. Stephen

Dec 26