

**Dates of Interest**

*December 1-16*  
Advent Giving Tree

*December 3-4-5*  
EFF Advent Prayer Services  
4:30 PM and 6:30 PM

*Saturday, December 8*  
Holy Day - Immaculate Conception  
Mass at 9:30 AM and 11:30 AM

*Thursday, December 20*  
Advent Penance Service  
with Individual Confessions  
7:00 PM

*Saturday, December 22*  
Christmas Confessions  
9:00-11:00 AM

*Monday, December 24*  
Christmas Eve  
Mass at 4:30 PM and 7:30 PM

*Tuesday, December 25*  
Christmas Day  
Mass at 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM

*December 31-January 1*  
Holy Day - Mary, Mother of God  
Mass at 5:30 PM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM

*January 27 - February 1*  
Catholic Schools Week

*Ash Wednesday, February 13*  
Mass at 7:30 AM and 7:00 PM  
Liturgy of the Word at  
11:30 AM and 4:30 PM

*February 23 and March 2*  
Confirmation Retreats  
8:30 AM

**Knights of Columbus – the Strong Right  
Arm of the Church**

Throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, immigrant Catholics often faced hostility and exclusion because of their religious identity. Many were denied membership to labor unions, fraternal benefit societies and organizations that provided social services simply because they were Catholic. These same men frequently took jobs in factories, facing dangerous conditions that eventually left many families fatherless.

In 1881, Father Michael J. McGivney, an Irish-American Catholic priest who faced similar struggles when he lost his father at a young age, gathered a group of men in the basement of Saint Mary's Church in New Haven, Connecticut, in an effort to form a mutual benefit society. This society would support low-income immigrant Catholics and families in need, while encouraging men to be proud of their American-Catholic heritage. The men were united together by the core principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism. They sought strength in solidarity, security through unity of purpose and devotion to a holy cause. They vowed to be defenders of their country, their families and their faith.



*They were the Knights of Columbus.*

Currently 1.8 million members strong, with 15,000 councils throughout the United States, the Knights of Columbus are called “the strong right arm of the church.” Named and inspired by Christopher Columbus, whose hand brought Christianity to the New World, the order has been praised by popes, presidents and world leaders for its evangelization programs, Catholic education, civic involvement and charity to those in need.

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## Father Chambers Takes a Sabbatical

Last January, Father Frank Chambers took off for Rome in the spirit of Augustinian education and his own history of advanced degrees. He spent the next three months at the Augustinianum, the Order's Center for Spiritual and Educational Advancement. The Center is situated next to the Vatican at OSA headquarters and is comprised of three buildings: St. Monica's College, the residence; The Curia for the Augustinian Order, where the Friar General lives and works; and the Academic building that houses the Augustinianum and the School of Patristics, where courses focus upon a study of Fathers of the Church.

During his stay, Father Chambers studied an advanced course in Augustinian Spirituality. The course is offered every year to Friars, Seminarians and Sisters who follow the Rule of St. Augustine. The course curriculum is rigorous, and given in a different language each year. Father studied in English along with 11 friars and six sisters from different countries. (The course will be offered in Italian next year; it was in Spanish in 2011). All instructors at the Augustinianum are OSA Friars, including 'local' Father Michael DiGregorio, who resides at the National Shrine of St. Rita in Philadelphia.

According to Father Chambers, most students were young.

"Some of my fellow students were surprised by the academic requirements, but I'm in a different state in life, so I can appreciate it more," smiled Father Chambers. "It was a very

Doctorate of Ministry, a professional degree.

In addition to all of his studies, Father Chambers endures a busy travel schedule for his job in the



*Father Frank Chambers with his international classmates in Rome.*

worthwhile and challenging experience. Teachers were insightful and presented the course with depth. And, the food was great! In three months, we did not have the same kind of pasta twice!"

At the end of the course, students must present a thesis in order to earn their diploma. Father Chambers successfully completed his thesis and now adds a Diploma in Augustinian Spirituality to a Master's Degree in Counseling from Villanova, a Master's Degree in Spirituality from Duquesne, and a Master's Degree in Theology from the Washington Theological Union. Father Chambers is currently working on his thesis for a

Admissions Department at Villanova, but also enjoys his time at Saint Elizabeth where he feels like a true member of our family. "I really appreciate the close-knit community at Saint Elizabeth," he said. "Once, I turned down another job offer because it would have prevented me from continuing to work with the people of Saint Elizabeth."

Lucky for us! We are fortunate to have such a learned and dedicated priest with us each weekend. So, Father Chambers: We're glad to have you back 'home' again.

*~ Lisa Sheronas*

# Elizabeth Ministry Play Dates Open to All Caregivers

**W**hen Doug Simpson saw an advertisement in our parish bulletin last Spring about an Elizabeth Ministry play date, he decided to check it out with his 3½ year-old son, John.

Doug is a stay-at-home dad to John and his brother, Tommy. “I felt that the ladies in the group were very welcoming toward me, which is not necessarily the case for most play groups when a dad shows up,” Doug said. He explained that the majority of other playgroups are exclusively for stay-at-home moms.

“I don't have a problem with any group setting their own parameters to restrict membership,” Doug said. “The Elizabeth Ministry is more welcoming, I think, because the common faith of the attendees allows for greater openness toward everyone.”

JoAnna Benton, co-chair of the Elizabeth Ministry, explained “We encourage all caregivers to join us as an outlet to spend time with their peers.”

Play dates are part of the core of the Elizabeth Ministry – which is designed for all children ranging from infants through kindergarteners. “Being a caregiver, especially for very young children, can be stressful and isolating at times,” JoAnna said. “These playgroups are an outlet, allowing caregivers to meet others with similar-aged

children. They can share feelings and stories, and, of course, have some fun as well.”

The Ministry holds four morning play dates a year:

- **October – Trick-or-Treat with the Saints**
- **December (Thursday, 12/6/12) – Happy Birthday Jesus**
- **Early Spring (Wednesday, 3/13/13) – Easter or Earth Day-themed.**
- **Spring (Friday, 5/17/13) – Road Rally**

“During Trick or Treat with the Saints we visit several areas around the church and learn about saints. We give out treats such as animal crackers for Saint Francis and kisses for the Holy Family. During Happy Birthday Jesus, we have cake and sing ‘Happy Birthday.’ We also visit the second grade classrooms. The students make cards and read to the kids,” JoAnna said.

In addition to play dates, the Elizabeth Ministry also sends prayer cards to expectant moms, and offer their assistance should any needs arise during pregnancy and the months following birth. The group also offers prayer and support to families experiencing adoption, infertility, miscarriage, child death, severe child illness, and special needs births. This part of the Ministry inspired Amy Laughlin, now co-chair of the group. She and her husband



*Playgroup fun at Trick-or-Treat with the Saints.*

experienced tragedy when their baby girl passed away three hours after birth three years ago.

“Our doctors discovered that Grace had a severe chromosomal disorder at our 20-week ultrasound,” Amy explained. “After that, I was obsessed with the idea that I needed to find a reason for her death, and I looked around for volunteer opportunities in the parish. When I found this ministry, and read what it stood for, I thought it was perfect.”

Whether it’s through fun play dates or the group support provided to other young families, the Elizabeth Ministry is another inspiring way that parishioners can feel connected to Saint Elizabeth.

*All play dates will be held from 9:30 AM-11:00 AM. To RSVP, or for more info, please contact JoAnna at joannabenton@comcast.net or Amy at amyLaughlin28@gmail.com.*

~ Sara Richardson

## Family Spirits

### Meet Carolyn Lese – World Traveler Returns Home to Saint Elizabeth!

*Carolyn Lese has been a member of our parish since 2001 when she moved from Exton to Chester Springs. Through her consulting job with PwC, Carolyn has traveled 34 states and more than 20 countries spanning four continents! Read more about how this energetic parishioner has put her many talents to work for us in different capacities.*

**C**arolyn has lived in Chester County her whole life, attending grade school at Saint Basil the Great (Kimberton, PA), high school at Saint Pius X (Pottstown, PA) and finally went off to college at the University of Delaware where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration.

"I can't believe it has been 11 years since I joined this parish," remarked Carolyn. "It seems just like yesterday we went to Mass in the Lionville Middle School gym."

After graduating college, Carolyn joined PwC and is now a successful senior manager of project and business management consulting services to financial services clients. But that's just her day job! Carolyn generously volunteers her time in various stewardship capacities at Saint Elizabeth. These include her service as a liturgical greeter, as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and as the coordinator of the Committee to Welcome New Parishioners. Carolyn also recently joined the Liturgical Life Committee. Needless to say...Carolyn is a *little* busy.

"My job requires that I am out of town almost every Monday through Thursday. With this travel schedule, it was difficult to have much involvement in the community. But, I knew I would always be home on the weekends, so Church seemed like a logical place to volunteer my time. It's the one thing that's constant in my busy week," said Carolyn.

Friendly and outgoing, Carolyn started volunteering as a liturgical greeter for the 8:00 AM Mass. "It seemed pretty natural for me to say good morning to people. Plus, I think it's important to provide a welcoming environment to all parishioners," added Carolyn.

Next, after hearing Msgr. Mullin's appeal for new liturgical ministers, Carolyn offered her service as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. "His message was simple: Extraordinary Ministers need to represent the entire parish community, not just one

demographic. I am a single, childless parishioner and am just as much a part of this parish as everyone else, so why not represent?"

Beyond her work both professionally and as a steward, Carolyn enjoys following the Phillies, reading, baking (and eating!) cupcakes, crocheting and, of course, traveling. When she finally gets a moment of relaxation at home,

Carolyn's SPCA rescue cats, Gus and Lucy, make for good, non-demanding company!

"I love this parish. It's a tight-knit, fun and welcoming community filled with many talented individuals who are willing to share those talents. I think we are all bonded by our sense of creating something new here on Fellowship Road," concluded Carolyn. "And, Msgr. Mullin's leadership and spiritual guidance are the cornerstones of everything we have and continue to build on here and I'm happy to do my part."

~ Lisa Barbadora



*"I love this parish," says Carolyn Lese. "It's a tight-knit, fun and welcoming community."*

# Knights of Columbus

*(continued from cover)*

The Saint Elizabeth Council began ten years ago, with 30 local members. The charter has grown to 176 members, most of whom are also members of the parish community. Although the Knights of Columbus are an independent organization with their own leadership, by-laws, membership requirements and finances separate from the parish, members work closely with many parish ministry groups, providing labor and financial support for many parish projects throughout the year.

“We support the parish wherever we can within the parameters of our principles of charity, unity and patriotism,” explains current Grand

Knight and parishioner Curt Zingaro. “We take an active role at Saint Elizabeth, helping with projects like mulching the grounds, preparing turkey dinners for our sister parish, helping families in need, supporting parish ministries and donating most of the money we raise back to the church.”

In addition to directly supporting the parish, the Saint Elizabeth Knights of Columbus extend their service to the local

community. Recent endeavors include donating funds to the Chester County Women's Group for the purchase of an ultrasound machine, helping with the Ludwig's Horse Show, distributing toys for the local Toys for Tots program and helping prepare and transport 14,000 packets of food for the



*This summer, the Knights hosted the Springton Manor Farm potato harvest, where 3,200 pounds of potatoes were harvested and delivered to the Chester County Food Bank and various local food cupboards.*



people of Burkina Faso, a small and struggling country in West Africa,

as part of a Catholic Relief Services hunger project. This summer, the Knights hosted the Springton Manor Farm potato harvest, where 3,200 pounds of potatoes were harvested and delivered to the Chester County Food Bank and various local food cupboards. With the help of Elementary Youth Group Coordinator, Pat Kaspar, a number of Saint Elizabeth children and their parents came out to the farm to participate in this meaningful and fun event.

“This year we have put more emphasis on youth,” explains Curt. “We are starting a new group, the Columbian Squires, for boys ages ten to 18, who wish to shadow what the Knights do by participating in community service and activities, with fun things added in like sporting events. It's a great way for boys to participate with their friends, with help and guidance from the Knights. When they turn 18, hopefully they too will be inspired to become Knights.”

The Saint Elizabeth Council is always looking for new members, and welcomes anyone over the age of 18 who is a member in good standing of the church. “We meet once a month, and members can participate as much or as little as they want. We realize many families are busy, so we are

very flexible with membership. It's a great way to get involved and meet other parishioners, and it's a great father-son activity” notes Curt, whose two sons are also knights.

Father McGivney's founding vision of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism amongst Catholic men continues to prosper at the national and local levels as the Knights of Columbus proudly exemplify these virtues with so many commendable actions.

~ Julie Krumenacker

## Advent Giving Tree: *It takes many hands to keep the Giving Tree growing*

Imagine planning, purchasing and distributing 1,800 gifts to twelve different organizations on top of your already busy holiday schedule. That's exactly what Kim Slattery and members of Sharing Our Bounty, along with the generous help and donations from our parishioners, accomplish through the Advent Giving Tree Program.

The Advent Giving Tree Program was started back in 2001. That first year, the parish collected 100 gifts; last year, 1,800 gifts were donated and distributed to twelve different organizations! For 2012, the team hopes to collect 2,000 gifts and add a new charity to the recipient list.

The Giving Tree process all starts with the preparation of gift tags by several parish volunteers at the ministry center. Each organization gets a unique-shaped tag to help with sorting. Next, gift ideas are identified for each organization. Some organizations provide specific gift requests and others, just a wish list, so Kim Slattery creates gift ideas for each agency. Finally, the gift tags are completed and the tree is decorated with many colorful gift tags.

Now it's your turn to help. Parishioners are invited to choose a gift tag from the tree at the beginning of Advent. Pick



*The Advent Giving Tree program is an opportunity for all our parishioners to use their time, talent and treasure to help make someone's Christmas a little bit more special and exciting.*

one, or one for each member of your family. Choose according to the gift requested, or close your eyes and be daring – you might get that hard-to-find gift that takes a little effort to locate.

"Every year I nervously put these tags on the tree knowing there are 1,000 plus families counting on us to help them, and every year as I watch the gifts arrive, I am amazed and overwhelmed by the generosity of our parish," praises Kim.

As the gifts start coming in, volunteers sort and bag them at each weekend Mass. Members of the parish youth groups also help out by wrapping some of the gifts. Another group of volunteers help distribute the gifts to the various organizations. Kim says she is very blessed to have a great core group of volunteers who return every year to lend a hand with the project.

The Advent Giving Tree program is an opportunity for all our parishioners to use their time, talent and treasure to help make someone's Christmas a little bit more special and exciting. It also reminds us to take a moment from all of the craziness of the season to thank God for what we have and to pray for those less fortunate. As one recipient said last season, "What a blessing to know there are people out there willing to be so very generous and caring to people they will most likely never meet."

~ Rhonda Jones

### "The Spirit" Staff

*Staff Chairperson*

Kathy Link

*Editor-in-Chief*

Lisa Barbadora

*Contributors*

Lisa Barbadora

Rhonda Jones

Julie Krumenacker

Jessica LaGrossa

Sara Richardson

Lisa Sheronas

*Photos*

Mike Richardson

*Graphics*

Amy Giampietro

*Other Staff*

Georgann Cindrich

Karen Hofmann

Monsignor Mullin

Karen Patterson

Shirley Reardon

## School Spirits

*This "School Spirits" section of our newsletter delivers updates and news from the parish school, keeping parishioners up to speed on the wonderful things happening right here on our parish campus.*

As the leaves outside began to fall, the students inside Saint Elizabeth Parish School settled into their desks and into a new school year.

Officially welcoming students and their parents to the 2012-2013 school year, Principal Bernadette Dougherty expressed the faculty and staff's persistent commitment to the educational processes that spur advancement both in and out of the classroom. "We are continuing our school-wide goal this school year of using the Common Core Standards as our curriculum guidelines," she wrote in a letter to parents the first week of school, "while also continuing to focus on being a peaceful school by building relationships with God and with each other."

Mrs. Dougherty describes the parish school as a place that challenges both the students *and* the teachers. "You can also feel a sense of excitement, engagement, encouragement, and creativity as you walk through our happy halls."

New to the halls this year is Mrs. Marie Kilcoyne. Previously a part-time substitute and a first grade reading intervention teacher at Saint Theresa in Palatine, IL, Marie is now the full-time teacher aide for Jennifer Dawson's kindergarten

classroom. Her eldest daughter, Colleen, is a recent graduate of

arts along with religion for both 6B and 5A.



*Mrs. Nicole Greczek, Mrs. Judy Kluth, Mrs. Melissa DiRocco, and Mrs. Marie Kilcoyne are new to Saint Elizabeth Parish School this year.*

Saint Elizabeth Parish School, while her younger son, Connor, is currently enrolled.

"I believe kindergarten is the foundation for the students' education," said Marie. "The positive experiences they have will encourage a love for learning."

Also joining the teaching team is Mrs. Judith Kluth. A graduate of Neumann University and University of Scranton, Judy was previously an ELA teacher for fifth and sixth grades at Conshohocken Catholic School. "God sent me to Saint Elizabeth after my former school was closed due to the reorganization of the parochial schools," she shared. Mrs. Kluth has 6B homeroom and teaches sixth grade English and language

College, Melissa has been a daily K-8 substitute at various schools in Delaware and Chester Counties. She has previously taught second grade and fulfilled her student teaching requirement in the first and fifth grades.

Melissa, who married Mr. Joseph DiRocco in November, explained that she chose Saint Elizabeth because of her belief that students' education should have ties to their faith. "Being Catholic, I want to share my experience and understanding of the Catholic faith with the next generation."

Welcome to all the new teachers!

*~ Jessica LaGrossa*

## Join the Ongoing Celebration of Stewardship!

Stewardship has been an integral part of parish life here at Saint Elizabeth from the very beginning back in 2000. The *Parish Mission Statement* proclaims that we are “stewards of God’s abundant gifts.” Stewardship activities abound throughout the year: Stewardship Council meetings, the Stewardship Prayer, the Stewardship Fair, Stewardship retreat days, renewal of our stewardship of treasure and the service of more than 40 ministry groups engaging hundreds of parishioners. Yes, stewardship has become a significant way of living out our faith in Jesus Christ, yet in

many ways we have only just begun the journey of becoming a stewardship parish in its fullest sense.

- *What does it really mean to be a stewardship parish?*
- *What are the theological and spiritual foundations of Catholic Stewardship?*
- *How does the Stewardship Prayer we recite at Mass every weekend express what we believe about stewardship?*
- *How might you respond to the call to live a more complete stewardship way of life?*

Hear answers to these questions and much more at the next Stewardship Retreat Day on **Saturday, February 2, 2013**. Come to listen and dialogue with Msgr. Mullin and fellow parishioners about the call we share to deepen and to expand our personal and parish commitments to stewardship here at Saint Elizabeth. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend on February 2! Look for more information in the parish bulletin and on the parish website early in the new year.

~ Lisa Barbadora

Msgr. Thomas M. Mullin, Pastor  
P.O. Box 695  
Uwchlan, PA 19480-0695  
Phone: 610-321-1200  
Fax: 610-646-6513  
E-mail: [steuucc@stelizabetchparish.org](mailto:steuucc@stelizabetchparish.org)  
Web site: [stelizabetchparish.org](http://stelizabetchparish.org)  
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