

Dates of Interest

Tuesday, September 2
Saint Elizabeth Parish School
Opening Day for Grades 1-8

M-T-W, September 8-9-10
Elementary Faith Formation
Weekly Sessions Begin

Saturday, September 13
K of C Blood Drive

Monday, September 15
No Greater Love-
Catholics Coming Home

M-T-W, September 22-23-24
Elementary Faith Formation
Parent Orientation in Church

Saturday, September 27
Stewardship – Gift Discernment
Retreat Day

Friday-Saturday, October 17-18
Christ Renews His Parish
Women’s Overnight Renewal

Saturday, November 1
All Saints Holy Day
(non-obligatory)
Mass at 8:30 AM

Sunday-Tuesday, November 2-3-4
Forty Hours Devotions

Friday-Saturday, November 14-15
Christ Renews His Parish
Men’s Overnight Renewal

Saturday, November 22
Parent Sacramental Forum
for Confirmation &
First Holy Communion

Walking With Jesus



The prayer crosses posted along the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, or, The Way of Saint James, in Santiago, Spain. Here, parishioner Cathy Lewis laid a cross with her personal prayers, and intentions for Saint Elizabeth Parish.

During our lifetime, we experience many different types of prayer. As Catholics, we usually start by teaching our children to make the sign of the cross. We continue to build on that foundation, and our prayer lives take varied paths. For many people, their prayer life is personal and private. They prefer reading scripture, praying the rosary, or journaling. For others, their prayer life includes a physical aspect. Many people fast, travel on a pilgrimage, or even walk a labyrinth.

Thousands of pilgrims have chosen to walk the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, The Way of Saint James, first established in medieval

times. The Way is a pilgrimage to the tomb of the apostle Saint James in Santiago, Spain. The scallop shell is the symbol of the Camino, and is used as a marker along the path for the pilgrims walking the trails.

Some paths lead through small towns or along highways. Pilgrims are easily identified by a scallop shell hanging either on their backpack, around their necks, or attached to their walking sticks. They also carry a pilgrim’s passport called a ‘credencial,’ which provides a method for each traveler to record the towns where they ate or slept, and also to use as proof to show the Pilgrim’s Office that the journey was

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Walking With Jesus

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accomplished according to an official route.

A Pilgrim's Mass is held several times throughout the day at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela at the end of The Way. Attending Mass at the Cathedral is usually a high point for each traveler, along with receiving their 'compostela,' a certificate of accomplishment, and being able to physically hug the relic of Saint James.

In October 2013, one of our parishioners, Cathy Lewis, felt a calling to challenge herself to walk The Way.

There are many routes along the Camino. Many people walk it in sections, or for a designated amount of days. Cathy chose the most popular route, the French Way, which begins in St. Jean, France. She began her journey midway along the French route in Astorga, Spain and finished it 15 days later, walking into the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

"The typical day begins in the dark at 5:00 a.m. and I walked until about 3:00 p.m., after locating an albergue for the night," explained Cathy. One of the high points of each day was the community dinner and the conversations with the other pilgrims. "I prayed the rosary daily, and stopped frequently, enjoying the friendship and hospitality of the Spanish people," she said.

Near the end of the Camino de Santiago is a long chain link fence. Crosses made of sticks are woven

into the fence as a symbol of their travel and prayer intentions. "I placed a cross in the fence for my personal intentions, and for the continued success of Saint Elizabeth ministries; especially the first *Christ Renew His Parish* overnight renewal," said Cathy.

"Follow Me" and "Walk with Me" are phrases that remind us that we are called to walk with Jesus. Few of us will be able to experience a pilgrimage to the Camino de Santiago in northern Spain, but there are

other ways that we can walk and pray with Jesus. Perhaps we might escape the rush of our daily lives and visit a local park or walking path. Knowing this, one can even look at the walking trail around the Saint Elizabeth parish grounds in a different light.

-Georgann Cindrich



Top: Parishioner Cathy Lewis is pictured along her journey on The Way. She carried a small stone from Saint Elizabeth Parish along the entire way, and left it by the crypt of Saint James. Bottom: A scenic view.

Check out more about The Way on YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=FF4xC-Vfivk



Elementary Faith Formation: Enriching the Lives of Both Stewardship Volunteers and the Children

It may seem like the Elementary Faith Formation (EFF) Ministry is all about the students; but ask any of the almost 130 EFF catechists, catechetical aides and office volunteers, and you'll find that the experience is just as enriching for them as it is for the children.

"I have gained great satisfaction helping the children grow in confidence and learn more about their faith, while watching them increase their understanding of their religion. At the same time, I have grown in my own faith and understanding," said Marie Martini, a long-time catechist. "I have also met many parishioners and have made many lasting friendships with the parents of the children I have taught through the years, as well as fellow volunteers and catechists."

Marie has been involved in the EFF Ministry for over 12 years, guiding our children at almost every grade level. She became involved in the ministry when her oldest daughter was in first grade. Marie offered her home as a host site for EFF classes before the parish education center was constructed and was later asked to consider becoming a catechist. "I didn't have any real teaching experience," she admits, "but I always enjoyed working with children, so I was happy to help."

Marie's two daughters have now completed their elementary faith formation; however, Marie continues working as a catechist for one of the sixth grade classes.

Andrea Bell also realizes how the program has enriched her life. Although she's only been involved in the ministry for a year, she has loved the support of the team and students.

"Through my work as a catechist in the EFF Ministry, I have continued to grow in my own relationship with God," Andrea said.

"My passion for working with children and my belief that our children show us how to live more like Christ, spurred my response to the call for EFF volunteers," she said. "I believe that children can develop a beautiful and genuine relationship with God, and can teach the rest of us so much when they share that relationship with us."

Having gone through the RCIA program at Saint Elizabeth, Andrea's catechesis was as an adult. Her only experience with children's faith formation was when her son, now 20, attended CCD. "At first I was a little nervous about whether I knew enough to contribute effectively; however, with the training and support of the EFF team and all that my fourth grade students taught me, I realized that what I knew was not nearly as important as what I was willing to learn," Andrea explained.

"Bringing the children into Communion with Christ is the



Catechist volunteers attend an Elementary Faith Formation summer workshop session in July.

mission statement for EFF," stresses Belle Mahoney, coordinator of Elementary Faith Formation. "We focus on developing a prayerful relationship with Christ. It's the heart and soul and mind of Christ. It is more than religious education; it is faith formation."

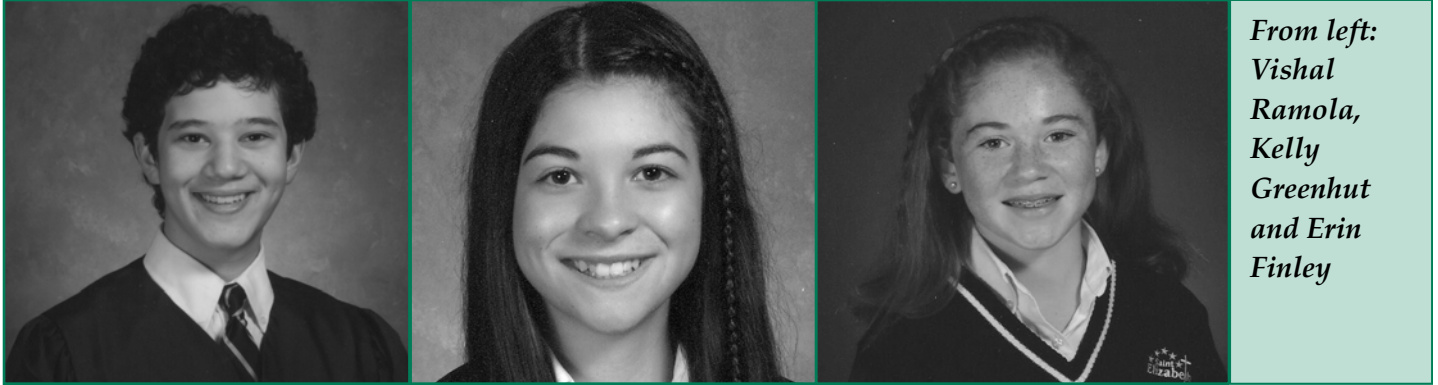
Belle helps prepare all of the catechists and assistants so they are comfortable in their roles. There are summer workshops for volunteers covering scripture, prayer and classroom management. Archdiocesan workshops are also offered twice a year, covering faith formation and ministry skills.

"The support that the EFF team provides is truly exceptional," raved Andrea Bell. "From finding a resource or activity, to helping with strategies to effectively guide the children, the team is always there to help." Both Marie and Andrea agree that the sources and materials available to

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School Spirits

Eighth Grade Graduates Reflect on Their Parish School Memories



From left:
Vishal
Ramola,
Kelly
Greenhut
and Erin
Finley

With the 2013-2014 school year in their rear-view mirror, 30 students from Saint Elizabeth Parish School's most recent eighth grade class are now beginning high school. This class was an accomplished group of individuals, with numerous scholarships and awards to its credit. The majority have chosen to attend Bishop Shanahan High School, with Devon Prep, Villa Maria Academy and the Downingtown Area School District, among others, in the mix as well. "This was a very 'musical' class that participated enthusiastically with liturgy preparation and the Living Stations of the Cross," notes Dr. Diane Greco, parish school principal. "This class contributed greatly to many moving and meaningful prayer services throughout the year."

Before they move on to their new educational "home," we reached out to a few of the recent graduates, and asked them to reflect on their time at the parish school. Here's what they had to say:

Vishal Ramola

"My favorite memory from Saint Elizabeth Parish School was when my band, Platinum Triangle,

played at the spring concert. We had a great time and were able to share the joy of Rock n' Roll with the rest of the school. What I liked most about our school was that walking into it felt like walking into your own home. I knew every face, and knew my friends were all there, too."

Kelly Greenhut

"Playing sports at Saint Elizabeth was always so much fun because, win or lose, we always found ways to have fun and be a family. What I liked best about the school is that there was always someone you could go to for help, no matter what the problem was. We were like a big family that always helped each other."

Erin Finley

"I will miss the teachers and staff the most. They were all so helpful and loving to me, even when I had thousands of questions! The teachers always had my best interest in mind. Also, attending a Catholic elementary school has really built a foundation for my faith, and this is why I look forward to attending a Catholic high school."

-Amy Giampietro

Parsons Scholarship to Bishop Shanahan High School:

Michael Gingrich
Kelly Greenhut

Peggy McGovern Plunkett Award to Bishop Shanahan; donated by the Nancy and Michael Pia Foundation:

Bridget Oakes

Anderson Gloria Dei Award to attend Bishop Shanahan; instituted by Mr. & Mrs. Chris Anderson:

Austin Odell

Two Neumann Scholars, who earned their award through a highly competitive, diocesan-wide scholarship exam:

Vishal Ramola
Patrick Bobko

Full 4-year scholarship to Villa Maria Academy:

Erin Finley

Individual Special Awards were presented the night of graduation to recognize students for achievements of academic excellence and qualities of character and leadership. Recipients included Erin Finley, Nicolas Fardone, Matthew Riotto, Cade Melcher, Brendan Dougherty and Thomas Waite.

Saint Elizabeth's Welcome Mat is Out

Saint Elizabeth Parish strives to make new parishioners feel welcome and we seem to be having some success with that goal. Interviews with several parishioners registered within the past year show that the welcome mat is indeed out, since each one described the parish as "very welcoming." New parishioner, Meagan Hendrickson added that joining the parish has been "a really nice experience."

Part of the success in having new members and families feel at home in our parish community is directly related to the efforts of the Welcoming New Parishioners Committee, which sends out a packet of information about the parish after registration. This is followed up with a phone call to welcome the new parishioners, and to answer any questions. In addition, once per quarter new parishioners are recognized and given a special blessing at a weekend Mass, which is typically followed by a social fellowship gathering where many parishioners have a free snack

while they welcome and meet the newcomers.

However, much of the feeling of being at home in our parish comes from the new members themselves, because they've chosen to become actively involved in the community. Several of those interviewed have already jumped into one or more ministries. The Franco family includes a cantor in the Music Ministry and a third grade catechist, the Mesiarik family volunteered for the Stewardship Day of Service and are involved in the Elementary Faith Formation Ministry ...while others are searching for the ministry that is compatible with their talents or has the greatest need for help.

Although a few of those interviewed come from halfway around the world, most come from within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, so the liturgical practices at Saint Elizabeth parish are usually similar to the parishes they recently left behind. Still, our parish held some surprises

for this group. "I had no idea the parish was so large," noted Constance Mesiarek, who was pleased at the number and variety of ministries open to participation. Meagan Hendrickson attended a Mass with the Children's Liturgy of the Word and was "astonished at the number of young families in the parish." Aimee Cyran was impressed by the celebration of Baptism at Saint Elizabeth.

The new parishioners we interviewed were hard pressed to come up with improvements to the welcoming process. After several minutes, one mentioned that a map of the parish facilities, i.e. the meeting rooms, might be included in the welcome packet. All agreed that the Welcoming New Parishioners Committee and the many parishioners they have met really know how to make people feel welcome. These new parishioners plan to be a part of the Saint Elizabeth's welcome mat, for those who join us next!

-Kathy Link

Elementary Faith Formation

(Continued from page 3)

them is very helpful in leading the children to develop their relationship with Christ.

With nearly 700 children from kindergarten through sixth grade participating in the program, it takes many stewardship volunteers to keep the ministry running smoothly. Some volunteers are parents of the children, some are teenagers who are needed to assist the other volunteers, but many are men and women who

simply want to share their faith with the children. Whatever background, education and experience the volunteers have, they are all called to stewardship service, and all are working toward the same goal of bringing the children into Communion with Christ.

Andrea encourages everyone to consider becoming a part of the program. "Please do not hesitate to explore how you can help the Saint

Elizabeth EFF Ministry. With the support of the team and with God's guidance, you will be able to share your gifts with the children, while they enrich your life by reminding you of the wonder, awe, innocence, trust and faith of a child."

If you feel called to bring your time and talents to our children, contact Belle Mahoney at bmahoney@stelizabethparish.org.

-Rhonda Jones

Pastoral Council Members Reflect and Look Forward

This past spring, Pastoral Council elections were held at Saint Elizabeth parish, bringing some new members to the group, as well as the retirement of three dedicated parishioners.

The Saint Elizabeth Pastoral Council, a group of parishioners representing the parish at large, serves to advise and assist Father Mullin in matters pertaining to the life and mission of our parish. Pastoral councils exist in three-quarters of all Catholic churches in the United States, which is roughly 18,000 parishes throughout the country. In a prayerful, collaborative manner, these groups help their pastors carry out local parish pastoral missions by reflecting on and sharing their visions for the future. Having the same charge, members of the Saint Elizabeth Pastoral Council are an important and valued part of our community.

Individuals serving on the pastoral council are either elected by parishioners for an initial three-year term and may serve two consecutive terms if chosen by the community, or they serve by appointment of the pastor. Al Riviezzo, who served on the finance council prior to spending six years on the pastoral council, reflected on his tenure:

“During my time on the pastoral council, I helped with the development of our new pastoral plan, which took a lot of time and effort. While on the finance committee, I also noticed that the collections were on a downward trend, as was attendance at Mass. I felt strongly that this issue needed attention.

My thought was that if sacramental life is important to an individual, then regular attendance at the Eucharist was the linchpin. Trying to discern what was keeping parishioners from Mass and the revival of our parish was a priority, which I hope, going forward, that the council continues to address.”

Newly elected member Robin Kerwin notes, “I am honored to be elected. I look forward to serving on this council, and participating in the planning of both the parish’s short- and long-term goals. As a younger parishioner, I also wish to engage young parish members and their families in Mass attendance and stewardship activities, as well as with helping the community.”

“With the parish approaching our 15th anniversary, this is a good time to reflect upon our tremendous progress, and consider our plans for the future,” adds newly appointed member Christopher Ritchie. “I am enthusiastic and honored to serve on the pastoral council and look forward to working together with Father Mullin and the members of the council.”

Newly elected member George Marshalek, who previously worked with several parish ministries, also states, “As a 14-year member of our parish, I really want to experience and support Father Mullin’s attempt to continue to move us to the next level of a ‘Christ-seeking community.’ With the many new ministries established in the past few years, along with our commitment to youth, families, seniors, adults and evan-

gelization (as a whole), I am sure it will be a challenging three years ahead, but I look forward to this responsibility.”

Congratulations to Robin, Christopher, and George, as well as John Irwin and Patricia Smith, who have been re-elected to the council. Best of luck as you help guide the growth of our parish. Also, the parish sends a sincere thank you to Al, as well as John Hanrahan and Maureen Runyon, for their significant contributions to the Pastoral Council throughout the past six years.

-Julie Krumenacker

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Family Spirits

The Patterson Family Embraces Stewardship

The Patterson family truly has given much of their time, talent and treasure to several programs here at Saint Elizabeth Parish. But, most important, prayer is at the center of the lives of Scott and Karen, and their five (soon to be six!) children.

It may seem like it would be difficult balancing stewardship with raising their children, but Scott and Karen take it all in stride.

“Honestly, we just try to set realistic standards for what we can do and stay flexible for when the unexpected happens, as it always does,” they explain. “Prioritizing is a constant battle, but we try to keep in mind our primary vocation of being a spouse and parent. When we fall short, we just adjust and try again (and again). Prayer helps a lot, especially the family rosary, and we rely heavily on our kids’ guardian angels to step in when we need them!”

Karen lived in New Jersey and Massachusetts before moving into the area in 1987. She moved to Chester Springs and joined our parish in 2001. Scott grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, moved to the Philadelphia area after graduate school, and then to Chester Springs in 2006.

Scott is Senior Director of Statistical Science for Vaccine Development at Pfizer and Karen worked as an engineer at a medical device company. They met on the dating website CatholicMatch.com, and married at

Saint Elizabeth Church on July 22, 2006. Scott officially joined the parish after their wedding.

“When we built our house, we were very happy to see that it was inside the parish borders, since I had really enjoyed being a member here and we had started planning our wedding with Father Mullin,” Karen said.

Karen started pursuing a doctorate in biomechanics before she found out their first child was on the way. Daniel (7 years old) and Mary Grace “Gracie” (6) attend Saint Elizabeth Parish School. Both have participated in elementary youth group activities and Gracie is a member of the Little Flowers Club at Saint Peter Parish. Michael (4) will be going to preschool at Saint Basil the Great School. Joseph is two years old, and Robert is one year old. The family will soon be joined by another son.

As for their stewardship activities, Scott and Karen are both members of the Pre-Jordan Team. Scott is an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, serves on the Home and Hospital Team, and is a member of the Knights of Columbus. He also cooks a casserole every month for our Casserole Program benefitting Saint



The Patterson Family. From left, Scott, Michael, Joseph, Gracie, Robert, Karen and Daniel. Scott and Karen's sixth child will arrive in August.

John's Hospice. Karen has been a greeter and a lector, and currently is a member of the Adult Faith Formation and Respect Life Committees. She also brings the children to Elizabeth Ministry play dates and events.

Scott and Karen feel it is important to contribute to parish life beyond attending Mass on Sundays. “We find that we really enjoy it. It is also nice for our kids to see us helping, because it shows that we are part of a bigger family and it presents some nice opportunities to have conversations with them about our faith and about parish life,” they said.

Looks like Saint Elizabeth parish can look forward to the little Pattersons growing up with a strong commitment to prayer and stewardship service, due to the steady guidance and example of their devoted parents!

-Sara Richardson

On June 7, 103 Saint Elizabeth parishioners gathered in the social hall for the second annual Catholic Relief Services and the Stop Hunger Now International Hunger Relief Organization's Food Project to benefit the people in Burkina Faso, West Africa. From \$7,200 donated into the poor box in March and April, 14,400 meals were prepared in this year's project.



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