

Dates of Interest

Memorial Day Holiday

Monday, May 28

Mass at 9:00 AM

Mass and Reception

Newly Ordained Father Thomas Higman

Sunday, June 3, 9:30 AM

Graduation Mass

Saint Elizabeth Parish School

Tuesday, June 12, 7:00 PM

Memorial Mass for Deceased Fathers

Saturday, June 16, 8:30 AM

Food Project for Burkina Faso

Saturday, June 16, 8:30 AM

Independence Day Holiday

Wednesday, July 4

Mass at 9:00 AM

Holy Day of the Assumption

Wednesday, August 15

Mass at 7:30 AM, 12 Noon, 7:00 PM

Labor Day Holiday

Monday, September 3

Mass at 9:00 AM

Saint Elizabeth Parish School

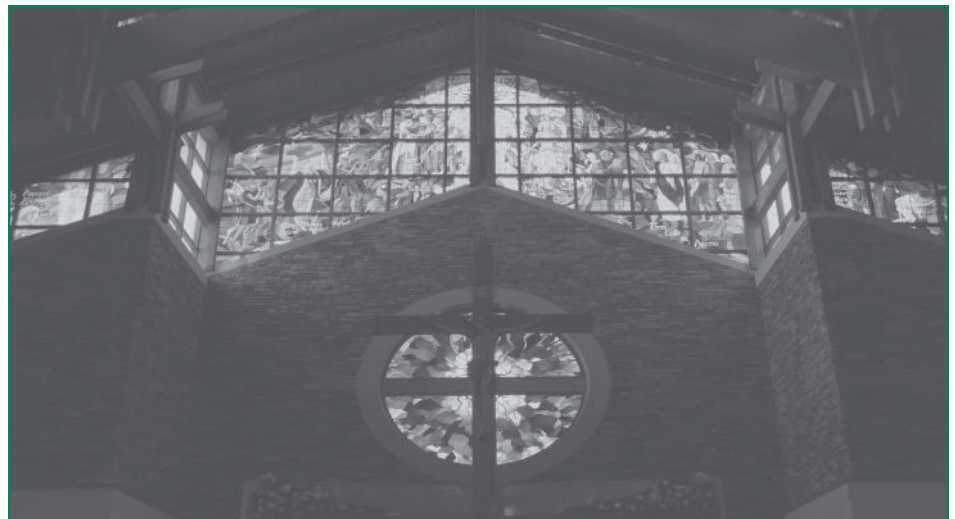
Opening Day for Grades 1-8

Tuesday, September 4

Elementary Faith Formation

Weekly Sessions Begin

September 10-11-12



Salvation History in Stained Glass

The earliest recorded use of stained glass in a Christian place of worship dates back to the fourth century, at the time Christianity was made the official religion of the Roman Empire. It is likely that pictorial stained glass windows (together with mosaic floor tiles) were first used primarily to help an illiterate congregation remember the bible stories and accounts of saints they'd heard from their parish priests. Today, though most congregations are no longer illiterate, stained glass windows continue to serve the same educational function, while at the same time helping to beautify our churches.

At Saint Elizabeth, several thousand years of salvation history from Genesis to the Gospels are spread out in stained glass behind the altar. The windows remind parishioners that humanity has repeatedly broken its

relationship with God who has just as frequently forgiven us, restored our relationship and promised redemption, culminating in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus' Death and Resurrection celebrated at Mass.

The stained glass windows to the left of the altar depict key events in the Old Testament, each linked to God's covenant relationship with the People of Israel: Adam and Eve being cast out of the Garden of Eden; Moses standing before the burning bush; Elijah going off in the fiery chariot; Abraham and Sarah receiving the promise of a son; and King David dancing before the Ark of the Covenant.

Then from the center to the right of the altar, the windows illustrate the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel and to the whole human race, starting with Mary and Elizabeth rejoicing in

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Stained Glass

(Continued from cover)

impending motherhood. At the very center, directly over the altar, is the tree of life with flowing water, both symbols of God the Father. The stained glass panels on the right portray New Testament events: Jesus' baptism by John; the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles at Pentecost; and the miracles of the raising of Lazarus, the wedding feast at Cana and the multiplication of loaves and fishes. Behind the altar, the crucifix and the circle of stained glass behind it focus attention on the pinnacle of salvation history, Christ's death.

Similarly, at the back of the church are three windows which repeat this sacrificial theme by depicting Jesus' passion (being condemned to death by Pilate), his Crucifixion and his Resurrection. These three windows

and the mosaic Stations of the Cross along both side walls were originally located in the Church of the Transfiguration in West Philadelphia (the childhood parish of our pastor that was closed the day before Saint Elizabeth was founded in July of 2000). The exterior cross overlooking the back parking area and recess yard comes from the now-closed Saint Hedwig Church in North Philadelphia. Note that the Archdiocese regularly preserves all the liturgical artifacts from closed parishes for use in newly constructed church buildings, locally and across the country. The stained glass windows behind the altar as well as the beautiful rose window in the daily Mass chapel, which portrays Saint Elizabeth with the infant John the Baptist, were all

designed by the Joseph Beyer Studio of Philadelphia. The scriptural scenes were selected by the 18 parishioners who served with the pastor on the church subcommittee of the original Parish Building Committee. The color schemes were chosen to match the colors of the older stained glass panels in the rear of the church.

Future plans, very tentative at present, call for four additional stained glass windows depicting American saints in the tall, narrow windows along the Route 100 side of the church and additional stained glass in the round dormer windows of the upper clerestory. Ultimately, all our stained glass not only enhances the beauty of the church building, but also remind us of our rich heritage of faith.

-Kathy Link



Exciting Saint Elizabeth Hoops Heat Up Winter!

Just as the temperature started to drop outside this past winter, area gymnasiums started heating up with all the excitement of a fun yet competitive basketball season. Many nights, up to six different courts throughout the area were jam-packed with Saint Elizabeth youth practicing their lay ups, jump shots and defense. In addition to an instructional league for close to 100 first- and second-graders, more than 250 parish athletes in third through twelfth grade formed 25 hoops teams – five more teams than last year. They represented the parish in the regional CYO league and in the Malvern League. Divisions were arranged by grade level, with enough participants for Saint Elizabeth to field multiple teams at each level.

Many Saint Elizabeth teams finished the season with winning records while three 5th/6th grade boys' teams made it all the way to the quarter finals of the Region 17 CYO playoffs. The final four games were hosted in our very own gym, where the Saint Elizabeth's 5th/6th grade boys' team coached by parishioner Ray Ibarguen upset the #1 seed,

Saint Thomas of Glenn Mills, in the semi-finals with a nail biter, overtime win. Ibarguen's team went on to beat a team from Saint Maximilian Kolbe in West Chester (39-25) to take the CYO Region 17 championship. "After trailing 16 to 10 at the half, we stormed back with great energy and determination to outplay the other team in the final quarter," said Coach Ray.

"It was a lot of fun. Everyone played and contributed in an important way. It was truly a team achievement," explains Ray, who was assisted by Coaches Rob Duncheskie and Mike Burton.

Two 4th grade girls' teams represented Saint Elizabeth in the Malvern League, where they each finished with .500+ records. Their season ended with an engaging game played against each other in the parish gym – both sides demonstrated great sportsmanship, exchanging friendly hugs after

the final buzzer sounded. "We had a great season, learning the fundamentals of the game but also building a sense of team spirit and parish pride. Our girls behaved like true 'stars,'" added Coach Kim Greenhut, one of the fourth-grade girls' coaches.



4th Grade Girls Team L to R: Maren Dougherty, Rachel Burke, Maddie Jones, Jordan Musantry, Julia Marrone, Mia Bellafante, Taylor Barbadora, Kathryn Greenhut and Olivia McCrossin, with coaches Kim Greenhut and Lisa Barbadora



5th and 6th Grade Region 17 Championship Team: Front Row L to R: Robbie Duncheskie, Brian Ibarguen. Center Row L to R: John Michael DeArma, Pat Kelly, Zach Burton, Dylan Phillips, Matt Ferrie, Paul Marrone, Cole Iannarino, Joey Ippolito. Back Row L to R: Coaches Rob Duncheskie, Mike Burton, Ray Ibarguen

Adult Sports Update

The parish sports program isn't limited to the youth of Saint Elizabeth! In fact, we have an active adult sports program that extends all year long. This winter, we had two co-ed volleyball teams compete in the Downingtown Area Christian Sports League (DACSL) – one team finished in first place, losing only one match all season. The Saint Elizabeth adult volleyball team defeated Coatesville Bible (3-1) in the finals to become the league champions after seven years of persistence!

Saint Elizabeth adult athletes also formed two men's basketball teams this winter and played in the DACSL. Again, one team made it to the playoffs.

Next up for the spring: Co-ed softball! Come out and join the fun!

Congratulations to all of the Saint Elizabeth Stars (or, as we like to call them, 'super stars')!

-Lisa Barbadora

School Spirits

The Eighth Grade's Moving Presentation of the Living Stations

"I knew this had to be, so I walked on, silently."

This simple phrase recurs often during the Living Stations of the Cross presented by the eighth graders of the parish school at the end of Lent. The prayers of this contemporary rendering of the traditional Lenten devotion are narrated from Mary's perspective as she walks with her son, Jesus, to Calvary.

This year's eighth-grade class had a unique opportunity to experience these words as they rehearsed multiple times and then finally presented the story of Christ's Passion and Death to the whole parish community. For the past four years, this reenactment of the Crucifixion story has served as a special reflection on the Paschal Mystery, both for the students involved and for all who witness it...usually with great awe. The school principal, Mrs. Bernadette Dougherty, affirmed: "Presenting the Living Stations is such a wonderful experience for our students. Each year we see how the eighth-grade class matures during the entire project. They truly understand that it is a prayerful experience and not simply a stage performance."

Under the guidance of their director, Mrs. Maria Fraser, and two of their teachers, Ms. Jennifer Harris and Mrs. Louise Shanley, the students bring the stations to life. First, each student crafts an essay about the role he or she would like to portray and why. One wrote that he wanted to portray Jesus so that he could "feel

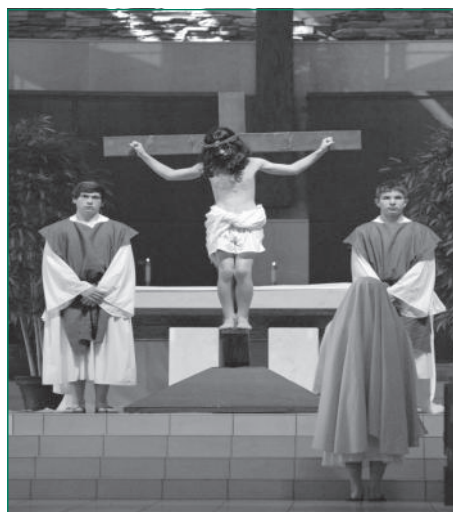
the pain that Jesus felt." Others wrote that they would take any role, simply because they wanted to experience what it was like to walk with Jesus. These are pretty insightful reflections for people of any age!

Once assigned specific roles for the presentation, the students are transformed from classmates working awkwardly through scenes together into faithful servants with the courage and confidence to portray with great sensitivity the characters of the Gospel narrative. Mrs. Fraser noted: "God's presence was evident during the Living Stations, like a heaviness in the air, as Patrick Rush, who played Jesus, carried the Cross to Calvary with the same composure and serenity that he imagined Christ himself had."

One student's mother said it was truly amazing to see how serious and reverent the students became when they presented the Living Stations.



Above is the cast of the Eighth Grade's presentation of the Living Stations of the Cross. Below, Patrick Rush portrays Jesus on the Cross.



"That is what really brought tears to my eyes," she said. Another mother was moved when her daughter, narrating Mary's words at the podium, choked up.

"It's wonderful to see the students grow in faith throughout the practices. They truly enjoy sharing their faith with the rest of the student body and with the parish community," remarked Ms. Harris.

A number of the students reported that they experienced and aimed to portray a more personal approach to the journey of Jesus to Calvary. They realized that depicting the Stations in such dramatic fashion, rather than simply reading them, provided for themselves and for the parish community a more intimate insight into Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross.

"My hope is that these students begin to grasp how deeply Jesus loves them and they, in turn, will want to make Him a part of their everyday lives," concluded Mrs. Fraser. Amen!

- Rhonda Jones

A Call of the Heart – The EFF Program at Saint Elizabeth

Could you teach the message of Jesus Christ to over eight hundred students in eight different grades? Deacon Jim Bogdan and Mrs. Belle Mahoney put their whole hearts into it!

Together these two parish staff members coordinate the Elementary Faith Formation (EFF) program at Saint Elizabeth, a ministry serving 830 students and engaging over 60 parishioners who offer their stewardship service as catechists, aides and support staff for this program. Deacon Jim and Belle also oversee sacramental preparation for families whose children are candidates for First Penance/Reconciliation and First Holy Communion or candidates for Confirmation. The word 'busy' does not do these two individuals justice!

"This is Christ's work: He has called us and He carries us," Deacon Jim says humbly.

EFF students attend weekly sessions (September through May) to pray together with the Word of God, to learn about Catholic beliefs and moral values and to grow in their relationship with God and in their commitment to serve others. Some 400 students throughout

the parish are receiving a sacrament this year. So, how does it all get done? Belle says, "Our catechists are integral to the process. It is a call of the heart to be a catechist." The EFF team provides resources and ongoing faith formation for the catechists and aides, including workshops, seminars, manuals, CDs,

***"This is Christ's work:
He has called us and
He carries us."***

-Deacon Jim

magazines, and activity suggestions that encourage children to become more aware of God in their lives and to understand the Catholic Faith more clearly.

Catechists share a very special ministry in the Church. They are called to be in personal communion with Christ themselves and to invite the children to grow in that same communion with Christ. "We are to bring others to Christ and vice versa. It would be such a shame if we only brought ourselves," explains Belle. Church documents call catechists "to bring children into communion with Christ." The primary role of the catechist is to help children experience Christ, who in turn opens them

to recognize Him in one another and then to love others as Christ loves us all. Catechists are not simply teachers; they are called to be personal witnesses to something much greater – the love of God that comes to us in Jesus Christ!

This is not your parents' CCD program, either! Deacon Jim, Belle and Msgr. Mullin have worked diligently over the last few years to develop a richer, parent-involved program that will instill values for a lifetime. "It is about planting seeds that will sprout, blossom and produce fruit now and in the future. When we pray with the children, when we celebrate the Sacraments with them, when we see catechists sharing their faith with the children and with us, we are also nurtured and strengthened to give even more of our time and energy," explains Deacon Jim.

Parishioner Nancy Mullen, who is a third-grade catechist at Saint Elizabeth, puts it this way, "Being a catechist is about sharing the gift of Faith." Yes, in the end, the EFF program is all about passing on the gift of our Faith!

If you are interested in serving as a catechist, please call the EFF Office at 610-646-6545.

-Karen Hofmann

A Sold-Out Island Getaway

The parish Social Fellowship Committee held a *Margaritaville Party* this past winter – complete with palm trees, beach balls and, of course, margaritas! "The parish school social events team hosted a Margaritaville-themed luncheon for the school staff at the end of last year," said event coordinator Michele Riotto. "We then shared the idea with the Social Fellow-

ship Committee as an adult social to chase the February blues away."

And chase away the blues it did! As the temperature and snow fell outside, nearly 200 attendees enjoyed island music while dining on an authentic luau spread topped off with key lime pie for dessert. "The committee actually made all of the food," revealed Riotto.

"Cooking is a great opportunity for our committee members to come together, not to just prepare the food for the event but to also enjoy a time of fellowship with each other."

Margaritaville-themed prizes were given away throughout the evening.

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Stewardship Spouses: Non-Catholic Members Actively Support Their Families in Faith

“All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome, in this place.”

So goes one of the gathering hymns we sing at Mass. Here at Saint Elizabeth, we strive to live out what we sing, in imitation of Jesus Himself. It's all part of the mission shared by our 10,000+ member parish community under the leadership of our pastor, Msgr. Mullin. Among our many parishioners are more than 600 non-Catholic individuals who support their spouses and families in faith.

Believing that we are all called to be the hands, feet and heart of Jesus on earth, many of these non-Catholic members are actively involved in one of the parish's stewardship ministries. They coach parish SEAM/CYO sports teams, assist in the EFF program, and serve as liturgical greeters and/or music ministers.

These dedicated stewards offer many different reasons as to why they get involved, but all agree that they feel a sense of fulfillment in giving something back through Saint Elizabeth. They are happy to help spread the spirit of the parish while contributing to the good of the surrounding community.

“I wanted to be involved with my sons' CYO sports and to contribute my time and knowledge to children whose parents might not be able to volunteer,” said non-Catholic parishioner, Tom Paulus.

Some of these faithful volunteers have been with Saint Elizabeth since its founding. Don Bowyer and his family, for example, helped get the parish up

and running. “We were part of the crew who helped set up and take down the chairs for Masses at Lionville Middle School. We now serve as liturgical greeters at Sunday Mass.”

Jessi LaGrossa, a Saint Elizabeth parishioner who volunteers her time and talents to the *Spirit* Newsletter staff, feels more connected with the church, its members and the community as a whole now that she is more involved. “I am also learning more about the Catholic faith and I feel better prepared to help my children grow up as Catholics. I was afraid that I wouldn't be accepted at first. However, the more parishioners I meet through stewardship activities, the more comfortable and welcome I feel.”

Since music is central to all Christian worship, Saint Elizabeth non-Catholic members often feel comfortable raising their voices in praise with one of the many liturgical music groups. “Music enhances the liturgy, attracts church and choir members, complements the celebration and helps people grow in their faith. When we sing, we feel the wonder of Mass and leave renewed,” commented one non-Catholic musician who has been involved in liturgical music since the beginning of the parish.

Over the years, some of our non-Catholic parishioners have decided to explore becoming fully initiated into the Catholic Church and have joined the RCIA to learn more about our faith. While our non-Catholic members are always most welcome to explore the faith journey of the RCIA,

this is not a condition of their membership here. The call to fellowship and stewardship service extends to everyone. Stewardship opportunities are open to all the members of our community and everyone who is affiliated in any way with the parish.

For more information about stewardship opportunities at Saint Elizabeth, please check the parish website, call the parish services office (610-646-6550) or ask any of the hundreds of people already actively involved. All of you are called, and all of you are most welcome in this place!

-Lisa Sheronas

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Family Spirits

Meet the Riotta Family – Where Stewardship is a Family Affair

Many of you have likely met up with the Riotta family at a baseball or basketball game, a school activity, or recognize their boys serving on the altar on an occasional Sunday morning. The Riottos love donating their time and talent to Saint Elizabeth Parish, where they have been members for ten years.

Michele and Mark both grew up in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania (she was a member of Saint Mary's Parish in Saint Clair; he attended Saint Joseph's in Pottsville). Ironically, they never met until they were introduced through mutual friends while living in the Philadelphia area after graduating from college. Mark, who works in Medical Communications, enjoys coaching, both with the Lionville Youth Association and the parish SEAM/CYO sports program. He also plays on Saint Elizabeth's adult men's basketball team in the Downingtown Area Christian Sports League (DACSL). In his spare time, Mark enjoys golf and tennis.

Michele, a graduate of Immaculata College and a former Systems Analyst, enjoys facilitating the busy home, school and social calendars for the family. She also participates in volunteer work, offering her stewardship service to the parish Social Fellowship Committee and Home and Hospital Team, to the STEPSS Leadership Council of the par-

ish school and to the Board of the Bishop Shanahan Parents' Association. Michele enjoys playing tennis with Mark, working out, and playing on the parish adult volleyball team in the DACSL.

Their son Brendan, a freshman at Bishop Shanahan High School, plays basketball for the parish CYO as well as baseball, both for the Uwchlan American Legion and for Bishop Shanahan; he is also an altar server at Saint Elizabeth. Matthew is in sixth grade at Saint Elizabeth Parish School, where he serves as a class representative and an altar server. He also plays basketball and baseball, enjoys fishing, ice skating, golf, tennis, and spending time with his friends. Ryan, a third grader at Saint Elizabeth Parish School, is just as active with baseball and basketball, golf and tennis.

The Riottos love spending time with family and friends, and especially enjoy the time they spend together as a family.



The Riotta Family: Michele, Mark, and sons (from R to L) Ryan, Brendan and Matthew

"We love everything about Saint Elizabeth Parish," notes Michele, "We really feel a sense of community here, just like the small town area where we grew up. We feel like the parish is a large family that supports each other in all capacities, and we're thankful to Monsignor Mullin, who fosters such a fun, kind, and loving parish. We've made lifelong friends here and feel so blessed to have been called to this parish."

-Julie Krumenacker

Margaritaville

Continued from page 5

Parishioner Rob Duncheskie won a basket for best island attire, while three other baskets were distributed as door prizes. Finally, the DJ awarded trophies to limbo and hula hoop contest winners at the end of the affair. Congratulations to parishioner Kathleen Bradlee, who showed off just how low she can go in the limbo contest!

Be on the lookout for more fun as the Social Fellowship Committee plans future events. "We aim to have at least two adult socials every year, typically designing a new theme for each one," Riotta explained. "We are truly blessed to have a great cross section of parishioners on the committee, all dedicated to fostering fellowship while having a great time."

In the end, the Social Fellowship Committee enjoy seeing fellow parishioners having a wonderful time. And word has it that the refreshments and dancing are always great at social fellowship events, so have your appetites and dancing shoes ready for the next party!

- Jessica LaGrossa

Volunteers for the Second Annual Stewardship Day of Service on April 14 were spread out to provide help at several sites in Chester County. Bottom right: Volunteers are put on landscaping duty at Camilla Hall in Malvern. Top left: Ms. Jennifer Nangle, and her mother Mrs. Diane Nangle, scrubbed the refrigerators at The Lord's Pantry in Downingtown. See more photos from the SDOS on the parish website, www.stelizabethparish.org.



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