

Dates of Interest

Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation
Saturday mornings at 9:00 AM
[no confessions on Holy Saturday, March 30]

Communal Reconciliation Service with Individual Confessions 7:00 PM on
Wednesday, March 20

Wednesday Confessions
6:30-7:00 PM on February 20,
February 27, March 13 and March 27

Stations of the Cross & Benediction
Fridays, 7:00 PM
February 15 - March 15
Living Stations of the Cross
Friday, March 22, 1:30 & 7:00 PM

Holy Week Services
Palm Sunday, March 23-24
Mass at 5:30 PM, 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM,
11:30 AM
Holy Thursday, March 28
Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7:30 PM
Good Friday, March 29
Solemn Passion Service at 3:00 PM
Holy Saturday, March 30
Blessing of Easter Foods at 11:00 AM
Easter Vigil Liturgy at 8:00 PM
Easter Sunday, March 31
Mass at 8:00, 9:30 & 11:30 AM

Other Special Events
First Penance/Reconciliation
7:00 PM on Wednesday, March 6 and
Monday, March 11

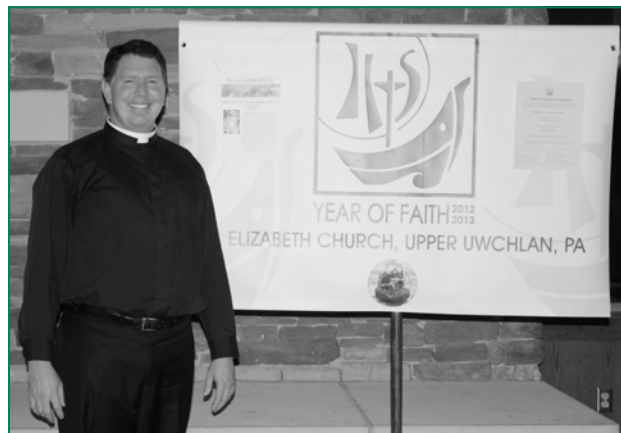
Confirmation Ceremonies
10:00 AM and 2:00 PM on
Saturday, April 6

I Believe...A Profession of our Faith

"I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth."

You've recited the Nicene Creed hundreds, even thousands of times and hopefully by now you have the new translation memorized, but have you ever really stopped to think what each phrase means?

During this *Year of Faith*, the parishioners of Saint Elizabeth have the opportunity to renew and grow in their faith by re-discovering the Creed's content. The 12 Articles of Faith proclaimed in the Creed are the fundamental expression of what we believe as Catholic Christians.



Father Matt Guckin: I Believe in God the Father.
"By believing Him, we are first drawn into Relationship with Him but ultimately into Communion with Him."

Through the Adult Faith Formation Committee's new monthly series, "I Believe," each month one of the Articles of Faith is being discussed and reflected upon. Melissa Bolz, chairperson of the committee, and Gen Miceli, Parish Services Director, share responsibility

for the series. Taking suggestions from the Archdiocese on programs for the *Year of Faith*, Melissa and Gen are arranging speakers and helping with the teaching material. Much of the content comes from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Various clips from Father Robert Barron's popular DVD series, "Catholicism," and other materials are also being incorporated into the monthly series.

"I hope that people who attend the sessions learn more about their faith and the meaning of the words they say in prayer, so as to deepen their relationship with God. I also hope that the attendees share this

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The Spirit ■ 1

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Coming Soon – Stewardship for the Whole Family

In its weekly bulletin and on the parish website, Saint Elizabeth proclaims itself as a stewardship parish. This claim is demonstrated in the work of more than 50 ministries and committees that support church and school events, provide religious education to adults and children, and offer pastoral care to parishioners and the public community. In addition, several activities are conducted each year to provide stewardship opportunities for entire families, including the Stewardship Fair in the fall, the Stewardship Day of Service (SDOS) in the spring, and periodic workshops and retreats that teach parishioners about stewardship and encourage them to share their gifts of time, talent and treasure with others.

This year's SDOS will be held on Saturday, April 20. Nearly 300 parishioners, young and not so young, families and singles, will provide three hours of free labor to organizations throughout the county. In past years, activities varied from planting flowers in the courtyard and at the victim's memorial, to cleaning buses at Mission Santa Maria, to cleaning and stocking the fridges and shelves of The Lord's Pantry. (See the box on the back cover or watch the bulletins for more information).

Another workshop retreat, entitled "Living Stewardship in Our Families," will be held on

Saturday morning, May 18. Led by a guest speaker and a team of stewardship volunteers, the retreat will focus on family life and explore how stewardship can play a practical but powerful role within families. The goal is to develop engaging service programs that parishioners could follow together as a family. This would include families with young children and those with teenagers (Is that possible without a smart phone?!?). Plans are being finalized to involve and interest as broad a family age range as possible, with activities for young children during the workshop as well. Everyone will walk away with new ideas on how to live stewardship and to place God at the center of the family's life. Watch the bulletin for more information.

Parishioners at the most recent workshop retreat, conducted on Saturday, February 2, listened to Monsignor Mullin discuss the Stewardship Prayer and explain how it relates to all of us. Several parishioners shared their personal experiences in discovering the power and benefits of living a life of stewardship. The group also reflected on how Sacred Scripture calls each of us to a stewardship

way of life. As an example, 1 Peter 4:10 calls for sharing time and talent: "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." Please visit the website to hear Monsignor's complete presentation.



Organized chaos! Parishioners just returning from Saturday Mass are signing in, receiving name tags and materials for Monsignor Mullin's stewardship workshop.

Even the earliest Christians practiced stewardship by sharing treasure as reflected in this passage from the Acts of the Apostles (2:44-45): "All who believed...would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's needs." Now it's your turn – whether through sharing of time, talent or treasure...and the opportunities for you and your family are endless!

~ Kathy Link

School Spirits – Working Hard to Keep Our Children Safe

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.

When tragedy struck Sandy Hook Elementary school on December 14, every parent felt deep pain over this senseless act. At Saint Elizabeth, we prayed at school, at Mass, at CYO events. We cried, and we hugged our children ever so tightly.

Now, as the world tries to move forward, Saint Elizabeth Parish School reconsiders the security policies and procedures in place right here. School Principal, Mrs. Bernadette Dougherty, has made this an urgent priority.

“We’ve always made the safety of our students #1, even before I got to Saint Elizabeth,” said Mrs. Dougherty, who regularly attends Safe School Summits in Chester County. “We attend area safety seminars, practice four different security drills regularly with students and enforce security procedures for safe entrance and exit of the facility.”

Most recently, Saint Elizabeth School conducted a lock-down drill which involved the Upper Uwchlan police. Police officials witnessed the drill and offered a few minor suggestions, which have been taken into account by administrators. According to Mrs. Dougherty, our procedures are exemplary. “Upper Uwchlan police officers often hold our

school up as an example when talking to other schools about safety,” she said.

In addition to lock-down drills, Saint Elizabeth School conducts evacuation, fire and shelter-in-place drills on a regular basis in order to be prepared for whatever emergency situation might arise, not only within the education center itself but also any weather-related concerns or an

emergency in the local community around the parish property. To ensure that parents receive prompt information about the well-being of their children in such situations, the parish school maintains a comprehensive binder with up-to-date student emergency cards and the proper steps for every security procedure. A duplicate copy of this emergency binder is also maintained in the Mullin Ministry Center.

Mrs. Dougherty stressed the importance of parental cooperation with all safety procedures. “We are very strict and consistent about signing in visitors and keeping exterior doors locked; since Sandy Hook, we have also put signs on all the doors, reminding visitors of the

procedures. But we really need parents to remain diligent with these procedures and patient – even if it requires them to sit in car line an extra few minutes,” added Mrs. Dougherty.

The Sandy Hook tragedy is still so raw and frightening that no words are adequate to address it fully with the school students. “All of us continue to

offer up our heartfelt prayers for victims,” noted Mrs. Dougherty. “Shortly after the news reports became public, we had the children make snowflakes to send to the families in Sandy Hook to show that we care and are praying for them. But we decided to defer to the judgment of the children’s parents how to discuss the tragedy at home.”

“Tragically, Sandy Hook served to remind us all to keep the safety of our children always at the forefront of our daily operation at Saint Elizabeth – teachers, parents and most certainly myself,” concluded Mrs. Dougherty.

~ Lisa Barbadora



Security procedures ensure safe entrance and exit to the Parish Education Center.

Saint Elizabeth Forms Two New Parish Ministries

Two new ministry groups have recently been inaugurated at Saint Elizabeth Parish: a Committee for the New Evangelization and a Family Life Ministry Team. Early last October, more than 25 parishioners attended an information night about the two new ministries conducted by Msgr. Mullin, Deacon Jim Bogdan and Gen Miceli.

“During our early years as a parish community, we have not fully responded to the call by the Church regarding the New Evangelization,” said Msgr. Mullin. “Now is the time to reach out in a more concentrated way to those who are disconnected from their Catholic Faith and those who are altogether un-churched.”

Some Family Life ministries, such as the Pre-Jordan Team, Senior Adult Ministry (SAM) and Elizabeth Ministry, have been developed over the past number of years at Saint Elizabeth. However, several other important areas of Family Life Ministry, such as a Pre-Cana Program for engaged couples and a marriage enrichment program, have not yet been initiated. This will be the work of the Family Life Ministry Team.

The Committee for the New Evangelization

The term “New Evangelization” isn’t exactly

new, explained Deacon Jim Bogdan, coordinator of the new committee. It was founded in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, when the Church gave renewed emphasis to its identity as “the People of God” and its mission to the world. Prior to this shift in perspective, evangelization was commonly understood as referring exclusively to the work of missionaries who spread the word of God to others in foreign lands.



People involved with the New Evangelization are willing to become examples of Christ for others. This means they are committed to growing in an intimate communion with Christ, share with others the true path to happiness, and eagerly teach the art of living. “This art of living is the active participation in the life of the Trinity,” Deacon Jim explained. “In this sense, everyone needs to be evangelized, in the pew or not.”

The responsibilities of a committee member include being open to and expecting ongoing personal conversion, growing more intimately with Christ, and a willingness to reach out to others, explicitly and implicitly, serving as a catalyst to help everyone become closer to Christ.

The Committee for the New Evangelization has two primary goals: to encourage and foster faith in the people of the parish,

in order to bring about enthusiasm for sharing their faith with others, and to reach out to those who are disconnected or un-churched, inviting them to embrace the faith and commit

themselves to living gospel values in everyday life.

Some projects the committee is now exploring include a pastoral outreach to inactive or uninvolved parishioners, going door to door to the un-churched, reaching out to Catholics returning home, and promoting evangelization among those serving in various parish ministries such as Youth Ministry, Adult Faith Formation, Elementary Faith Formation and Pastoral Care. *(continued on page 6)*

Profession of our Faith ... (continued from cover)

faith with their children and with others, by talking with them and by personal example," states Gen Miceli.

Father Matt Guckin, School Minister for Bishop Shanahan High School facilitated the first session in November. His topic,

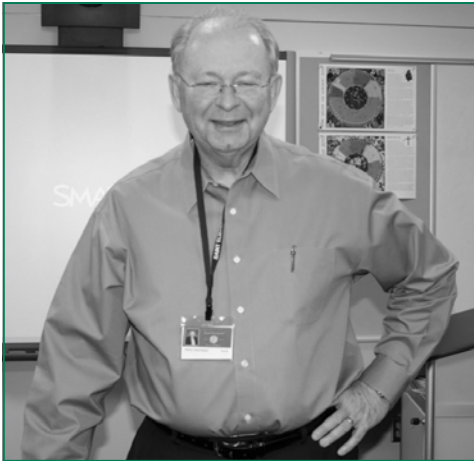
"I Believe in God the Father," helped to set the tone for the series. Father Guckin discussed faith and belief. He said, "Without faith, we can't have hope."

Parishioner

Lynda Anthony, who attended the first session, reflected, "Father Guckin's talk was a great kick-start for the series. His presentation was interactive and thought provoking with a little humor thrown in. The series is a boost for all believers." #

Those attending the December session, "I Believe in God the Son," had quite a personal experience. Deacon Jim Bogdan challenged the attendees to imagine themselves alongside Jesus – at the manger, at the cross and with the disciples on

their way to Emmaus. In his presentation, Deacon Jim raised two provocative questions: "Who is Jesus to you?" and "How would you introduce Him to the world?" Deacon Jim showed a video clip of Steve Harvey introducing Jesus to a packed audience in modern times.



Deacon Jim Bogdan: I Believe in God the Son.

"To be in "Communion with Christ" means we will express His identity and mission with our lives!"

"Harvey's introduction of Jesus would be hard to top," smiled attendees. The Incarnation, the 3rd Article of Faith, was presented by Deacon Jim McAvoy in January. By explaining why God became man and Mary's role in the Incarnation, Deacon Jim helped his listeners better

understand who Jesus is and better grasp the Mystery of the Incarnation. "I came away from the presentation with a new awareness of Mary, Our Mother," said parishioner Barbara Batt. "Deacon Jim provided me with many thoughts to ponder. He truly painted a more beautiful and real picture of our very special Mother."

AFF Chairperson Melissa Bolz praised the program saying, "I am surprised how unique each talk has been. The priests and deacons who are speaking have

Deacon Jim McAvoy: The Incarnation.

"By His incarnation, the Son of God has in a certain way united Himself with each individual member of the human community."

researched their topics and have been able to inspire the participants with prayer, scripture, the Catechism and practical examples. Each session stands on its own, so parishioners should feel free to come to any or all the remaining sessions."

Continuing monthly through September, the series will conclude with "The Life of the World to Come," a combination of the 11th and 12th Articles of Faith. You can find the complete schedule on the parish website or watch for updates in the bulletin.

The next time you pray the Nicene Creed, stop to understand what the words really mean and learn how it can help you rekindle or deepen your faith. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "We want this Year (of Faith) to arouse in every believer the aspiration to profess the faith in fullness and with renewed conviction, with confidence and hope...."

~ Rhonda Jones

Two New Ministries ... *(continued from page 4)*

“Christ is at the heart of both evangelization and stewardship,” Deacon Jim added. “We want to help everyone have the heart of Christ. It is the art of witnessing through your very life. Sharing your faith is the way evangelization takes off.” For more information about joining the Committee for the New Evangelization, contact Deacon Jim at (610) 646-6535 or jbogdan@stelizabethparish.org.

Family Life Ministry Team

Parish Services Director, Gen Miceli, who coordinates this new ministry, notes that the idea for a Family Life Ministry Team arose from the results of the parish survey conducted by the Parish Pastoral Council a few years ago



as the council was engaged in designing a new, multi-year pastoral plan for Saint Elizabeth.

“Forming a team is essential to set a clear direction for this ministry, like a think tank,” she explained. “Our goal is to figure

out how to help families here in our parish as they confront a variety of challenges to living family life well. The role of every Catholic is to love, inside and outside of our families.”

The initial goals of the Family Life Ministry Team are to explore ways to help parish families grow spiritually together and to identify practical ways to strengthen family relationships.

Members of the Family Life Ministry Team will coordinate a variety of activities and programs intended to nourish and strengthen family life among parishioners, and to design and implement periodic faith formation programs based upon the Church’s teachings about

marriage and family life for all parishioners, young and old. In addition, they will promote family-oriented stewardship opportunities conducted by existing parish ministry groups throughout the year, and

develop Christian parenting formation programs.

The Family Life Ministry Team also hopes to develop pastoral outreach programs, including personal support, spiritual formation and professional

resources for families facing difficulties like separation or divorce, serious illness, grief, or abuse.

Monthly meetings are now being held the second Monday of the month in the Mullin Ministry Center. For more information about joining the Family Life Team, contact Gen Miceli at (610) 646-6550 or gmiceli@stelizabethparish.org.

~ Sara Richardson

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Profile: Deacon Jim McAvoy

Deacon Jim McAvoy and his family became members of Saint Elizabeth parish in July 2007. He and Louise, his wife of 41 years, have three children: Elizabeth, Jim and Chris, and three grandchildren: Liam, Aidan and Molly.

Right from the beginning the family got involved in various liturgical and pastoral ministries at the parish. Jim completed his formation for the permanent diaconate and was ordained in June of 2008. His initial diaconate assignment was at Saint Peter Church in Honey Brook, while the family continued to offer stewardship service here at Saint Elizabeth. In July of 2012 Deacon Jim was assigned to diaconate ministry at Saint Elizabeth and has since become a regular fixture at weekend Masses. He always bids you goodbye with a friendly or inspirational sentiment.

While he has quickly become an important part of our growing family at Saint Elizabeth, Deacon Jim wasn't always an active member of the Catholic Church. "I had 16 years of Catholic schooling, so I had a strong Catholic upbringing in my family and was a very active member of Church as a child. For about 10 or 12 years, though, I was not a fervent practicing Catholic. I returned to active faith in the mid-1980s after a robust sacramental confession," admitted Deacon Jim.

Deacon Jim grew up in the Kensington section of Philadelphia and had 16 years of Catholic school, (Ascension grade school '51-'59, Northeast Catholic School for Boys ('59-'63) and then La Salle College ('63-'67). He was commissioned as an army lieutenant in 1967 and later served a year as an intelligence officer in Vietnam ('68-'69) in the 25th Infantry Division.

According to Deacon Jim, it took quite a long time for him to hear the calling. "I was the last person to sense a special vocation," smiled Deacon Jim. "It wasn't until 2001 that I attended an information night at the seminary with my wife, Louise. Despite a rather shocking presentation that described how difficult it is to be a deacon, I applied, but I had low expectations of being accepted. Louise and I went through six months of applications, interviews, various testing and endless rosaries, Eucharistic Adoration hours, Masses and more. The acceptance letter arrived in the spring of 2002, inviting me to join a class of eight diaconate candidates and their wives. There was never a sign that this would be my true calling, nor did I ever know for sure until the ending months of formation, six years later. So what I needed was to trust the Holy Spirit: If God wanted me to serve Him, he'd make it so."



"Everyone has a calling to serve God and to accept his grace," says Deacon Jim McAvoy.

Deacon Jim offers this advice to those who are struggling to figure out their vocation in life: "Everyone has a calling to serve God and to accept his grace. For married couples, they should pray for faithfulness to their vocation: to grow in love with each other, to be open to life and to accept children with love. Young, single people should stay focused on serving God in school or work. For those who sense a calling to the priesthood or any religious life, I encourage them to depend upon God to open opportunities, to seek out spiritual direction from a good director, to go to confession often and to pray the rosary, asking God to guide their vocational discernment."

~ Alicia Tansey

Day of Service Facts!

This year's *Stewardship Day of Service* will be held on **Saturday, April 20.**

Read more about *Stewardship for the whole family* on page 2.

Here's a look at some fun facts as Saint Elizabeth approaches this third annual event.

- **Number of Worksites: 32**
- **Oldest Volunteer: 70+**
- **Youngest Volunteer: 4**
- **Number of Volunteers: 312 (2011); 277 (2012)**
- **Number of Children Volunteers: 126 (2011); 105 (2012)**
- **Number of Adults Volunteers: 186 (2011); 172 (2012)**
- **Total number of hours volunteered: 1,767 — which equals 44 weeks of work (40 hours/week)**
- **Family Volunteers: 54 families participated in both 2011 and 2012**

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