

Dates of Interest

Tuesday, September 3
Saint Elizabeth Parish School
Opening Day for Grades 1-8

M-T-W, September 9-10-11
Elementary Faith Formation
Weekly Sessions Begin

Sunday, September 15
Celebration of Youth
Mass & Picnic at 4:00 PM

Saturday, September 21
K of C Blood Drive

M-T-W, September 23-24-25
Elementary Faith Formation
Parent Orientation in Church

Monday, September 30
No Greater Love-
Catholics Coming Home

Friday-Saturday, October 11-12
Christ Renews His Parish
Women's Overnight Renewal

Saturday, October 26
Parent Sacramental Forum
for Confirmation and
First Holy Communion

Friday, November 1
All Saints Holy Day
Mass at 7:30 AM, 12 Noon & 7:00 PM

Sunday-Tuesday, November 3-4-5
Forty Hours Devotions

Friday-Saturday, November 15-16
Christ Renews His Parish
Men's Overnight Renewal

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***Meet the New Principal at
Saint Elizabeth Parish School***

Seeing unfamiliar faces around the halls at the beginning of a school year is nothing new. From the innocent faces of the new kindergarten class to the curious faces of new students and even to the enthusiastic faces of new teachers, there are a lot of people to get to know. This year at Saint Elizabeth Parish School, there is someone else to meet – the new principal, Dr. Diane Greco.

Officially taking the reins on July 1, Dr. Greco has worked diligently to get ready for the start of school. “Getting to know the children and the parents is one of my first priorities. I’m a people person first, so I want everyone to feel comfortable talking to me about anything. My door is always open,” Dr. Greco emphasized.

The oldest of six children, Dr. Greco was born and raised in Rochester, New York, where she attended Catholic elementary and high schools. In college, she majored in English and Secondary Education.

In 1988, Dr. Greco’s family moved to Pennsylvania, first settling in Montgomery County. In 2007, she moved to Chester Springs and joined Saint Elizabeth Church. Dr. Greco has three grown children and is the proud grandmother of ten grandchildren.

If you think Dr. Greco looks familiar, then it’s probably because you have seen her at Mass. “I felt a real sense of community when I attend Mass here,” said Dr. Greco. “I was happy to find a parish I love so close to home.”



Dr. Diane Greco has been named the new principal.

Dr. Greco began her professional career in education by teaching English in a secondary school. “I enjoyed teaching high school youth, but I soon realized that I was more interested in the full development of a child, and made the switch to elementary education,” she recalled. “I believe that by teaching younger children and spending more time with them, I can identify their strengths and weaknesses and help them develop both intellectually and spiritually.”

After teaching in elementary schools for a number of years, Dr. Greco was encouraged to go into school administration. She entered the Principal Training Program offered by the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education and completed a doctorate in

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New Principal

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Educational Leadership at Immaculata University. She served as principal of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish School in Jenkintown for sixteen years, and in 2012 was named principal of the new regional school of Saint Joseph the Protector in Glenside (formed by the merger of Immaculate Conception and Saint Luke the Evangelist parish schools). "Being principal of a new school was very exciting," said Dr. Greco. "However, when the position opened up here at Saint Elizabeth, I couldn't pass up the opportunity to be principal at my own parish school."

"I plan to maintain the spirit that I see in the parish and move forward with educating the whole child based on programs currently in place," said Dr. Greco. "I am

a true believer in Catholic education. Children not only get to learn about their faith, but they also learn to practice and live it," stressed Dr. Greco. "Our goal is to educate children not only to succeed intellectually but to also hold on to that sense of openness and acceptance that comes so naturally to younger children as they grow spiritually."

As the newness of the school year begins to fade and faces become more familiar, rest assured that Dr. Greco will continue to be enthusiastic and excited getting to



Dr. Greco meets some of her new students during the uniform fitting day on July 25.

know and guiding the students, teachers and parents of our parish school. Welcome, Dr. Greco! Have a great year!

-Rhonda Jones

Stewardship and the Ministry of a Reader

Participating in a liturgical ministry is a great way to practice stewardship, and one important liturgical ministry open to laypeople is that of the Reader at Mass. The term 'lector' is often used for this ministry; however, properly speaking, a "lector" is someone who has been formally instituted by the bishop to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture during the Liturgy of the Mass. In the absence of an instituted lector, lay persons may be designated by the local pastor to serve as Readers of the Word. That is the practice here at Saint Elizabeth.

A volunteer for the ministry of Reader receives formal training at the parish and is provided with a *Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers*. This valuable resource contains the readings for the entire Liturgical Year, specific information about each of the readings assigned to Sundays and solemn feasts, and practical hints on pronunciation, inflection and emphasis to assist the reader in preparing to proclaim the

readings to a congregation.

The parish currently has 33 men and women serving as Readers for weekend and daily Masses. Individuals are enlisted for a three-year term and are eligible to serve for a second three-year term, if available. After three or six years, readers are expected to retire from this ministry, in order to foster participation by other parishioners as readers. Given the size of the parish (currently more than 10,000 registered individuals), it is important that as many parishioners as possible be given the opportunity to take on a liturgical ministry in service to the parish.

Parishioner Ray Erfle, himself an experienced public speaker and reader at Mass, decided to compile a set of practical, helpful hints that foster confidence and composure, improve delivery and deepen the spirituality of liturgical readers. His guidebook is



intended as a tool to help less experienced readers overcome their initial self-consciousness and concentrate on proclaiming the Word more effectively. Ray is in the final stages of producing a guidebook that combines his own insights and those of other experienced readers, building upon the more general guidelines provided in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Ray is hopeful that, once edited and approved, his guidebook will serve many aspiring readers around the Philadelphia Archdiocese and beyond. His work may well become a liturgical reader's best friend!

For more information about becoming a reader at Mass, please contact coordinator, Patricia Sylvester (610-458-7105) or Monsignor Mullin (610-321-1200). Stay tuned for the introduction of the Ray Erfle guidebook in the near future.

-Elisa Sheronas

Pope Francis – A Ray of Sunshine for the Catholic Church? Saint Elizabeth Parishioners Forecast...

June 21st – the northern hemisphere's summer solstice, when the sun reaches its highest position in the sky – marked Pope Francis' 100th day in office. To many Catholic believers, the 76-year-old Argentine has already brought a sunny outlook to a Church that has experienced so much darkness recently. His decision to live in the Vatican's functional Casa Santa Marta – a humble, nondescript guesthouse built in 1992 – rather than in the 16th century Apostolic Palace, won general public admiration. Speaking with some school children earlier in June, he explained how he preferred to live in community rather than alone in the imposing papal apartments. "It is to keep my sanity," he explained with a smile.

"I remember the telecast of Pope Francis being introduced to the world and I was very emotional, feeling such a sense of pride for our new leader. He has a great sense of humility...of being the "common man,"" said Saint Elizabeth parishioner, Jen Parke.

Her husband, Jeff, added "He's a Pope for the people, and I have a lot of hope that he will reunite the Catholic community with a sense of stewardship by leading by example. I am really impressed with how Pope Francis carries his own bags into hotels, rides buses rather than limos, and not wrapped up in pomp and grandeur. He is well-grounded. Jen and I are both very excited for our new leader."

It turns out, the Parke's aren't alone. Each morning the Pope invites about 50 people to morning Mass in the chapel. The very first guests were street cleaners and garbage collectors, but now hundreds clamor for an invite every day. Pope Francis uses down-to-earth language in brief, unscripted homilies after the Gospel. According to reports, these talks are now listened to more than his official texts. Part of the Bergoglio attraction is his directness and simplicity. In sharp contrast to his immediate predecessors, Pope Francis proves unafraid to challenge Catholics and those who "run" the Church. He regularly calls out those he terms as "satellite Catholics," defining them as those who dip in and out when it suits them and say they are more in tune with God through the cosmos than through the Church. And yet adoring crowds continue to applaud him.

Why? What has changed? Will it last? And, how does our bustling parish community right here at Saint Elizabeth view Pope Francis? Here are a few perspectives from parishioners of all demographics.

"I think it is great that the Church's new leader is a man from humble beginnings and from outside of the mainstream," said Vince Finley, devoted father of three, CYO basketball coach and married to wife Marie. "I also found it interesting that during a time when the Church is troubled, the College of



Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio of Argentina became the Holy Father, Pope Francis, after his election in March.

Courtesy: <http://www.presidencia.gov.ar>

Cardinals chose a Jesuit to help right the ship."

Cynthia O'Donnell, married to Jerry with three children who attend our parish school, said "I am most impressed by Pope Francis' modesty and simplicity. The Catholic Church can benefit from leaders that are relatable and who set an example of selflessness. I admire the fact that when he was elected Pope he opted to travel with the Cardinals in the minivan rather than the papal car. He's a people's Pope."

"I am excited for the change in the church," added Monica Dougherty, who is actively involved in Saint Elizabeth's Pre-Jordan ministry along with her husband, Terry. "Pope Francis seems humble and more interested in serving the

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School Spirits

Saint Elizabeth School Earns an Official Seal of Approval

Our Parish School has received the Middle States Accreditation for its excellent program.

This spring, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA) confirmed what the parish community has already recognized, that Saint Elizabeth has an excellent parish elementary school program. Thanks to the efforts of the former principal, Mrs. Bernadette Dougherty, and school faculty and staff, Saint Elizabeth Parish School was awarded full accreditation by the MSA Commission on Elementary and Secondary Schools.

This accreditation represents a significant validation of a school's quality by professional educators from the Association. It is not an automatic "rubber stamp" to any school's formal application and self-study. Rather, it was the culmination of two years of extensive effort by the school's administration, teaching faculty and parent representatives, plus no small effort from the MSA Visiting Team, too!

The accreditation process began with Mrs. Dougherty's initial meeting with an MSA representative, followed by a kick-off meeting conducted by the principal for the entire teaching staff at which several working committees were formed to define objectives and strategies for the

development of the school's various programs. As a measure of the faculty's commitment to the process, each teacher served on several committees and sacrificed lunch breaks and after school time to attend meetings. Parents participated on several committees and all parents were invited to complete an online survey. Towards the end of that process, a formal Self-Study Report was submitted to the MSA Board for review and analysis by the Visiting Team in advance of their coming to Saint Elizabeth in mid-April.

The four-member Visiting Team from the Middle States Association Commission on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CES) spent four days on site to evaluate the school facilities and educational programs. During the day, team members sat in classrooms to evaluate teaching methods and content for consistency with the school's mission statement and goals and interviewed the faculty and administrative staff. The MSA team conducted a group interview for parents and a number of interviews with a cross-section of students. In the evening, the team would summarize their experience and findings and begin draft-



ing a written report to be presented to the school staff at the end of the visitation.

In its final report, the Visiting Team offered a series of commendations and recommendations that were presented first to the school administration and faculty, and then submitted to the MSA Board for a final determination of the school's accreditation status. The Visiting Team fully endorsed the school's Self-Study Report and its initial implementation, and recommended to the MSA Board that full accreditation be awarded to Saint Elizabeth Parish School.

Thanks and congratulations to all involved in the MSA accreditation process these past two years!

-Kathy Link

Update on Two New Ministries: Moving Forward in Faith

Two of Saint Elizabeth's newest parish ministries are moving forward with programs to put their respective missions into action. Read on to learn what The Committee for the New Evangelization and the Family Life Ministry Team each have planned.

The Committee for the New Evangelization

This fall, the Committee will sponsor two programs rooted in faith-sharing among participants, in order to advance the

Committee's mission of encouraging and fostering faith in the people of the parish. *No Greater Love - Catholics Coming Home* is a seven-week series for individuals who have been away from the Church and would like a non-threatening way to bridge the gap between non-involvement and active participation.

"Our team is committed to be welcoming and accepting of everyone's situation, perceptions and background," says Deacon Jim Bogdan, Director of Evangeli-

zation. "This will be an occasion for individuals who have been separated from the Church to ask questions about its teachings, gain a greater understanding of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist, or just simply vent about their frustrations." Incorporating opportunities for faith-sharing into this series will give those looking to renew their relationship with Christ an awareness that others have been in similar footsteps and have been able to change their hearts and minds.

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Update on New Ministries

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“Faith-sharing is personal, but it can’t be private,” Deacon Jim added. “If Peter and the apostles had made their faith private, then our Church would have died with Christ.”

The second project of the Committee for the New Evangelization is the introduction of the *Christ Renews His Parish* renewal program (familiarly known as: CRHP) here at Saint Elizabeth. At a CRHP renewal, parishioners are invited to rekindle their faith through personal prayer, testimonial presentations and faith-sharing. From Friday evening until early Saturday evening, participants will stay at the parish campus, spending time examining their own faith and relating in a new way to Christ. Cots will be provided for sleeping overnight and all meals will be provided. An experienced team from Saint Andrew Church in Newtown, PA, will facilitate the first two weekends here, after which the Saint Elizabeth team will lead future weekends of *Christ Renews His Parish*.

“It will be a profound meeting with our Savior through the witness of people just like them,” says Deacon Jim. “While it is not a prerequisite to participating, we will be asking attendees to commit to an ongoing faith formation for six months, building greater involvement with the Church and then sharing their experience at the next weekend renewal.” *Christ Renews His Parish* will be offered for women on October 11-12 and for men on November 16-17.

If you know someone who may be interested in or benefit from either program, please contact Deacon Jim at 610-646-6563.

Family Life Ministry Team

The Family Life Ministry Team has identified three distinct areas to foster

its goal of helping parish families grow spiritually together.

First, the team is developing a program to support divorced and separated Catholics and to help them and their families feel more connected to the Church. “This is a big issue in the Catholic community at large and impacts many families at Saint Elizabeth, too,” offers Gen Miceli, the Parish Services Director. “The team aims to help dispel some common myths about the Church’s teachings on divorce and to help family members cope with the situation through faith. We are looking for input from men and women who are currently separated or divorced to guide the team’s efforts to determine the best ways to address their personal and their spiritual needs. They need to know that the Church has not abandoned them.”

Another committee of the Family Life Ministry Team is researching various models of Pre-Cana programs as they work to design a program for presentation to engaged couples at Saint Elizabeth. Each year an average of 25 weddings are celebrated at our parish. For now, engaged parishioners complete their Pre-Cana marriage preparations either at another local parish (such as St. Joseph in Downingtown or SS. Philip & James in Exton) or through the Archdiocesan Pre-Cana program. The team anticipates offering a Pre-Cana Program at the parish two or three times a year and aims to conduct the inaugural program in the



The Family Life Ministry Team is developing programs for divorced and separated Catholics, Pre-Cana, and family enrichment.

fall of 2014. “Offering a good experience to our young parishioners as they prepare for the Sacrament of Marriage will hopefully, in turn, engage them more actively in parish life,” said Gen.

Third, through its Family Enrichment Program, the Family Life Ministry Team looks to equip parents with tools to navigate Christian parenting with success. “Today’s parents face unique challenges, like trying to instill Catholic values in a highly technological age,” says Gen. The team plans to conduct a brief survey during the parish’s Celebration of Youth event on September 15. “Children represent one of the largest population groups in our parish. We look forward to hearing from their parents about how we can help support them more effectively.”

The Family Life Ministry usually meets on the second Monday of the month. Contact Gen Miceli at gmiceli@stelizabethparish.org to get involved or offer input on one of the topics mentioned.

-Amy Giampietro

Pope Francis

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poor rather than basking in the pomp and circumstance that can go along with his position. I also am interested to see what, if anything, will change regarding women in the church. I understand that he is very conservative, so I'm curious to see how his views will affect our modern day church."

Retired parishioner, Shirley Rear- don, exuberantly talked about the new Pope this way. "As far as I can tell, he is a man of principle, filled with the Holy Spirit with a deep love for the Church. He is a humble man and a man full of hope which comes from his love of the Lord. I wish I knew him personally! I even love his face, considering it to be a mirror of his soul. May God bless him with wisdom and truth."

Candice Swick, who recently joined Saint Elizabeth parish after going through the RCIA program, commented "I like what I've read and heard about Pope Francis so far and was impressed by him paying his own hotel bill and personally thanking each member of the staff who waited on him. He comes across as especially humble, taking a *let's-get-back-to-basics* approach. And, his emphasis on forgiveness is refreshing. He encourages us to all keep asking the Lord for forgiveness, because the Lord never tires of forgiving."

Indeed, Pope Francis seems to be planting the seeds for progress and

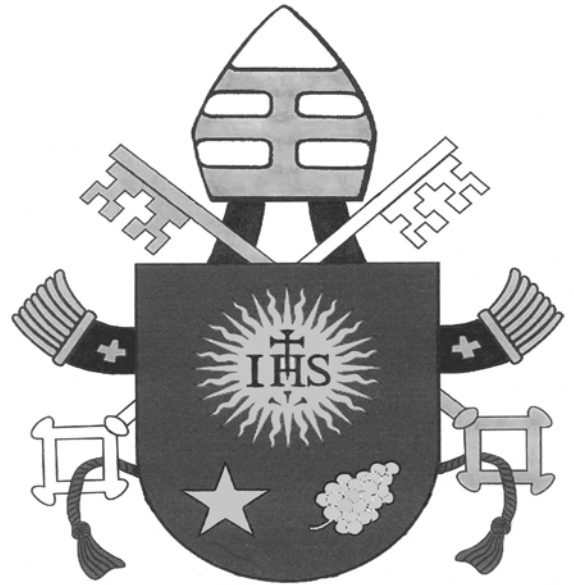
reform but – especially for those "doubting Thomases" – he must continue to fertilize these early, delicate layers of trust. Already the Pope has formed a committee of eight cardinals from five continents to assist him in administering the global Church of 1.2 billion Catholics – another step suggesting a genuine commitment to listening and guiding with an open heart.

"Pope Francis has captured our attention with his simple message delivered in plain everyday language," concluded Saint Elizabeth seniors who are active in various ministries, Chris and Larry Babich. "His smile is so sincere and heartwarming, plus he has surrounded himself with people that will work together to initiate changes. Our new Pope is opening the windows of the Church once again and finally letting the sunshine in."

What do you think? Will Pope Francis continue to be the highest light – the summer solstice that many of us in the Catholic community desperately crave right now? It's a tall order, but our sights are set.

Let us pray.

-Lisa Barbadora



miserando atque eligendo

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Welcoming New Members into the Church Family

Saint Elizabeth Parish warmly welcomes those new members of the parish community who were fully initiated into the Catholic Faith this past spring!

The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) at Saint Elizabeth is for non-Catholic adults who wish to explore the Catholic Faith and consider whether they have a calling to join the Catholic Church. The RCIA process is a personal journey of mind, heart and spirit, through a period of reflection, prayer and formation into the Catholic Faith. The RCIA Team, led by Deacon Jim Bogdan, includes parishioners who are knowledgeable in the Catechism of the Church, willing to share their faith experience and Catholic way of life with others, and eager to assist participants on their spiritual journey.

At the Easter Vigil last March, three teenagers received the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. Five adult candidates, baptized members of other Christian congregations, were received into the full communion of the Catholic Church and celebrated the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. In addition, two young adult Catholics who participated in the RCIA received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

What compelled this year's RCIA candidates to join the Catholic Faith? Here's what three participants have to say about their faith journey:

"Through a series of events, I felt that God was leading me at least to explore the Catholic faith," explains Susan Laager. "I was a little nervous about attending RCIA, but the leaders were very caring. RCIA is a safe environment to share your faith journey, learn from one another, and become more intimate with God. I had a lot of

misconceptions about Catholicism that were always met with patience and knowledgeable information. I learned new ways to experience the love and peace of Jesus, and that has made me a much calmer, less judgmental and more compassionate person. I am joyful to be able to receive Holy Communion each Sunday. I believe these are God's gifts to me."

Emily Marchesani explains, "All of my adult life I've felt drawn to the Catholic Faith. Having gone to a Catholic university and having married a Catholic man, the faith has been a large part of my life for the past 15 years. When my children were baptized Catholic, I started to seriously consider becoming a Catholic myself. Two years ago I decided I was ready to make the full commitment, not for them, but for me. The RCIA challenged my spiritual life, and the biggest lesson I took away was that although it's not an easy journey, it's a commitment you need to make daily."

"My journey to the Catholic Church began when I was 17 years old and my mother died," explains Jill Daiuto. "I was raised a Christian in a small non-denominational church, but didn't find the support I needed at such a difficult time. It was at this time that God surrounded me with Catholic friends whose families provided me with the comfort that I needed. Because of this, I was drawn to the Catholic Faith. It wasn't until I met Deacon Jim that I



Deacon Barry Midwood leads an RCIA inquiry meeting. Meetings are held on Monday evenings. For more information about the program, contact Deacon Jim Bogdan at 610-646-6535.

clearly saw what God was asking of me. Deacon Jim and the entire RCIA staff are such a warm and welcoming group, and our pastor, Monsignor Mullin, is for me a constant reminder of God's devotion. Add in my wonderful sponsor, Melinda, and the puzzle was complete. I thank God every day for this amazing group of people and all they have done for me!"

Congratulations to all the 2013 RCIA participants who are now fully initiated members of the Catholic Church and Saint Elizabeth parish community!

The RCIA meets at 7:00 PM on Monday evenings throughout the year. For more information about the RCIA, please contact Deacon Jim Bogdan at 610-646-6535. If you have a non-Catholic spouse, another relative, friend or neighbor who might be interested in learning more about the Catholic Faith, why not extend an invitation to them to contact Deacon Jim, too?

-Julie Krumenacker



The Senior Adult Ministry (SAM) sponsored a fun event, called "Sinatra in the Park" in the afternoon on Sunday, August 11. The event was held in the parish courtyard. A talented impersonator of singing legend Frank Sinatra serenaded the crowd, who were scattered in the courtyard and the sidewalks with lawn chairs, blankets, and umbrellas...and the weather was perfect!

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