

# *The Spirit*

*Tidings for the parish community of Saint Elizabeth*

## *Faith and Hope amid COVID-19*

Without a doubt, the year of 2020 has been a challenging time. Stress and change have created confusion and uncertainty. Daily reminders of sickness and death have been frightening. As many things in life have been canceled or dramatically altered because of the COVID-19, a few of our parishioners remind us that faith is not one of them.



Dr. Allison Shirker, an Obstetrics and Gynecology Specialist with Valley Forge OB/GYN Associates, has worked at Phoenixville Hospital for 20 years. When the virus hit in March, her practice diligently worked on an action plan to accommodate pregnant women and those with medical issues, while having to shut down treatment to all other patients. Her workload doubled, and she continues to do 24 hour shifts at the hospital.

“It was very stressful. Many times patients had questions that we did not have answers for, such as ‘Will my baby be okay?’ It was also very difficult on my family.” she said. Dr. Shirker, who is in remission from cancer, was extra careful with her family, having her kids wear masks on the soccer field and having to disallow sleep-overs and

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## *Here Comes* *Christmas, 2020!*

Greetings to you and to your loved ones from the parish staff at Saint Elizabeth. This year has certainly left its unique mark as all of us have confronted the coronavirus, a conflicted presidential election, widespread social unrest and a series of natural disasters. Many of us are eager to see 2020 come to an end!

One challenging aspect of this year’s parish celebration of Christmas is how to accommodate the many parishioners who traditionally attend Mass on Christmas Eve, while respecting the health and safety limitations in place due to COVID-19. The survey conducted in early November indicated that 60% of the 630 respondents plan to attend Mass in person, while the other 40% expect to view a live-streamed Mass at home. As always, the majority of those planning to come in person prefer coming to Mass on Christmas Eve (again a 60%-40% split).

In consultation with the administrative staff and the Liturgical Life Committee, the following Mass schedule has been arranged for Christmas, 2020:

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# The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Capital Campaign for Saint Elizabeth Church Begins!

So much has happened since the first newsletter article at the end of the summer reporting on the *Feasibility Study* to assess the readiness of parishioners to support a **Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Capital Campaign** at Saint Elizabeth. The study was successfully conducted back in March, and an initial report was delivered to Father Mullin in the late spring. The intervening months have surely been a time of great challenge in so many ways for us all! Now we are returning to this project begun in the spring, and we are forging ahead together to begin the work of the campaign which will culminate in the celebration of the parish's milestone anniversary in the spring of 2025.

As you may be aware, a presentation of the *Feasibility Study* results was shared with the pastoral, finance and stewardship councils at a joint meeting in mid-September. Next, everyone was invited to attend an *Open Parish Meeting* on Sunday, September 27, to hear the details of how the *Feasibility Study* was conducted and to learn the results of the interviews our consulting staff conducted with 50 households (74 individuals). This presentation was also live-streamed on the parish website and Facebook pages, and remains available on the parish website for those who missed the meeting and want to learn more about the *Feasibility Study*.

At the close of the presentation, all parishioners interested in con-

sidering a volunteer role in the anniversary campaign were invited to an organizational meeting on October 13 in the parish social hall. We had a wonderful turnout of people and shared information on how the capital campaign team would be formed, the work of the individual committees, leadership roles and a projected timeline, so that parishioners could discern their participation in the project. The Power Point presentation given at this meeting is also available on the parish website for your review. Since that meeting, we are thrilled to report that many fellow parishioners have stepped forward to offer their time and talent as a volunteer for the *Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Capital Campaign Team*. It is a great pleasure to announce that several dedicated parishioners were invited by Father Mullin to accept



roles as *HONORARY CO-CHAIRS* for the campaign; they are: Barry & Therese Bentley; Mike & Mary Ann Hughes; Joe & Holly Ippolito and Mary Mulherin. We thank them for their great generosity in giving their time, talent and treasure to our parish. Their leadership is inspiring and the cam-

paign will benefit tremendously from their counsel. Cheers to all of you!

In addition to the Honorary Co-Chairs, the campaign team will be coordinated by outstanding and dedicated *CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS*, including Ray & Marilyn Boncek; Bill & Trisha Burke and Mike & Lisa Kyne. These couples will engage in all aspects of the project and help bring the campaign to life for the entire parish community. We are grateful for their willingness to lead; if you run into them in your travels, do offer a word of thanks for their service to Saint Elizabeth!

The active phases of the campaign will take place now through the late spring of next year. A team of parish volunteers are already working in the areas of Communications, Parishioner Outreach, Hospitality and Special Events. We anticipate having a number of modest-sized group gatherings in the parish social hall, designed to meet the applicable health and safety standards for face masks, social distancing and hand sanitizing, to be sure! Parishioners who prefer may also arrange to meet directly with a campaign volunteer to discuss their participation and commitment to the *Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Campaign*.

There are opportunities for interested parishioners to help with the campaign in many ways as this great effort unfolds, and your active participation is most wel-

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## *Family Spirits: The Communion of Saints, The Family of the Church*

Each November, the Saint Elizabeth Bereavement Ministry Team sponsors a special Memorial Mass to remember the parishioners and immediate family members of parishioners who have died during the past year. This prayerful celebration provides great consolation to the ones left behind. The Team also sponsors a Grief Sharing Ministry series which gives great comfort to those who have lost a loved one. The parish bereavement ministry offers ongoing support that extends well beyond planning the funeral liturgy. Parishioners Jeanette Ranieri and Tom Cugini have each been touched by our bereavement ministry after the loss of a spouse. In this column, we celebrate how Saint Elizabeth Parish has helped restore joy in the hearts of Jeanette and Tom and all those who have lost a loved one, while highlighting our spiritual connection in the one family of God.

### **Jeanette's Journey to Peace**

Jeanette had been caring for her husband, Nick, for many of their 44 years of marriage in their home in Medford, NJ. In 2016, the Ranieri's decided to move to Chester Springs to be closer to their daughter and her family, including two young grandchildren. (They also have a son who lives in Colorado with his wife and two children). The Ranieri's cherished their time with their grandchildren, who brought love and consolation to them both. They tried to celebrate holidays together when possible – for ex-

ample, Jeanette recalled one Easter dinner when the family set up a table in Nick's bedroom so they could all be together. "Nick said that this was the most special Easter ever," recalled Jeanette.

Saint Elizabeth Home and Hospital team members visited Nick throughout his hospice care and



*Jeanette and Nick Ranieri*

many who so faithfully visited Nick attended his funeral. "Members from all of the parish ministries, along with Father Mullin and Deacon Barry, were so very caring. That truly touched my heart," Jeanette added.

Nick passed away on June 19, 2019 with his family by his side. "Mary Ann and Mike Hughes, members the Grief Sharing Ministry, graciously provided a haven for me to grieve. I was able to bare my soul and shed tears with them along with the wonderful team who understood my feelings and sadness," Jeanette added. "Faith, along with daily recitation of the rosary, comforts and helps me in my darker hours." She feels that Nick is still with her. "Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and

the life: he who believes in me shall live, even if he dies.'"

Jeanette now babysits often for her grandchildren. They laugh, but they also reminisce about Nick and pray for him every night. The family celebrates his memory by rekindling traditions, especially at holidays. They also kept a Philadelphia Eagles display in the house that includes a Lego model of Lincoln Financial Field that Nick built while he was under hospice care. "It is a comfort to talk about Nick and affirm my faith with my grandkids," said Jeanette.

### **Tom's Path to Healing**

Tom and Lynn Cugini were married for 45 years and have been members of Saint Elizabeth Parish from its beginning – serving as greeters at Masses celebrated in the Lionville Middle School Gym. They have a son and daughter, and four grandchildren, all residing in the Connecticut/North Jersey areas.

Lynn died on December 29, 2016 after suffering for 18 months from a rare and fast-moving form of cancer. Tom struggled at the suddenness of this tragedy but now says that his faith has grown stronger since Lynn's death. It truly helped him to get through his loss.

"At first, I didn't really understand why this had to happen, but then I realized the blessing of having Lynn as a partner for so many years, and that God has a

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*Tom and Lynn Cugini*

plan for all of us. He must think that I can handle this loss.” Tom and Lynn shared their faith together, and now that faith continues to give him comfort as he has leaned on the Church more than ever for support and strength. “Father Mullin, Deacon Barry, and the Grief Sharing group have been extremely supportive, and it has deeply touched me,” said Tom, “they are still looking out for me.”

Lynn was the Cugini family’s sounding board and had an infectious laugh. The family celebrates her life by keeping up with some of the family traditions she started, such as making a gingerbread house for Christmas and baking their favorite teddy bear birthday cakes. In addition, the family planted a tree in their daughter’s yard, given to them in Lynn’s memory by their friends, who were also incredibly supportive throughout Lynn’s illness and continue to support Tom now.

Since Lynn was a librarian and volunteered at the Saint Elizabeth Parish School library, her sister dedicated a mini library and a bench in her name with a memorial plaque to encourage others to love books as she did. New books were purchased and dedicated to her memory at the

school library, too.

Tom feels sustained by his connections to his Saint Elizabeth family and has volunteered with the Sister Parish and Transportation teams. “I sit in the same place in the church where we always sat to feel her presence. My faith and connection to Lynn are intertwined and have been a great consolation,” Tom said.

We are blessed with so many faith-filled and loving stewardship volunteers who devote themselves to the Home and Hospital, Bereavement and Grief Sharing ministries.

*May God grant all our departed love ones eternal rest!*

~Elisa Sheronas

## ***Here Comes Christmas, 2020!*** *(con't from page 4)*

*Christmas Eve Masses (Thursday)*

**2:30 PM** in church + overflow  
Mass at **2:40 PM** in the gym  
**4:30 PM** in church + overflow  
Mass at **4:40 PM** in the gym  
**7:30 PM** in church

*Christmas Day Masses (Friday)*

December 25

**8:00 AM, 9:30 AM and 11:30 AM,**  
all in church

The **2:30 PM** Christmas Eve and the **9:30 AM** Christmas Day Masses will be live-streamed on the parish website and Facebook pages for those not comfortable attending Mass in person with coronavirus restrictions.

Note that the church and gym will open **one hour before each Mass** and there will be *no ad-*

*vanced reservation of seats.* To ensure that the socially-distanced seating capacity of the church and chapel are not exceeded at Masses on Christmas Eve afternoon, ushers will offer *seating passes when people enter the church building*; once maximum seating capacity is reached, the ushers will direct everyone else to the overflow Mass in the gym. Those who wish may go directly to the gym as well.

Everyone over 2 years old must wear a face mask in parish buildings; all are required to follow social distancing (a minimum of six feet between persons of different households) while inside and outside the church, and to use

hand sanitizers provided upon entering the buildings. Thank you for your regard for the health and safety of the entire congregation.

This Christmas is sure to be a unique experience for all families and for the parish community as a whole. Despite the many challenges of this year, we are invited to celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ with renewed hope. And it is in Christ that we enter the New Year with a hope-filled spirit.

May the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph bring blessings of health, happiness and peace to all the families of Saint Elizabeth Church throughout the New Year 2021!  
- Fr. Tom Mullin

## School Spirits: In-person Learning Amid a Pandemic

It is hard to believe that during these unprecedented locked-down, mask-wearing, social-distancing times, Saint Elizabeth Parish School has been very successful in protecting against COVID-19 infections among our 225+ children from pre-K to 8th grade and 35+ staff members. Although several students have been exposed to the virus through outside activities or family contacts, no one has contracted the illness while at school for in-person learning.

School Principal Dr. Diane Greco credits the school community. “Our families signed a covenant before the school year started that outlined what we were responsible for as a church and a parish school, and what families were expected to do to keep the school community safe. It’s because of their unfaltering cooperation and support of each other that we have maintained safe in-person instruction.”

Teachers credit the administration’s rigorous and considered management of the pandemic, citing clear safety measures such as daily health screenings, mask-wearing at all times, distanced desks in the classrooms, frequent hand-washing, staggered dismissals, assigned school entrances and stairwells, and other measures outlined in Saint Elizabeth Parish School’s nine-page Health and Safety Plan. The plan, said Dr. Greco, is also regularly revised by a Pandemic Team consisting of administrators, parents, teachers and the parish facilities director.

“The administration has re-



*Pre-K-4 student participates in music class while implementing counting.*

mained consistent in implementing and enforcing the safety measures, which is critical,” said Mrs. Maria Fraser, who teaches math and science at Saint Elizabeth. “However, I must also pay tribute to our students. Kids need in-person learning, social interaction and extracurricular activities. They crave normalcy and we provide them with that anchor during this rockiest of abnormal times. I have been so impressed by our students – adapting and following protocols without resistance. They are teaching us all such resiliency.”

Possibly the most rewarding accolades of all come from parents of students in various grades who all speak so resoundingly positive of school life at Saint Elizabeth during the pandemic. For instance, Mrs. Tara Todd, mother of Killian (7th grade), Hannah (5th grade), and Ryan who graduated from Saint Elizabeth Parish School last year and is now attending Malvern Prep, monitors recess each week and is impressed.

“Saint Elizabeth couldn’t have done a better job, and we could not be happier,” said Mrs. Todd.

“The health and safety protocols are not interfering with their academic experience nor the equally as important social aspect of school life. The rules are consistent and well-communicated, so we could jump right back to school in September. Saint Elizabeth has found a way to adapt in fun and unique ways such as calculating the costs of a Thanksgiving meal for four virtually instead of going to the store with paper coupons and calculators.”

Mrs. Todd added, “One of the reasons we chose to send our children to Saint Elizabeth Parish School was the intimate learning environment, and this continues to demonstrate benefits. The smaller class sizes positioned them well to manage the COVID-19 safety challenges and still have face-to-face learning.”

Dr. Greco concluded, “We try to think of these times as just pauses that will pass and hope that the reflection that is naturally happening during COVID-19 seeds new hope and perspective. We can see it in ourselves, and especially in the students.”

~ Lisa Barbadora



*A 5th grade student enjoys outdoor class.*

## Welcome to our New Staff Members

As parishioners began returning to Saint Elizabeth campus this fall, they saw some new faces. Megan Carey, Roberta Dainton, and Paula Ringenbach joined our parish staff in essential roles, and our community is fortunate to have these three talented women supporting the parish.

**Megan Carey**, our new Youth Ministry Coordinator, is working hard to provide opportunities for connection among our middle school and high school students during a time when many other outlets for our youth have been curbed. She is carefully starting to transition meetings from virtual to in-person and is encouraged by a slowly growing turnout and engagement. She is especially excited to see all of the ways the kids enjoy participating and connecting with parish life. Megan grew up involved in many aspects of parish ministry as a member of Our Mother of Good Council Parish in Bryn Mawr and graduated with a degree in Psychology from Immaculata University. After a year of service as a teacher with the Augustinian Friars in Lawrence, Massachusetts, she knew she wanted to keep nurturing young people's faith. She continues to be active as a catechist and serves in many ministries in her home parish. Her faith-filled energy and enthusiasm make her a great example for the youth of our parish.

**Roberta Dainton** is our new Administrative Secretary for the

Parish Ministry Center. Roberta comes to us from her home parish of Saint Maximilian Kolbe in West Chester, where she held positions as Director of Religious Education, Catechist, and Youth Ministry leader. After many years of a demanding schedule, Roberta began looking for a position that allowed for more family time, especially to visit her young adult children who live out of state. Through the "priest grapevine" her pastor connected her with Father Mullin, and Roberta



*Paula, Megan and Roberta*

is thrilled to be working at Saint Elizabeth among the welcoming staff and friendly parishioners. Roberta is impressed with the many ministries and active community we have in our parish. While the pandemic has led to some unusual circumstances in the ministry center, Roberta has helped everyone adjust to the new routines, managing larger meeting spaces for groups and assisting with scheduling sacramental celebrations that had been delayed this spring. In her free time, Roberta enjoys hiking, knitting and reading.

**Paula Ringenbach** our new Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE) has already met many of the families participating in Elementary Faith Formation this year. For the past five years, Paula was a teacher at Saint Elizabeth Parish School. After prayerful consideration, she took on the role of CRE, despite the changes facing the program during the coronavirus pandemic. While COVID-19 has presented Paula with many challenges, from recruiting catechists to transitioning much of the program to a virtual format, she has proven to be flexible and dedicated to finding the right solution for every family. Since the religious education office is located in the education center, Paula enjoys being able to see her former students learn and grow. Working with students and catechists in preparation for First Holy Communion and Confirmation is especially rewarding and she is looking forward to those celebrations this spring. Paula enjoys seeing the children grow in their faith and is grateful for the creativity of the catechists who are finding new ways to engage their students online. While at home with her husband Dan, Paula enjoys reading, hiking, and baking.

Please make sure to share a warm welcome when you meet Megan, Roberta and Paula on your next visit to Saint Elizabeth!

~ Elizabeth Kazanjian

# Three New Ministries Add Opportunities for Stewardship and Support

The many ministries at Saint Elizabeth Parish have continued to thrive, albeit in remote and safe ways, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. During 2020, three brand-new ministries have been added to the long roster of organizations for stewardship opportunities. The *Creation Care Team*, the *Crafting Hands Ministry* and *Nourish for Caregivers* are now active and are looking for parishioners to participate!

## Creation Care Team

In 2006, to address growing ecological awareness, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) formed the *Catholic Climate Covenant* to help American Catholics respond to the call to care for creation and to care for the poor.

“I have been drawn to environmental issues for many years now,” explained Amy Laughlin, chairperson. “I conducted some research and found a model for a *Creation Care Team*, proposed this new ministry to the parish administrative staff and once it was accepted, I enlisted other parishioners to join this new ministry team.” Amy says that she is working with the *Catholic Climate Covenant* to get ideas from across the country to implement in Saint Elizabeth’s *Creation Care Team*.

Caring for creation and caring for the poor have been a part of the Catholic story since the beginning, but in recent years Saint John Paul II, Pope Emeritus Bene-

dict XVI, and especially Pope Francis have added a sense of urgency to their call for Catholics to act on climate change. “After doing my research, I have found that the climate change issue is really a pro-life issue,” Amy said. “Millions of people die prematurely each year due to climate change.”

The *Creation Care Team* has hit the ground running with a series of actions and events, both virtual and in-person. They co-sponsored a small event with the Interfaith Action Committee celebrating *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis’ second encyclical calling on all people of the world to take “swift and unified global action.” They also worked with the IAC and the Youth Ministry to create and maintain a butterfly garden on church grounds. The team held a socially-distanced bird watch walk at Marsh Creek State Park in September and they sponsored a table at the Blessing of the Animals event in October.

The *Creation Care Team* currently meets virtually every second Monday of each month.

## Crafting Hands Ministry

The *Crafting Hands Ministry* started when Deb Romich was teaching Mary Fontana how to crochet right before the pandemic hit. Both ladies are now co-chairs of the ministry. “As we were in quarantine, Deb and I would talk about donating



The *Crafting Hands*

the afghans we made to a nursing home once COVID-19 was over. As weeks turned into months, the number of completed projects grew. Deb talked to other parishioners who said they, too, would be interested in a crafting ministry,” Mary explained.

Deb said she felt this ministry was needed: a group that was dedicated to prayer, fellowship and crafting. She also noted that as an outward sign of love and friendship with the recipients, all their crafted blankets come with a hand-written note from the crafter.

So far, the group has held two monthly meetings and some “how-to” workshops. Rosary crafters will be making rosaries for Father Kevin to bring home to Nigeria when he returns in late December and are planning a future Youth Group activity to make “camo” rosaries for the troops. In January, the sewing team will help the Youth Group make fleece throw blankets on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Mary added.

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## Faith and Hope amid COVID-19 (cont'd from cover)

many normal social activities.

Emily Todd, a Nurse Practitioner at Brandywine Valley Cardiology reflected, "COVID added a different type of stress to daily life. Working in a hospital setting, I knew I would eventually care for COVID patients and experience the stress and fear of the unknown. I was unsure of patient acuity, various treatments and changing protocols. There was added emotional stress of bringing the virus home to my family. I worried about my two young children and my parents who help care for them."

Dr. Robert Satriale specializes in Internal Medicine, Pulmonary Diseases, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine at Brandywine Hospital. He serves on the Lung Cancer Multidisciplinary Group at Chester County Hospital and is the Medical Director of Life Care Hospital of Chester County.

In January of 2020, a colleague asked him whether he thought the novel coronavirus would be contained before spreading to our continent. He answered that he thought it would and now says, "How wrong I was! In March we geared up for the expected wave and as protective gear began to run low we scrambled to develop safe conservation guidelines for PPE use." In May Dr. Satriale tested positive for COVID-19 himself and has since recovered and returned to his essential work.

Dr. Satriale continues, "As the months progressed, the isolation thrust upon us changed our lives. For me, performing telemedicine

visits from home disconnected me from my patients. The honor and privilege bestowed upon us physicians by our patients was threatened, limiting our ability to create the venerable doctor-patient relationship."

Emily Todd notes, "Being raised Catholic, I was taught from a young age to love, respect and help others. Having faith and knowing that God was always there to guide us, to lean on and protect us has helped me treat and care for others during the pandemic."

"My faith has always been very important to me," says Dr. Shirker. "It's a part of me. I think of it as the road I walk on all the time, keeping me grounded. All along, I have known that I was not alone with the COVID situation. God was always walking with me. I have had other challenges in life, and this is just another different challenge. My job is important, but my faith is much more important."

"With churches closed, many of my patients would despair over the loss of weekly Mass attendance. For me, Mass at Saint Elizabeth always felt like a drink of water on a hot day! Yes, the pandemic has changed all of our lives. But, for the faithful, Jesus continues to guide us throughout the day and be our hope in the most challenging times," Dr. Satriale concludes.

Dr. Shirker reminds us, "We need not get tired and let our guard down, but keep up what we've been doing, stay vigilant and hopeful. We know so much more

now than earlier this year." Every morning she says a prayer from Psalm 143:8:

*Remind me each morning of your constant love, for I put my trust in you. My prayers go up to you; show me the way I should go.*

- Julie Krumenacker

## Twenty-Fifth Anniversary

(cont'd from page 2)

come! Stay tuned and do ask if you have questions! Look to the parish website for the latest information and/or call the parish ministry center (610-321-1200). Most importantly: **PRAY EACH DAY** for the success of the **Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Capital Campaign** for Saint Elizabeth!

~ Kathy Caliendo,  
LCDC Managing Partner

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### (con't from page 7)

At the first collection meeting, the crafters in the group collected 111 items for donation to our own parish community, women's and family shelters, shut-ins, nursing homes, oncology and dialysis centers, and the VA Hospital.

#### **Nourish for Caregivers**

*Nourish for Caregivers* is a Christ-centered program that provides resources and support to family caregivers. After attending a Philadelphia Archdiocese workshop, Regan Sarmiento was inspired to bring a chapter of *Nourish for Caregivers* to the Saint Elizabeth community. She now serves as a co-chair of the group together with parishioner Diane Thompson.

### **Take Five with Father Kevin**

This July, Saint Elizabeth parish welcomed Father Kevin Okafor as our new parochial vicar. While his accent may reveal that he hails from somewhere outside the U.S., other characteristics are not as obvious. We wanted to get to know more about this music lover and a World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) fan, so we took five minutes to learn more.

#### **What are you reading right now?**

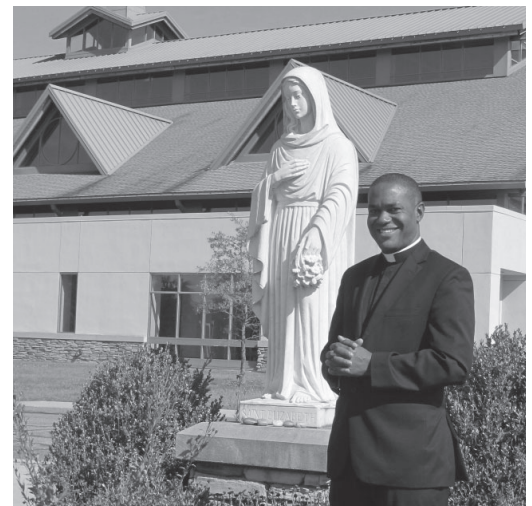
*Things Fall Apart*, a 1958 novel by Chinua Achebe that concerns traditional Igbo life during the advent of missionaries and colonial government in my homeland of Nigeria. The main character cannot accept the new order, even though the old has already collapsed.

Regan stated that while we are blessed to have many resources at Saint Elizabeth, there are still many parishioners who are in need of assistance. For caregivers who are caring for a special-needs child, Regan noted that there are few places to speak candidly about the struggles and difficulties they face. "I envisioned the program through my own lens as a mother of a child who required a great deal of caretaking in her youth and feeling there was nowhere to turn for support. The same goes for family members who are taking care of an ailing parent who may be struggling with health or memory issues. The mission of *Nourish for Caregivers* is to

offer a safe place to share those burdens, but to also nourish our souls through our faith."

The first meeting for *Nourish for Caregivers* took place in November. Future meetings are scheduled for Saturdays, December 5, January 9 and February 6, all on Zoom.

~Sara Richardson



Father Kevin Okafor

#### **What is one of your best memories from childhood?**

The day I was accepted in our diocesan junior high school seminary and began my journey to the priesthood.

#### **Name three things on your bucket list:**

Go to WrestleMania, travel to Africa, and learn to speak Spanish fluently.

#### **What was the first concert you attended?**

In the sixth grade, I attended a concert organized by the music department at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. My love for music came much earlier from my mom, who still sings at liturgical events and at cultural events in my hometown.

#### **If you could pick up a new skill in an instant what would it be?**

Playing the violin.

#### **Who is someone you really admire?**

John Cena, a wrestler and WWE champion.

#### **How would your friends describe you?**

Kindhearted, serious, and smart.

#### **What is the last thing you do at night?**

Listen to music until sleep comes (which does not take long!).

-Amy Giampietro

## *Supplement to the Spirit Newsletter: December 2020*

### *Parish Financial Report for July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020*

Dear Parishioners of Saint Elizabeth,

Greetings for Advent and Christmas! Despite the many challenges of this past year, we enter this holy season with a hope-filled spirit, strengthened by our shared faith in Jesus Christ.

I am grateful to those parishioners who have continued to demonstrate their commitment to a stewardship of treasure throughout the months of the coronavirus pandemic. Your generosity has enabled us to sustain most of our spiritual, educational and pastoral ministries here at Saint Elizabeth while respecting the applicable healthy and safety regulations.

I am especially grateful to the 437 families now participating in Auto-Giving, more than 100 of whom have enrolled in Auto-Giving since the pandemic first restricted public Mass and many other communal parish activities last spring. During the past year, we also introduced an online Parish Giving Program through the John Patrick Publishing Company. For more information about the Auto-Giving and/or the Parish Giving programs, simply contact Sam Venuti ([svenuti@stelizabethparish.org](mailto:svenuti@stelizabethparish.org)) or go to the parish website ([stelizabethparish.org](http://stelizabethparish.org)).

On the next page, you will find a pie-chart report for the parish and the parish school income and expenses for the period July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. Please review this information and, if you have any questions or comments to share, contact me at the parish office (610-321-1200).

With the consistent financial support of a core number of parishioners, the parish staff's efforts to control expenses, and a one-time only guaranteed (and hopefully fully forgivable) loan through the federal government's Payroll Protection Program (PPP), we have been able to meet everyday operational expenses, carry the annual debt service on the parish's two mortgages and complete several long-term maintenance projects, while avoiding the layoff of any full-time parish and parish school employees throughout the course of the pandemic.

The PPP funds have proven very timely, allowing the parish to remain cash positive approximately one year longer than originally anticipated. Nevertheless, in the absence of any other material changes, the parish will begin operating at a significant loss in fiscal 2021-2022.

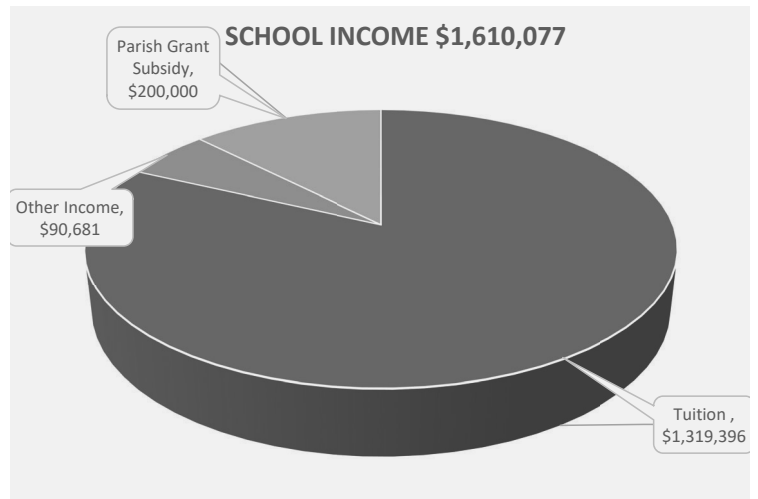
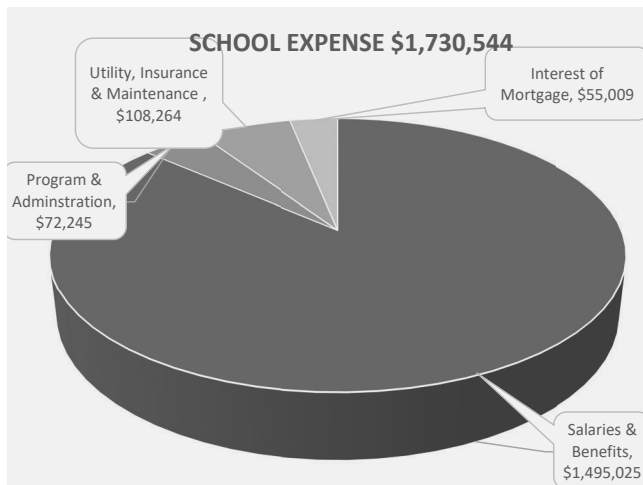
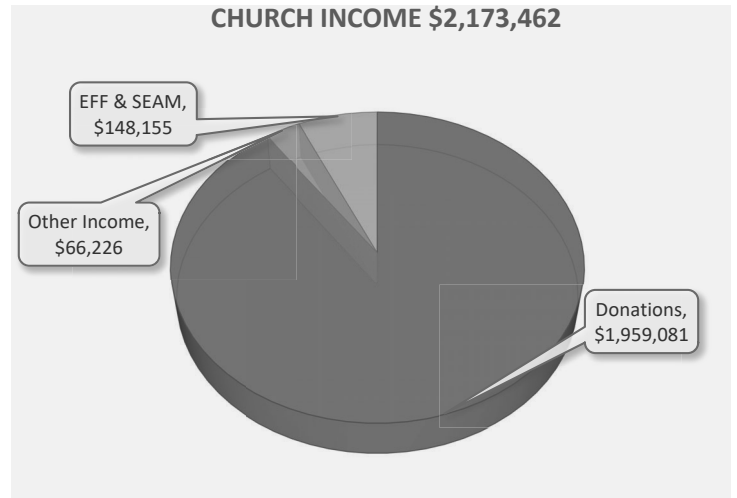
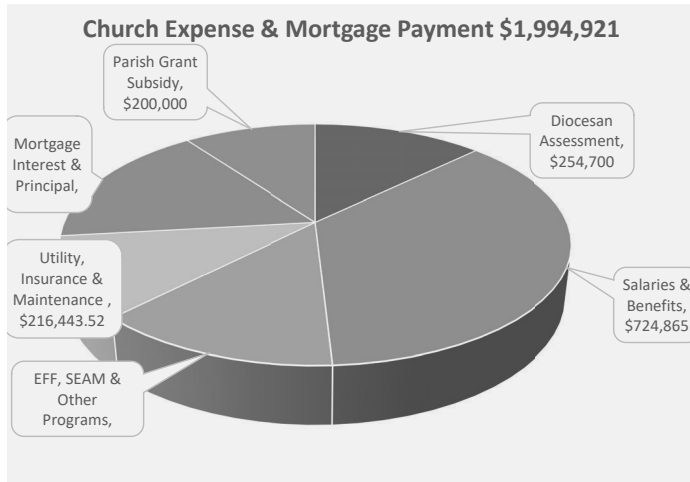
To address the critical financial need of the parish, we are moving forward with a parish-wide, five-year capital campaign in anticipation of the 25th anniversary of the parish's founding in 2000. This campaign is intended to strengthen the long-term foundation of the parish community by addressing the existing financial challenges in a pro-active manner in order to ensure that the parish begins our next 25 years fully prepared to sustain, enrich and expand the vibrant spiritual, educational and pastoral ministries of Saint Elizabeth Church.

For more information about the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Capital Campaign that the parish is undertaking between now and June of next year, please read the accompanying article by Kathy Caliendo of Lynn Cummings Development Consultants.

During the Advent Season, I encourage all of you to reflect prayerfully upon your own commitment to support Saint Elizabeth Church with your stewardship of time, talents and treasure. May God bless you and your loved ones at Christmas and throughout the New Year 2021!

- Fr. Tom Mullin

# Income and Expenses: July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020



## Projected Cash Balance: June, 2020 through June, 2023

	Parish	Parish School	Combined
<b>Actual: June 30, 2020</b>	\$805,300	\$459,409	\$1,264,709
Projected: June 30, 2021	\$454,641	\$120,975	\$575,616
Projected: June 30, 2022	\$146,191	\$14,671	\$160,862
Projected: June 30, 2023	(\$162,869)	(\$71,274)	(\$234,143)

### Notes

- 1) The Parish Finance Council recommends that an operating balance equal to 2 months of expenses be maintained in cash reserves; this amounts to about \$525,000.
- 2) The current mortgage agreements with WSFS Bank require that the parish maintains a total cash balance of at least \$500,000; we anticipate being in non-compliance by Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

## *Dates of Interest*

November 28-December 13 Advent Giving Tree	(+ 2:40 PM in the gym) 4:30 PM in church (+ 4:40 PM in the gym) 7:30 PM in church	Catholic Schools Week  Opening Mass: Sunday, Jan. 31, 11:30 AM
Sunday, December 6 Presentation of First Penance/ First Holy Communion Candidates at 9:30 AM Mass	Friday, December 25 Christmas Day Masses 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM & 11:30 AM	Closing Mass: Friday, Feb. 5, 11:15 AM
Tuesday, December 8 Holy Day of the Immaculate Conception Mass at 7:30 AM, 12:00 PM, 7:00 PM	Thursday, December 31 Holy Day of Mary, Mother of God Vigil Mass at 5:30 PM	Wednesday, February 3 Feast of Saint Blaise Blessing of Throats at the 7:30 AM Mass
Thursday, December 17 Advent Penance Service with Individual Confessions at 7:00 PM	Friday, January 1 Holy Day of Mary, Mother of God Mass at 9:30 AM & 11:30 AM	Ash Wednesday, February 17 Mass at 7:30 AM and 7:00 PM Liturgy of the Word with Ashes at 11:00 AM and 4:45 PM
Saturday, December 19 Christmas Confessions 9:00-11:00 AM	Sunday, January 10 Blessing of 2021/2022 Confirmation Candidates at 11:30 AM Mass	Lenten Fridays, February 19-March 26 Stations of the Cross & Benediction at 7:00 PM
Thursday, December 24 Christmas Eve Masses 2:30 PM in church	Sunday-Friday, January 31- February 5	

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