

## *Father Stokely Bids Saint Elizabeth a Fond Farewell*

**S**ometimes it feels like I have been at Saint Elizabeth forever, and at other times, it's like I just got here! Ever since I received word that I would be leaving Saint Elizabeth to study Canon Law, it has made me appreciate the three years I have had here in Chester Springs.

When I first arrived at Saint Elizabeth, I thought, "Wow – this place is big." But I soon realized it wasn't just the size of the buildings on campus or the number of registered parishioners that made this place "big." What truly makes our parish community seem so big is the intensity with which our parishioners commit to living out the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Everyone here loves Jesus in a big way. They approach their faith in a big way. And, they give to their community and to the parish in a big way.



Now, I can affirm that my first impression has remained true. I still marvel at how many good things are happening in our parish and local community because of so many generous and faithful Catholic people.

I have a feeling that when I arrive in Rome this summer, I might have a similar sense of awe when standing in the piazza in front of Saint Peter's Cathedral. "Wow – this place is big." I think this time it will be not only the grandeur of living near the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church but also a bit of fearful reverence for the magnitude of the task ahead of me. For the next three years or so, I will study Canon Law at the Pontifical Gregorian University, founded by Saint Ignatius of Loyola in 1551. It's incredible that Saint Ignatius founded the school on February 23, the Feast of Saint Polycarp, a saint for whom I have had a special devotion since I first entered the seminary.

### **What is Canon Law?**

Canon Law is a code of ecclesiastical laws governing the Catholic Church. If you ever wondered about the responsibilities of a pastor, or

*(continues on page 4)*

### **Dates of Interest**

*Parish Farewell for Fr. John Stokely*  
Sunday, June 9  
Mass at 11:30 AM  
Reception at 12:30 PM

*Graduation Mass*  
Saint Elizabeth Parish School  
Wednesday, June 12 at 7:00 PM

*Closing Mass for the Parish School*  
Friday, June 14 at 10:00 AM

*Memorial Mass for  
Deceased Fathers*  
Saturday, June 15 at 8:30 AM

*Independence Day Holiday*  
Thursday, July 4  
Mass at 9:00 AM

*Solemnity of the  
Assumption of Mary*  
Thursday, August 15  
Mass: 7:30 AM, 12:00 PM, 7:00 PM

*Labor Day Holiday*  
Monday, September 2  
Mass at 9:00 AM

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

*Elementary Faith Formation  
Weekly Sessions Begin*  
September 9-10-11

### **In this issue:**

Farewell Father Stokely.....	1,4
FORMED: New Faith Resource.....	2
Living Parish Values.....	3
School Spirits.....	4
Saving Lives with QPR.....	5
Family Spirits.....	6
Sights of Easter Season.....	7
Music Ministry Addition.....	8

## New Faith Resource – It’s Netflix for Catholics!

Have you wondered how you can learn more about faith, prayer, sacraments or saints? Looking for family-oriented movies, books or educational material? If so, check out FORMED – a new online platform that provides access to Catholic spiritual resources from trusted sources.

Anne Polese, acting Coordinator of Elementary Faith Formation (EFF), explains, “We were looking for a way to expand the resources provided by the church’s adult spirituality library. FORMED offered a broad range of topics and delivery options that appeal to parishioners of all ages, and comes highly recommended for its wide range of spiritual enrichment, Catholic teaching and entertainment opportunities. There are video-based study programs, feature films, audio presentations and eBooks.” She continued, “It’s Netflix for Catholics!”

Anne uses FORMED to find resources for Saint Elizabeth’s EFF Program. “As I review potential videos for the students, I learn so much about the sacraments and the saints,” she said, “often in areas I thought I already knew pretty well! FORMED can also guide parents with ongoing faith formation in the home. The study programs for adults or teens can be used individually or as a guide for small groups.”

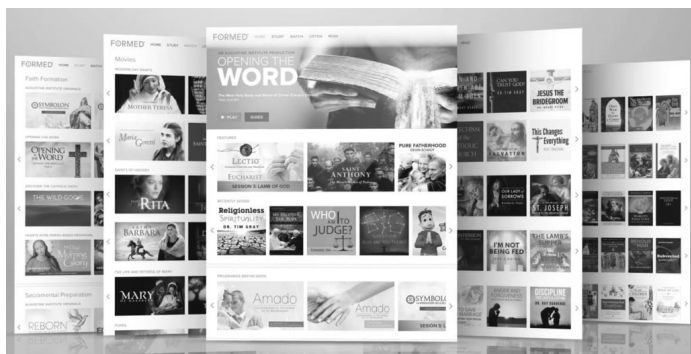
Parishioner Jed Pratt was welcomed into the full communion of the Catholic Church nine years ago. He started using FORMED during Advent in 2016 when he was about to turn 62. “Knowing I

had less time left than I had already spent on earth,” he smiled, “I wanted to be prepared, so Father Mullin suggested some resources through FORMED. I found it to be a treasure trove of well-organized topics that assist people of all ages to deepen their understanding of God’s timeless messages.”

Today, Jed is an active FORMED subscriber. “During Lent, it helps me reflect on the person I can be,” he said, “a mustard seed size of faith and the willingness to explore the wide range of content will pay dividends.” Jed especially enjoys the movies. “They are high quality, historically based dramas,” he explained. “I feel like I watched the Annunciation in person! And the series dedicated to the sacraments and liturgy reminds me not to take the special aspects of my Catholic faith for granted.”

“I use FORMED frequently and recommend it to everyone,” said Jed. “I appreciate the positive Catholic worldview vs. popular secularism. There is something of interest for all and I am encouraged by the fresh supply of new material that is easy to access and engaging. You give it the time and you will be blessed and instructed. FORMED has helped me take each step in life more seriously.”

Jed says FORMED is a great resource for families. “The material can supplement family prayer time. It also provides opportunities for older family members to discuss topics of interest in light of their Catholic faith,” he says.



*FORMED has thousands of movies, video programs, audios and eBooks for Catholic believers.*

FORMED has movies, audio material and eBooks on topics ranging from the sacraments, sacramental preparation and bible studies to seasonal topics such as Lent and Advent. There are animated and live-action movies, audio dramas, talks about discovering the Catholic faith, scripture and much more. Content is sourced from various groups such as Ignatius Press, Augustine Institute, Eternal World TV Network (EWTN), and CCC of America.

Visit the parish website to sign up for free. “Give it a try. It is extremely user friendly,” said Anne. “There’s an orientation section or you can dive right into an area of interest such as Family Movie Night, Children & Youth or For Your Commute. There’s something for everyone!”

~ Dave Guthrie

## Living Lenten Cross, an Expression of Saint Elizabeth Parish Values

This is the conclusion of a three-part series of articles to help parishioners become more familiar with the 2017-2021 Pastoral Plan and how it is being put into practice. In this article, Diane Shoemaker, a member of the Pastoral Plan Implementation Committee, explains how the Living Lenten Cross focused on the six core values articulated in the pastoral plan.

What guides the direction of Saint Elizabeth Parish? Instrumental are six core values delineated in the Pastoral Plan together with its articulation of the parish's Vision and Mission. This past Lent, the Living Lenten Cross project was conducted to encourage parishioners to give practical expression to our core values during the course of their Lenten sacrifices.

During Lent, two large wooden crosses were displayed in the narthex, each holding hundreds of paper cross tags in six different colors. Each color represented a particular parish value and underscored a specific action (Lenten sacrifice) or prayer intention as marked on the paper cross. Parishioners had the opportunity to choose from 75 unique Lenten commitments or prayer intentions from the 800 cross tags available in the narthex.

The Pastoral Plan Implementation Committee, in partnership with the Adult Faith Formation Committee and Family Life Ministry Team, led the effort.

The Saint Elizabeth Parish Values are:

1. Nourishing a welcoming and inviting parish
2. Knowing and practicing our

3. Catholic faith and traditions
3. Calling others to Christian discipleship
4. Building a community of grateful stewards
5. Offering compassionate pastoral care
6. Growing in a Christ-centered life through the sacraments



*The Living Lenten Cross focused on Saint Elizabeth's six core values.*

Carolyn Lese from the Welcoming New Parishioners Committee reported receiving two new volunteers to help with phone calls to greet new parishioners from the Living Lenten Cross project. The Bereavement Ministry Team, which posted tags requesting greeters for funerals during Lent, added to their team as well. Other ministries that benefitted from the project included the Family Life Ministry Team, the Liturgical Music Ministry and the Legion of Mary. A total of 20 ministries were involved in the project.

Parishioners of all ages selected

tags from the wooden crosses and committed to their given task – similar to the tags parishioners take from the Advent Giving Tree to benefit the needy at Christmas. “What a terrific way to perform good works and lift up so many deserving people in prayer,” commented Father Stokely.

To learn more about the Parish Values or Parish Vision and Mission, check the parish website at [stelizabethparish.org](http://stelizabethparish.org). Most importantly, thank you to the hundreds of parishioners who participated in the Living Lenten Cross project this year.

~ Diane Shoemaker

### *“The Spirit” Staff*

#### *Editor-in-Chief*

Lisa Barbadora

#### *Director of Communications*

Deacon Barry Midwood

#### *Communications Coordinator*

Sara Richardson

#### *Contributors*

Lisa Barbadora

Dave Guthrie

Elisa Sheronas

Diane Shoemaker

Father Stokely

#### *Photos*

Mary Damian

Jerry Wojcik

#### *Layout and Graphics*

Amy Giampietro

#### *Other Staff*

Julie Krumenacker

Sue Morgan

Father Mullin



## School Spirits: *Building an Alumni Association*

**D**id you know that with this year's graduating class of 40 girls and boys, we now have a total of 340 graduates of Saint Elizabeth Parish School in 11 classes (2009-2019)? On Wednesday, June 12, 23 girls and 17 boys are receiving their diplomas at the eleventh Graduation Mass and Commencement Ceremony.

Members of the first graduation class in June of 2009 are now 24-year olds, most of them busy in the working world and/or extending their education in graduate school, while the 35 members of the class of 2015 are preparing to graduate from high school this month. The largest class to date (2017) included 42 graduates, while the smallest graduation class (2011) included only 10—all boys!

Among the alumni include one set of triplets (Keenan, Sean & Thomas Kirk in 2015) and five sets of twins: Colleen & Megan Lyons (2010); Caroline & Owen Brnich (2013); Elizabeth & Jennifer Nealy (2017); Madison & Sean Ullrich (2017); and Julia & Sean Conlon (2018). While more than 20 families have three parish school graduates each, four families (John & Margaret Conlon, Michael & Joan Kelly, Robert & Dina Ogden, and David & Marybeth Schaeffer) can boast of four parish school alumni within their households! The beat goes on toward 2020 in a parish community committed to Catholic education.

A committee of the Parish School Advisory Council (PSAC) is

working to develop a formal alumni association to provide a venue for past graduates to keep in touch with the parish school staff and with their former classmates. The PSAC invites all 340 of our graduates to enroll in the newly-forming Saint Elizabeth Parish Alumni Association. To join, log on to [stelizabethparishschool.org/alumni](http://stelizabethparishschool.org/alumni), fill out the member form and share whatever news you would like. To submit photos or videos along with your news, contact Mrs. Sara Richardson, Communications Coordinator, at [srichardson@stelizabethparish.org](mailto:srichardson@stelizabethparish.org).

~ *The Parish School Advisory Council*

## *Father Stokely Farewell (cont'd)*

fasting and abstinence rules, or who is eligible to receive certain sacraments, it is contained in the Code of Canon Law. The "code" as they call it, exists to help us live faithfully the two-fold greatest commandment (love of God and love of neighbor) by clearly articulating the Church's doctrine and corresponding discipline.

Once I complete my studies, I will return to the U.S. and continue serving as a priest in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. I do not know exactly what I will be doing or what assignment will be given to me upon my return. I do know that wherever I am and wherever I go, my greatest hope is to share the joy of Christ with everyone I meet. When I was ordained, I accepted the reality that the specific assign-



ments given to me would mostly be out of my control, but I knew that one thing: no matter what or where I go, it will be a ministry of joyful service. So that is what I hope to do.

Right now, I feel like the Apostles after the Resurrection who were

described to be "incredulous for joy." Likewise, I am in disbelief about how good God has been to me and how much He has blessed me throughout these six years of priesthood. My most recent years at Saint Elizabeth have been filled with blessings beyond imagination, and I hope that I have served you well.

Thank you for all the encouragement and support you have given to me these past three years. Know that this parish will always remain in my prayers, and please continue to pray for me that I can be successful in school while growing closer to our Lord.

~ *Father Stokely*

## QPR, like CPR, Can Save Lives

On Thursday, March 21, nearly 100 parishioners attended a training event held in the parish social hall to learn about a new suicide prevention technique called QPR.

Suicide is the leading cause of death among youths 12 to 24 years of age and, in 2017, stole the lives of 47,647 people of all ages. Suicide rates are at an all-time high, with the suicide rate for children and adolescents ages 10 to 19 increased by 56% from 2007 to 2016.

After four teen suicides in less than a year in the Downingtown Area School District, including one of Saint Elizabeth's young parishioners, the Family Life Ministry Team invited the Chester County Suicide Prevention Task Force to train interested parishioners of all ages. The intent of the evening training program was to help parishioners recognize warning



signs and potentially help prevent a person from taking his or her own life by using a simple, three-step tool.

The volunteer trainers, many of whom have been touched personally by the suicide of a loved one, gave slide and video presentations

highlighting statistics and details on the ways one can help. The simple steps that were outlined, which have become nationally recognized for their success, are: Question, Persuade, Refer. This technique was developed by Paul Quinnett, PhD, a clinical psychologist and QPR Institute founder.

The instructors led discussions about ways in which an individual, as a non-professional or "gatekeeper," can recognize the signs that someone is thinking of suicide and help prevent it by persuading that person to seek counseling. According to the nonprofit Jason Foundation, four out of five youths who die by suicide give clear warning signs.

Training is being offered to ninth graders in several local school districts to help make young people more aware of the signs and teach them how they too, can help stop this tragic trend.

One fact that was emphasized is the importance of remaining calm during Step 1 of the process when asking a direct question such as, "Have you thought about ending your life?" The trainers stressed that just asking a direct question does not put the idea of suicide into a person's thoughts. "If the person is really in danger of suicide, the thought is already there," said one of the volunteer trainers. "The question tells them that someone noticed, is concerned, cares enough to listen to them and wants to help.



*QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer. The technique refers to three simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide.*

Sometimes, even just that personal and sustained interest is what can set someone on the path to recovery. The QPR technique is an effort to engage non-professionals and address the mental health issues that are pushing so many young people over the edge into suicide," the trainer continued.

Family Life Ministry Team member, Anne Beccone, said, "Family Life Ministry hopes to have an activity each May as part of mental health awareness month and each September as part of suicide prevention month, in order to raise awareness and remove the stigma of mental illness. We are also working on other resources for parishioners and their families."

Watch the parish website for information on future programs. Together, we can save lives by using the three simple steps of QPR. You can learn more at [qprinstitute.com](http://qprinstitute.com).

~ Elisa Sheronas

## Family Spirits: Meet The Grants – What Goes Around... Comes Around!

Once upon a time, there was an eighth-grade altar server who nervously walked down the center aisle of St. Francis of Assisi church in Norristown, trailed by a young parish priest you may have heard of – Father Mullin, age 37. The boy, Greg Grant, attended St. Francis Parish Elementary School, and had no premonition that he would someday serve with Father Mullin again – this time, as a more confident adult.



*What do the Grants like most about Saint Elizabeth? "That's easy," both Greg and Megan agreed, "the homilies. It is amazing how our priests and deacons can relate the scripture readings to everyday life. They deliver a meaningful message that we can take with us and derive inspiration from throughout the busy week."*

Greg first met Megan Dillon at Cabrini College (now Cabrini University), a Catholic college that sprawls over 112 acres in Radnor, PA. Love grew quickly and he even proposed to Megan on campus. They wed at Megan's home parish, St. Pius X, in Broomall, and had their reception at Cabrini – a first for the school.

Megan is now a life skills teacher for the Chester County Intermediate Unit, and Greg is senior vice

president at Alliant Insurance Services. Both are enjoying rewarding and successful careers. So what brought them to our little piece of paradise on Fellowship Road?

The Grants moved into Saint Elizabeth Parish 11 years ago after buying a new home in Chester Springs. Along the way, they decided to start a family and wasted no time! First, Maggie

arrived in the world, now age 15 and in 9th grade at Bishop Shanahan High School. A year later, Lizzie arrived (age 14), followed by Caitlin (age 12), and then Bridget, their youngest (age 11). All four girls attend (or did attend) Saint Elizabeth Parish School where they are very active. The four play basketball and also played soccer with the Saint Elizabeth SEAM/CYO. They

participate in student government and various clubs like "24 Club" and Yearbook Club. Lizzie is even this year's eighth grade class president!

"We both attended Catholic school for 17 years of our lives. Our parents instilled the importance of a Catholic education so we naturally wanted the same enriching experience for our girls," said Megan. "We really like the small community. The

teachers know all of their students and their families. Saint Elizabeth Parish School has given all of our girls a good education while instilling good Catholic values too."

Stewardship has always been part of their souls, so both Greg and Megan jumped right into parish life at Saint Elizabeth and inspired their daughters to do the same. Maggie, Lizzie and Caitlin are altar servers; presumably, Bridget will follow suit when she begins the sixth grade next fall.

"We encourage our kids to give back to the church at a young age so it becomes ingrained in who they are and who they grow up to be. They can't offer much in the form of treasure, but they can give their time and talents," explained Megan.

Megan has coached in the girls' basketball program for five seasons and is a Pre-K leader for Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW). Greg is on the SEAM Board as the Basketball Commissioner, and serves as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion for weekend Mass – rounding out the circle of Catholic life with Father Mullin!

"It's kind of fun to think back all those years ago," smiled Greg. "Who would have thought that I'd meet Father Mullin again and have the honor of sharing him with my own children? It's a blessing – and maybe 'there's a homily in there somewhere!'"

~ Lisa Barbadora



# A Joyous Easter Season at Saint Elizabeth Parish





## Saint Elizabeth's Newest Addition to the Music Ministry

Mrs. Beverly Buckta, organist, shown with the "new-for-us," gently-used Rodgers organ that was donated to the parish by Mr. & Mrs. Conrad & Eileen Olenik of West Chester. If you are an organist and would like to offer your stewardship service to our music ministry, please contact the parish office.

Rev. Thomas M. Mullin, Pastor  
 P.O. Box 695  
 Uwchlan, PA 19480-0695  
 Phone: 610-321-1200  
 Fax: 610-646-6513  
 E-mail: steuucc@stelizabethparish.org  
 Web site: stelizabethparish.org  
*The Spirit* is a publication of the Parish Newsletter Staff. If you would like to join *The Spirit* staff, please call the Mullin Ministry Center.



Return Service Requested

Non-Profit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Permit No. 231  
 Uwchlan, PA 19480