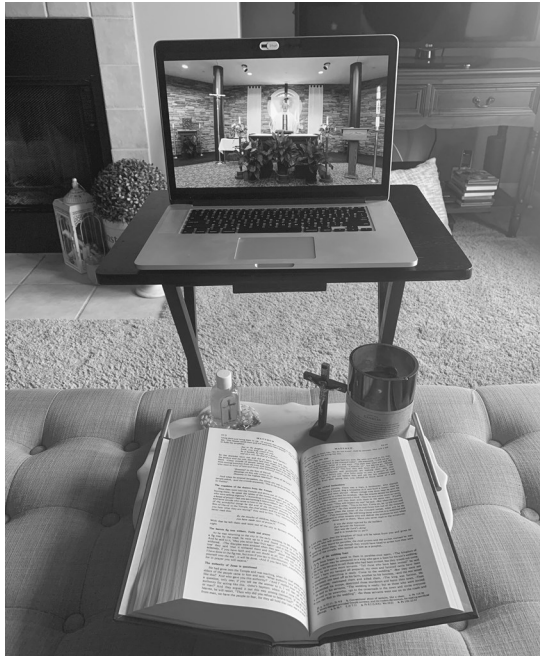


## Zooming Through the Pandemic

**W**ebinars, and emails, and Zoom, oh my! For many, the turn to digital platforms to build community, communicate effectively, and resume some semblance of everyday activities during the coronavirus outbreak has been as frightening and overwhelming as Dorothy’s journey through the forest on the way to Oz – so many unknowns and hidden barriers! Deacon Jim McAvoy shared his thoughts and feelings around this idea at the onset of our social distancing protocols. “The pandemic has disconnected, isolated and disheartened just about everyone,” he said. “It’s been really easy to have a glum spirit.”



Yet, out of the extra screen time and reliance on strong internet connections, something else emerged from the shadows of our pixelated pandemic reality. God has provided a way for His Church in this wilderness. What we found was “an expanded meaning to the ‘domestic church’ within our homes, in an environment we never could have envisioned,” explained Deacon Kevin Mead. “Having access to live streaming of liturgical services provides a way to visually and spiritually stay better connected to one another,” he concluded.

Deacon Jim reflects: “After getting over the initial shock of the quarantine predicament, various technology platforms have extended our ability to maintain devotional prayer and support each other. When we gather online for the rosary, the Chosen Father’s ‘party-line’ and other programs, we see familiar faces and hear familiar voices. It has been a wonderful way to continue our spiritual growth as a parish community while being sensitive to the need for social distancing.”

The youth and young adults of Saint Elizabeth parish have also used virtual means to come together and to stay connected to parish life. Within the parish Elementary Faith Formation program, children shared their at-home experiences from the past week on Zoom

*(continues on page 11)*

### Dates of Interest

**Labor Day Holiday**  
Monday, September 7  
Mass at 9:00 AM

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

**Elementary Faith Formation, K-7  
Opening Prayer Services & Classes**  
M-T-W, September 14-15-16

**Pre-Cana Program [tentative]**  
Friday-Saturday, September 18-19

**Blessing of Catechetical Ministers**  
Weekend Masses, September 19-20

**Confirmation for 2020 Candidates**  
Saturday, October 10, 11:00 AM

**Parent Forum for First Penance and  
First Eucharist**  
Saturday, October 24, 8:30 AM

**Bereavement Ministry  
Memorial Mass**  
Monday, November 2, 7:00 PM

**Forty Hours Devotions**  
Sunday-Tuesday, November 8-9-10

**Forum for 2022 Confirmation  
Candidates and Parents**  
Saturday, November 14, 5:30 PM

### In this issue:

Pandemic Zooming.....	1,11
Pastoral Care COVID-19 Style.....	2
School Spirits.....	3
Three Retirements.....	4,5
Anniversary Campaign Update.....	6
Family Spirits.....	7
Distance Sharing.....	8,11
Farewell to Andrew.....	9
A Note from Father Mullin.....	10
Welcome Father Kevin.....	12

# Pastoral Care During COVID-19

## Despite no public Mass, the Mission continued!

**T**he *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines a parish as a community of the Christian faithful and the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to its pastor. According to the text, "It is the place where all the faithful can be gathered together for the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist."

During the past many weeks, we have been living through a challenging time. Because of the COVID-19 epidemic, it has been impossible to come together in large groups for Mass or for any other reason, but our parish still continues to operate as a provider of pastoral care. We are blessed to have online access to daily and Sunday Mass via livestream. We have been able to continue to share time and prayer with our priests, deacons and each other through the wonder of technology.



*A drive-by pick-up of blessed Palm on Palm Sunday was one of the altered ways to deliver pastoral care during the pandemic.*

In addition to livestream and video recordings of the Stations of the Cross during Lent, we had a drive-by pickup of blessed Palm on Palm Sunday, and online Easter Triduum services including the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Good Friday Celebration of the Lord's Passion and the joyous celebration of the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday evening. We have also had prayer services for healing with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and communal recitation of the Rosary, extensions of our devotional life while we are socially distanced.

In ordinary times, our priests respond to parishioners' needs with help from the Pastoral Care Office. Home and Hospital stewardship volunteers care for the homebound and sick with personal visits. They are extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion who bring the Blessed Sacrament to those unable to attend Mass. They also conduct a weekly prayer service with Holy Communion for residents of two senior living facilities within the parish and provide a vital connection by offering emotional and spiritual support. During this pandemic, these volunteers have continued to bring caring comfort to homebound parishioners by sharing conversation and prayer via telephone.

In-person pastoral care visits have been curtailed for now; however, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is available for those who are critically

ill and in danger of death. The Sacraments of Baptism and Marriage may be arranged, but only with a limited congregation. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated in the church regularly, while always observing social distancing requirements.

While most of us have been staying home, our community has been here with support. Stewardship volunteers have gone grocery shopping with front door drop-off services for parishioners who are unable to get to a store and do not have family nearby. Approximately 40 volunteers participated in a pastoral care calling campaign and reached out to more than 500 parishioners over the age of 70, sharing information about available parish services while giving compassionate contact to stave off the loneliness that comes with social distancing. This connection has been reassuring and appreciated by all.

Despite the COVID-19 virus disrupting and costing lives throughout the world, our spiritual lives and well-being still receive the pastoral attention that we need to support and sustain us while we await a time when we can all gather together as the Saint Elizabeth Parish family.

~ Lisa Sheronas

## School Spirits: *Students and Teachers Adapt to New Way of Learning*

**O**n March 13, 2020, with three months remaining in the school year, life at Saint Elizabeth Parish School took a drastic, unpredictable change. As Governor Wolf announced the closure of all schools in Pennsylvania, students and teachers departed the brick and mortar building on Fellowship Road and embarked on a completely new and unprecedented way of teaching and learning.

“During the first two days following the closure, our staff took time to collaborate and pinpoint the concepts we thought were necessary in order to maintain the perspective and spirit of Catholic school,” explained Principal Dr. Diane Greco. “We determined that our priorities focused on three things—the ritual and routine of prayer, the practice of self-discipline and the importance of serving others. We focused on maintaining these concepts as we framed our lesson plans.”

“We also realized we had to have flexibility,” she continued. “While we felt it very important that our students were able to ‘see’ their teachers every day, we knew they couldn’t be in Zoom video classes all day long. We listened to feedback from parents and created an organizational framework consisting of a balance between class time and independent work, with teachers available all day. We designated Fridays for specials such as library, physical education, art and music so students were able to set up private or group lessons with each teacher. Counseling support was still there, which was especially important due to the emotional burden of the pandemic.”

While challenges existed, such as lack of in-person encouragement and motivation from teachers, students and their parents persevered through the months of online learning, often with great resilience and creativity.

“Overall, I embraced the opportunity to work more digitally with my students,” reflected Beth Hogarth, who teaches ELA and religion to fifth and sixth graders. “While nothing is better than face-to-face teaching and daily interaction, flexibility and adaptation are key attributes of growth. These are life lessons I stressed regularly. Our students are growing up in this digital world, so they were excited to try new educational sites, apps and methods of communication. We worked hard to streamline and enhance our modes of teaching and learning. During the quarantine, all reading, written assignments and tests were performed online, so as students worked on academic material, they practiced new technology at the same time. I truly hope they continue to take this fast-forward leap into the regular use of technology as a tool for the future. It was a source of pride for the students and will be their generation’s direction.”

“Teaching art from home was a huge change, although it really opened the door for creativity,” added art teacher Liz Griffin.



*From Zoom video calls to drive-by graduation, the 2020 school year was much different than anyone could have imagined!*

“The greatest challenge was not being able to hold conversations with students and provide guidance about their art as they worked through the process. However, it was wonderful to be blown away when I received some of their final projects. I was so grateful for certain technology programs, such as Seesaw, which I used with my fourth through eighth grade students. It allowed them to post work, see other’s work and make comments. I also enjoyed the parental involvement. Parents don’t always know what goes on in an art class or the lessons behind a work of art, so it was nice to connect with them.”

The administration is busy planning various scenarios for the upcoming school year, which may even include a combination of traditional and virtual learning, depending upon state mandates. “With much planning underway, we remain committed to motivating and challenging our students while never underestimating the value and importance of relationships and perseverance through challenge,” stressed Dr. Greco.

~ Julia Krumenacker



## Three Long-Term Staffers Prepare to Ride Off into the Sunset

Many of us dream of replacing the dizzying pace of work with the quiet serenity of retirement. However, when that day finally comes, it can leave those still in the office with aching hearts. Nowhere is this truer than at Saint Elizabeth, where three special ladies prepare to ride off into the sunset this summer.

Barbara Batt, Gen Miceli, and Anne Polese have been working at Saint Elizabeth Parish collectively for nearly 40 years. Prompted by their children, they each made the difficult decision to retire.

### *A Fond Farewell to Anne Polese*

As Coordinator of Religious Education, Ms. Anne Polese has helped grow Saint Elizabeth Parish's Elementary Faith Formation (EFF) program for more than seven years — a few more than she had first expected!

"I had been a member of the parish since 2005, but did not know many people because I traveled 70% of the time for work and was not involved at the parish," explained Anne. "When I decided to retire from my corporate position, I still needed to keep busy. I thought this role would be a perfect way to use my skills and meet people. Seven EFF school years later, and I can say it was the perfect job for me."

Anne has injected new fun and creativity into EFF classes. She has especially enjoyed working with the volunteers and meeting parish families. "EFF volunteers are incredible people who are willing to give so much of themselves to the

program and the children. Sharing their faith is truly their passion, and they are really an inspiration to me," Anne said.

Flexibility, noted Anne, is key to a successful religious education program in 2020. "Parents and students are extremely busy, so we need to work with them to make time for their faith life."

Anne is looking forward to spending more time visiting family and friends around the country. She also plans to go back to volunteering at Longwood Gardens as well as in other roles.

"It will be sad to say goodbye to the volunteers, parents and especially the students, but they are in good hands and now I know lots of folks to say hello to when I come to Mass," said Anne. "I'm excited to start a new chapter in my life."

### *Thank you, Barbara Batt, for Years of Service*

Mrs. Barbara Batt worked for Bell Labs, then at Uwchlan Hills elementary school, and finally landed at Saint Elizabeth, where she has worked as a secretary for the



*Through their work, Gen Miceli, Anne Polese and Barbara Batt have left an indelible mark on Saint Elizabeth Parish.*

last 14 years. At the urging of her children and with the allure of sleeping past 6 a.m. in her mind, Barbara decided now would be the right time to retire.

"I want to enjoy life while I'm still able to and have the freedom to do things on my schedule like make cookies on a Tuesday — not just on weekends — as well as spend more time with my husband," explained Barbara. "I also have a 12-year-old grandson and five-month-old granddaughter that I look forward to spending my newfound time with, not to mention that I want to get my house in order, too!"

Over the years, Barbara has learned a lot about how everyday parish life operates and has enjoyed the diversity of her day-to-day job...one day working on Confirmation and the next, Pre-Cana. "Most of all, though, I've enjoyed working with kind staff and generous parishioners," she added. "There are few places

## *Anne, Gen and Barbara Retire (cont'd from previous page)*

where you can collect more than 375 homemade casseroles for the poor in a single weekend!"

As the clock ticks down to Barbara's last day, the entire parish owes her a big thank you for all of her hard work over the years. "The one piece of advice that I would offer to whoever takes my spot is to be observant," concluded Barbara. "Keep your ears open because you may find special ways that you can help someone either in the office or in the parish at large."

### *Director of Parish Services Leaves Big Shoes to Fill*

Mrs. Gen Miceli grew up in Overbrook, PA, attended West Catholic High School for Girls, and then graduated from Immaculata University with a dual degree in English and Elementary Education. She landed her first teaching job soon after flipping her tassel and never looked back! After getting married, she raised a family of four, and for a time the family lived in Middletown, PA. Then 20 years ago, her husband, Alan began working in Philadelphia, and the family moved to Havertown, PA.

"Father Mullin had just been named pastor at Saint Elizabeth and offered me a job," explained Gen. As Director of Parish Services, Gen has worn many hats over the years, including coordinating the training and scheduling for liturgical ministers, overseeing the safe environment program, serving as the staff liaison for a wide range of pastoral outreach activities (such as Sharing Our Bounty, Good Works, Joseph's People), social fellowship activi-

ties, and family life ministry programs (such as Pre-Cana and Pre-Jordan, and the Bereavement Ministry Team). Gen also served "ex officio" on the Stewardship Council, the Adult Faith Formation Committee, the Liturgical Life Committee and the Stewardship Day of Service Committee.

"It's a lot, but I've loved it all. These parish ministry teams involve hundreds of dedicated parishioners, who have lots of ideas, high energy and selfless intent. When team members propose new projects, I work with Father Mullin to review the projects and coordinate their implementation. I am always impressed with the many creative ways to serve those in need that are brought forward by the stewardship volunteers," said Gen.

After nearly two decades at Saint Elizabeth, Gen has seen dozens of new ministries added. Two of the most unique, she says, are the Interfaith Action Committee and the new Creation Care Team, which reflects Pope Francis' mission to protect the environment.

"I have never seen such a dynamic interfaith group like the Northern Chester County Interfaith Action Community, with which our parish interfaith committee collaborates. We engage with people from Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish and Christian faiths, among others," added Gen. "It's inspiring and eye-opening."

Gen continued, "Saint Elizabeth does NOT stand still! So many new ministries and programs have been introduced during my

years here, as we design new ways to live out the mission and pastoral plan of the parish. I'm very grateful to have been a part of them all."

What's next for Gen? She plans to spend time with her husband and her 101-year-old father-in-law, in addition to her children and grandchildren. "I want to visit Santa Monica to visit my two daughters on the West Coast, but I am also looking forward to the little things like lunching with my friends, leisurely shopping and swimming more regularly."

Saint Elizabeth has been richly blessed by Gen's giving nature and warm heart, and we will forever benefit from her legacy - indeed, her replacement has big shoes to fill. "I'm most proud to have been the conduit of our parishioners' generosity and caring nature. It comes in the form of food collections, Christmas gifts, casseroles and toiletries for the homeless, visits to the sick and homebound, aiding the unemployed and caring for families with children who have disabilities. It comes in the form of volunteer teachers and coaches plus many other ongoing acts of kindness," she concluded.

"The staff and parishioners of Saint Elizabeth are deeply grateful to Anne, Barbara and Gen for their competent and dedicated service to the parish community in countless ways over the years," said Father Mullin. "And we pray that God will continue to bless each of them and their families in the years ahead!"

~ Lisa Barbadora

## With a Vision to the Future!

What blessings have come to the parishioners of Saint Elizabeth over the past 20 years, breathing life into a new parish here in the beautiful countryside of Upper Uwchlan Township, Chester County! It is a rare opportunity that you, as Catholics in the Northeastern U.S., have had to build a new parish community from the ground up, forming not just the visible and tangible elements of the parish facilities, but the parish's spiritual and pastoral life as well. Most Catholics in our area of the country have never had the experience of founding a new parish. So in the parish's 20th anniversary year, we thank God for the generosity, faith and enthusiasm of all the parishioners who have faithfully stewarded Saint Elizabeth Church from its establishment in July 2000, through the many years since then.

It must sometimes seem that in the blink of an eye, the parish is now looking ahead to plan for the next quarter century in the life of Saint Elizabeth, considering questions like these: Who is the parish today and what can we carry forward from the first 20 years? How can we use our many gifts of time, talent and treasure in the years ahead to maintain our foundation, serve the temporal and spiritual needs of the parish family and encourage others to join us in the faith community that is Saint Elizabeth?

In the spirit of responsible stewardship, and in consultation with many parish leaders, Father Mullin engaged the assistance of a local firm, LCDC Development Consultants, to proceed with a feasibility study intended to assess the readi-

ness of parishioners to support a 25th anniversary capital campaign. The five-year campaign is envisioned to be initiated this fall and culminate in the celebration of the parish's 25th anniversary in spring 2025.

Many parishioners are already familiar with one of LCDC's principals, Lynn Cummings, from her work on the *Stepping Forward Together Campaign* to fund the construction of the gymnasium and the parish ministry center (2006-2007). For over 30 years, LCDC has worked primarily with Catholic parishes in our



region on feasibility studies, capital campaigns, increased offertory appeals and leadership/lay engagement initiatives. As managing partner for LCDC, I have been coordinating the feasibility study for the parish.

Beginning in early March, LCDC began to meet individually with parishioners for confidential interviews. This conversation asked participants about their sense of the parish today – what strengths and challenges exist, what their thoughts and counsel are regarding the proposed anni-

versary campaign and their willingness to make a financial gift to this effort when the time for making a pledge would come. LCDC would like to thank those who gave their time to the study interviews, members of approximately 50 households in all.

As interviewers, we were so grateful for the thoughtfulness and hospitality of everyone involved, including staff members who made space available and helped the schedules run smoothly! Some parishioners met with LCDC team members in the parish ministry center, while others participated by phone in the weeks since. Once the interviewers have completed their own notes, we compile all the data into a formal report, which provides the parish with valuable information about the level of support that can be expected from parishioners for the proposed campaign. In this way, the “voice of the people” can be discerned, while ensuring the confidentiality of each interviewee.

The entire parish community will be invited to a presentation of the Feasibility Study results – traditionally, LCDC has an “open town meeting” at a time most convenient to parishioners. At that time, we will share the study findings and recommendations to best prepare for and proceed with the 25th anniversary campaign for Saint Elizabeth Parish. Stay tuned for more details about the time and place for this presentation!

~ Kathy Caliendo,  
LCDC Managing Partner



## Family Spirits: Meet Rolando Perez and Sofia Barroso

**R**olando Perez and Sofia Barroso grew up in Havana, Cuba, and met during Sofia's dental residency while Rolando was working as an engineer at the same hospital. A 13-year career as a dentist followed for Sofia, as Rolando continued his work in engineering. They were married at Sofia's home parish, Saint Rita of Cassia, in Havana, and in 1994, welcomed their son, Rudy.

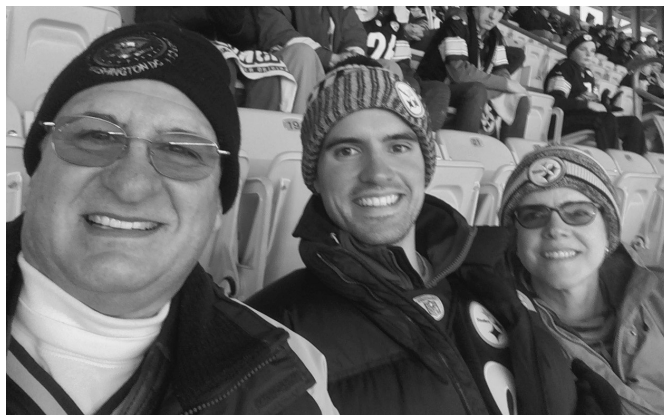
In 2000, due to the economic and political situation in Cuba, Rolando moved briefly to Venezuela before immigrating to the United States. Because Sofia worked in the medical field, she was not allowed to leave Cuba immediately. After four years apart, Rolando, Sofia and Rudy were finally reunited in Miami, FL. Sofia began working as a dental assistant and went to school to become a dental hygienist because her certification was not valid in the U.S. The family moved to Radnor, PA, when Sofia entered dental school at the University of Pennsylvania. She completed her degree in 2011.

Chester Springs became home in 2013, soon after Sofia started her career with ChesPenn Health Services in Coatesville. Her fluent Spanish is a valuable asset to her patients. Sofia says she practices dentistry with a "mindset of serving the community" and that working at CHS is very rewarding and a "true blessing." Rolando operates his own business from home, coordinating the sale of HVAC equipment to contractors and institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean. Rudy graduated from Radnor High School and attended Swarthmore College. He

now works and lives in Philadelphia, but is headed to the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business in the fall.

When the family came to Chester Springs, they frequently passed by Saint Elizabeth Parish. Rolando and Sofia were active stewardship volunteers in their parish in Cuba, but due to their many moves over the past decades, they had not settled into a new church community. They were eager to reconnect with parish life and their personal faith. Though following a Mass spoken completely in English was an initial challenge, recognizing colleagues, patients and the friendly greetings of Father Mullin made them feel welcome and right at home in a new setting. Sofia and Rolando have participated in the Stewardship Day of Service and adult faith formation opportunities, and they are now new members of the Pastoral Council, where they will serve together. "I know it will be another learning experience and very different compared to Cuba," Sofia said. "But we are eager to help wherever we can."

Rolando reflects, "We have loved exploring little by little the wonders of this beautiful country." The family has visited many local



*Cuban natives Rolando Perez and Sofia Barroso, pictured here with their son Rudy, brought their faith and Cuban heritage to Saint Elizabeth's. At right is Saint Rita of Cassia, in Havana, where the couple were married.*



historical landmarks and in the entire Northeast region, from Valley Forge and Independence Mall to the Smithsonian Museums in Washington, DC. They also enjoy trips to New York City to see shows on Broadway. Rolando also loves cooking and has found special enjoyment in the "new custom" of an American Thanksgiving, as he prepares traditional Cuban food to complement the traditional turkey.

A country away – and with a new parish to call home – Rolando and Sofia have brought their faith and Cuban heritage to Saint Elizabeth Parish. Sofia says, "We enjoy the fact that we were able to find a place again where we can feel part of a community." It is clear that Saint Elizabeth Parish is better for their presence here.

~ Elizabeth Kazanjian

## Sharing with Others from a Distance

The values outlined in the Saint Elizabeth Parish Pastoral Plan call each of us to “model our lives after the pattern of Christ in caring for the needs of others.” Even in this time of social distancing, when it may seem difficult to put it into practice, parishioners have discovered countless creative ways to stay in touch with family, friends and their community.

We continued to practice our faith and to grow as a community of grateful stewards, and we have offered compassionate pastoral care by reaching out to those in need during the months of isolation. We donated blood, meals and food, or sent kind notes to help brighten a stranger’s day. Here are a few of these stories:

### *American Red Cross Blood Drive*

On Tuesday, May 26, the Knights of Columbus Council #13141 partnered with the American Red Cross to host a blood drive in the Saint Elizabeth Parish gymnasium. Parishioners donated a total of 44 units of blood. Each unit can be used to help three patients, so up to 132 people have been touched by their generosity.

Council member Matthew Ward has been the coordinator of similar blood drives for the last four years. “Our council is all about service to Saint Elizabeth Parish and to our community,” said Matthew. “We typically have one blood drive each year, right before Thanksgiving. During this pandemic, the Red Cross is in desperate need, so we decided to organize another blood drive right away.”

*The Spirit* ■ 8



Matt went on to say, “We did a great job working together, although it was stressful at times. The Red Cross was struggling with staffing and frequently had to update their procedures in order to meet CDC protocol changes. Everything in the gym had to be perfect, including having the temperature set to 68 degrees to protect the donated blood. We used every square foot of the floor space to maximize social distancing; only staff and donors were allowed into the building.”

Members of the Knights volunteered to help answer questions and monitor the door, all while keeping the proper social distance. Donors were by appointment only and, if necessary, waited in their car until it was their time to donate. “Unfortunately, after giving blood, only one person could sit at the canteen table while drinking some juice or eating a snack,” Matt reflected. “During our regular blood drives, I like spending time at the canteen and meeting different parishioners. I really missed this part of the blood drive.”

### *EFF Student Greeting Cards*

More than 500 parish children are enrolled in Saint Elizabeth’s Elementary Faith Formation program where they learn about their faith and participate in

stewardship and community service projects.

Mary Damian is a catechist and teaches one of the second grade EFF classes. She is also a member of the parish Transportation Committee that brings parishioners who need rides to Mass on weekends. “A parent asked me if I knew of anyone that our children could make and send cards to,” said Mary. “She told me she thought sending cards to some senior parishioners would be a



good project, especially since they are isolated due to their vulnerability to the COVID-19 virus.”

Mary told the mom about one of the seniors that she drives to Mass on occasion and who lives in the Hankin apartments in Eagleview — and the rest is history. The students in Mary’s class decided to make greeting cards. Mary dropped them off at the apartments, and her “rider” distributed them to the residents.

“The seniors were thrilled to get the cards!” said Mary. “And the children had fun making them. We make cards from time to time and

*(continues on page 11)*



## A Grateful Farewell to (and from) Father Andrew Laboratorio

On June 19, Father Andrew Laboratorio, our parochial vicar since July 2019, was appointed by Archbishop Perez as the pastoral administrator for Our Lady of Hope Church in Philadelphia. Our Lady of Hope was established in 1993, with the merger of three parishes in what is known as the Lower Northeast section of Philadelphia: Saint Stephen (founded in 1843), Holy Child (founded in 1909) and Our Lady of the Holy Souls (also founded in 1909). On Wednesday, July 8, Father Andrew took on new responsibilities as the pastoral leader of this multicultural community which serves African-American, Filipino and Hispanic Catholics.

All in Saint Elizabeth Parish are deeply grateful to Father Andrew for his warm, engaging personal manner, his prayerful spirit and his genuine pastoral care for our parishioners during his year of priestly service here, an all-too-short stay with us, to be sure. May God bless Father Andrew and his ministry among the people of Our Lady of Hope Church in the months and years ahead!

As Father Andrew prepared to move to Our Lady of Hope Church, he offered these words of farewell and thanks to the staff and people of Saint Elizabeth Church. "In his appointment letter to me last year, Archbishop Chaput wrote, 'As a Parochial Vicar [of Saint Elizabeth Parish], you are called to know and to love the people whom you serve.' I hope that I have been able to fulfill his words during this past year here with you," said Father Andrew.



*All the best to Father Andrew, who began his ministry at Our Lady of Hope Church in Philadelphia in July.*

He continued, "Your prayers and your generous support are so humbling to me and help me a lot as I strive to continue growing in holiness. For this, I will be forever grateful. I am grateful to Father Mullin, for helping me to grow in priestly ministry and showing me a great example to follow as I accept the responsibility of shepherding the faithful of Our Lady of Hope; to the parish and school staff, who have shown that friendship and kindness can go a long way in our efforts to attend to people's pastoral needs; and to all of you, the people of Saint Elizabeth, I am truly indebted.

It was my honor and privilege to serve you. Thank you for allowing me to share in your faith journey. And for times that I may have offended you in any way, I ask for your forgiveness. Please

know that my only hope and intention is to bring you and me closer to God.

May our Blessed Mother continue to guide and inspire us to love and serve others tenderly!"

~ Father Tom Mullin

### Stay Connected to Parish News with Flocknote



Our parish uses the *Flocknote* messaging system to send parishioners email and/or text messages. The *Weekly Digest* contains weekly parish bulletin columns, a link to the Sunday scripture readings, a prayer corner and more.

Through the *Flocknote* system, we also send regular communications from the Parish School and the Youth Ministry Program, among other ministries.

*Flocknote* is a free service! Go to the "Next Steps" section on the parish website home page ([www.stelizabethparish.org](http://www.stelizabethparish.org)). Need help signing up? Simply email Sara Richardson, Communications Coordinator, via [sricharson@stelizabethparish.org](mailto:sricharson@stelizabethparish.org).

## A Word from Father Mullin



### Happy 20th Anniversary, Saint Elizabeth!

**T**his past July 1, in the midst of the ongoing social restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic, our parish community quietly marked the 20th anniversary of the founding of Saint Elizabeth Church, without the festive celebration one might associate with an emerald anniversary.

Nevertheless, our 20th anniversary as a parish community provides me a fitting opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation to all the individuals, couples and families of Saint Elizabeth who have so generously given of their time, talent and treasure to the mission and ministry of our parish community during the past 20 years.

By the grace of God, all of us have come together throughout these years to bring our church to life on Fellowship Road. Our parish vision reminds us that we are called by Jesus Christ to grow as a community of disciples, to deepen our faith in God and to live each day as grateful stewards of God's gifts.

So let us not grow weary, but remain strong in the Lord! May God bestow many blessings upon all in our parish community in the years ahead and bring to fulfillment in Christ Jesus the great work which the Lord began among us back in July 2000!

And may the Holy Spirit continue to lead us in sustaining a holy, faithful and vibrant Catholic community, deeply rooted in the Word of God and the Sacraments, and equally committed to caring for one another and to serving the needs of others, for *unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it* (Psalm 127:1).

~ Father Tom Mullin

## Just Five Minutes (or less) Can Make a Difference!

That is all it takes to fill out the online parish census! Go to [stelizabethparish.org](http://stelizabethparish.org). Look for



the *Census* logo on the front page and follow the steps to update your information!

If you have already filled out the paper copy of the census, please do not fill out the online version. Thank you for your cooperation with this project, a key step in the ongoing implementation of the *2017-2021 Parish Pastoral Plan*.

## "The Spirit" Staff

### Editor-in-Chief

Lisa Barbadora

### Director of Communications

Deacon Barry Midwod

### Communications Coordinator

Sara Richardson

### Contributors

Lisa Barbadora

Kathy Caliendo

David Guthrie

Elizabeth Kazanjian

Julia Krumenacker

Father Mullin

Lindsey Ranstrom

Elisa Sheronas

### Photos

Mary Damian

### Layout and Graphics

Amy Giampietro

## Distance Sharing *(cont'd from page 8)*

send them to sick parishioners, but this was special. It was a wonderful way that we could have an impact on someone's life, even while social distancing."

### *Casseroles and Food Drives*

The parishioners of Saint Elizabeth have always been generous by sharing their bounty for food drives, making casseroles for Saint John's Hospice, or collecting candy after Halloween. In

this time of isolation, when so many are in need, parishioners have been extraordinarily generous in their support.

The parish casserole collection program continued during the pandemic. Saint John's Hospice has greater need than ever due to COVID-19. They serve over 3,000 meals each week to their needy and often homeless clients. A drive-through donation system was set up in the front of the

church for the April and May collections so volunteers could collect the casseroles from donors while maintaining social distancing. Our parishioners made

375 casseroles for the May collection and another 200 for the June collection!

The food drive supporting The Lord's Pantry and Saint Agnes Day Room was just as successful and well organized by the Sharing Our Bounty stewardship volunteers who collected, sorted and transported the food to the organizations for distribution.

During these challenging weeks, the parishioners of Saint Elizabeth have found ways to continue compassionate care for others. We helped the lonely or isolated with a card or a note, the homeless or unemployed with food and the sick with the gift of our blood. We have answered Saint Paul's call for us to "put on the attitude of Christ" and modeled our lives after Him in caring for the needs of others.

*~ David Guthrie*



*During the pandemic, parishioners generously donated to a food drive that benefitted The Lord's Pantry and Saint Agnes Day Room.*

## Zooming *(cont'd from cover)*

video conferencing before getting into their weekly lessons. Catechist Liam Dempsey said, "Students seem to really like getting together with their friends. Online class numbers increased every week and parents appreciated the opportunity their children have had to socialize with their friends in an EFF environment." The youth ministry programs for junior high, high school and young adults have also created opportunities for both synchronous and asynchronous

engagement. From holding virtual youth groups on Zoom and Kast, to sharing video reflections, or creating a "virtual narthex" experience after the Sunday Mass livestream, there have been several ways for young adults to connect with their peers and gain emotional and spiritual support.

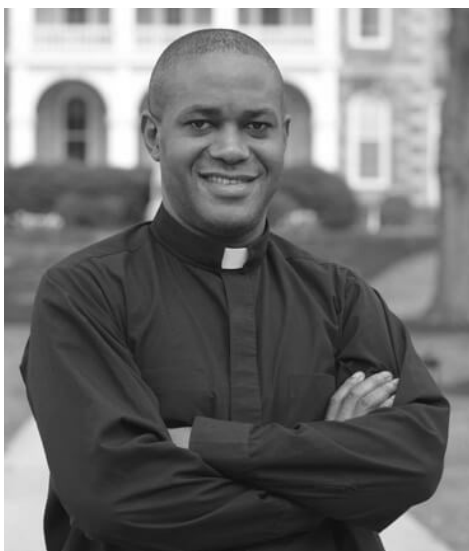
While there have been many graces in the midst of these uncertain times, Father Andrew reminds us, "This 'new normal' is

only a temporary solution created out of necessity because of the current health crisis. Nothing can replace the public celebration of Mass and other sacraments. Our church is an expression of people's faith. Our church life is sustained by people's lived experiences." We all look forward to being with each other in person once again!

*~ Lindsey Ranstrom*



## A Warm Welcome to Father Kevin Okafor!



Wednesday, July 8, marked the arrival of a new parochial vicar for our parish, Father Kevin C. Okafor. He is a 39-year-old native of Nigeria who was ordained a priest by Archbishop Perez on June 20, 2020. Father Kevin

celebrated his First Mass at Saint Martin of Tours Church in Philadelphia, his “home away from home” for the past four years.

Father Kevin grew up in a devout Catholic family in the village of Ojoto, Anambra State, Nigeria, where he remembers being drawn to the priesthood early in life. “I had a passion to be a priest from the time I was a young boy,” said Father Kevin. He attended several seminaries in Nigeria beginning in junior high school and completed a Bachelor of Arts degree (2005) in Enugu, Nigeria, and later, a Master of Arts degree in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Ibadan (2012).

Filled with a missionary spirit, Father Kevin came to the United

States in 2014, and spent several years as a lay missionary among the Hispanic Catholics in Colorado before resuming his priestly formation at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary in Wynnewood, PA. There, he completed both a Master of Divinity degree (2019) and Master of Arts in Theology degree (2020). Before his assignment to Saint Elizabeth, Father Kevin served as a transitional deacon at Saint Andrew Church in Newtown, PA.

A warm welcome to Father Kevin as he joins the pastoral staff serving our parish community. May God bless Father Kevin, his family, and his priestly ministry at Saint Elizabeth Church!

~ Father Tom Mullin

Rev. Thomas M. Mullin, Pastor  
P.O. Box 695  
Uwchlan, PA 19480-0695  
Phone: 610-321-1200  
Fax: 610-646-6513  
E-mail: steuucc@stelizabetchparish.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