

A Call to Stewardship – Living Beyond Sunday

At the inception of Saint Elizabeth Church in July of 2000, Father Mullin had a vision to develop a deep sense of Christian stewardship in all parishioners. We recite the powerful Stewardship Prayer when we celebrate Mass together. Stewardship is at the center of the 2017-2021 *Pastoral Plan* and is articulated in its mission statement and core values. It is almost 20 years since the beginning of our parish community and our world still needs us to be active disciples of Jesus Christ and to bring His light in to our homes, our schools and our places of work.

Over the past several months, the Parish Stewardship Council has been working on a campaign to bring stewardship to the forefront of our lives once again. **LIVING BEYOND SUNDAY** is a theme for all to embrace. It invites us to recognize the many and varied ways we are practicing stewardship on a daily basis – whether we realize it or not.

Are you a greeter at Mass? Do you make casseroles occasionally for St. John’s Hospice? Did you hold the door for someone? Are you the peacemaker in a divisive environment at work? Do you model good sportsmanship as a coach with youth sports? Do you collect donations or run/walk for a worthy cause? These are all simple, but practical, examples of stewardship and they should be celebrated. These good works are contagious, after all.

The goal of **LIVING BEYOND SUNDAY** is to reengage our parish community at large and create awareness of the countless opportunities for a stewardship way of life throughout the week. What can one do beyond simply attending Mass each weekend? You might become involved with

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Dates of Interest

Ash Wednesday, March 6

Mass with Distribution of Ashes:
7:30 AM & 7:00 PM
Liturgy of the Word with
Distribution of Ashes:
11:00 AM & 4:45 PM

Parish Mission with Elizabeth Ficocelli

Sunday, March 17: 4:00 PM
Monday & Tuesday, March 18 & 19:
7:00 PM

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturdays: 9:00-10:00 AM, chapel
Lenten Wednesdays, March 13, 20,
27 & April 3: 6:30-7:00 PM, chapel
[No confessions on Holy Saturday,
April 20]

Communal Reconciliation Service with Individual Confessions

Wednesday, April 10: 7:00 PM
Extended Confessions
Saturday, April 13: 9:00-11:00 AM

Stations of the Cross & Benediction

Fridays: 7:00 PM
March 8, 15, 22, 29 & April 5
Living Stations of the Cross
Friday, April 12: 1:30 PM & 7:00 PM

Stewardship Day of Service

Saturday, April 6, 8:30 AM

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Getting to Know Deacon Carson Kain

This fall, Transitional Deacon Carson Kain joined our parish community for weekend Masses. As he completes his theological studies and prepares for ordination to the priesthood in May, Deacon Kain assists at Mass, preaches and celebrates Baptism here at Saint Elizabeth. Transitional deacons are those preparing for the priesthood, as distinct from permanent deacons like Deacon Jim McAvoy, Deacon Barry Midwood and Deacon Kevin Mead, all of whom serve at our parish with no plans to continue toward the priesthood. The word deacon is derived from the Greek *diákonos*, which means servant.

Deacon Kain grew up in the small town of McCook (population 8,000), in southwestern Nebraska. Raised on a farm with six brothers and a sister, he was home-schooled until his youngest brother was born with several medical complications. He attended Catholic high school and later McCook Community College where he earned an Associate Degree in Science. He ultimately obtained a Bachelor of Philosophy degree at Saint Gregory the Great Seminary in Nebraska. Deacon Kain is completing his final year of theological studies at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, Overbrook, just outside Philadelphia.

"I first thought about becoming a priest as an altar boy at daily Mass. The high school retreats I went on were also an influence. My family prayed the Rosary together each night, and I believe this played a very important role in my vocation discernment. During World Youth Day in 2008 in

Sydney, Australia, I made the decision to stay close to home so I could attend school and think more deeply about my vocation. It wasn't until I was at the University of Nebraska that I came face to face with Jesus at the Newman Center. I realized I had to get to know Him better. I began attending daily Mass more frequently, doing Holy Hours of Adoration and surrounding myself with people who helped me to grow in virtue."

Deacon Kain continued, "In Spring 2011, I went on a pilgrimage to Rome led by priests of the Newman Center. God let loose the floodgates of His grace, and I decided to give the seminary a shot. I bargained with God to attend for one year, and if I didn't like it I would leave. Well, the first year went so well that I decided to go back for another. Soon, I was kneeling at the Cathedral before the Bishop and being ordained a Deacon. God's ways are truly wonderful and impossible to predict!"

As for influences, Deacon Kain credits his parents and priests whose teachings motivated him to grow in holiness. Many other religious people and families inspired him as they lived out the Gospel. "I encountered many non-Catholics, who also challenged me to get to know my faith, and I am grateful," he said.

While he finds being away from his family and urban living the most challenging aspects of being in the seminary, Deacon Kain noted that his friends at Saint Charles, priests and parishioners



"My calling to the priesthood came slowly over time," reflected Deacon Kain, who will be ordained to the priesthood in May.

have made him feel welcomed. "The fraternity at the seminary has been a great blessing. The faculty and their ardor to teach has been a source of inspiration. My goals are simply to be a holy priest and to trust in the strength and power of our Lord Jesus and allow Him to work through me to bring His joy and peace to all I meet."

Deacon Kain's hobbies include playing guitar, hiking, camping, canoeing, hunting, fishing, riding horses, skiing, splitting wood, reading, watching movies, creative writing, bonfires, inventive thinking, exploring the wilderness, and activities that ring of adventure.

Welcome Deacon Kain!

~ Julie Krumenacker

School Spirits: "Spring" Forward at Saint Elizabeth Parish School

Students and teachers alike look forward to the end of the school year. Of course, the time off means trips to the beach, sleeping in, vacations to new places and the pure simplicity of just doing nothing. However, for teachers the reality is that nearing the end of the school year means turning another page and starting all over again. It's a time of reflection. How did we meet the overarching theme of Catholic Schools Week 2019:

Learn. Serve.
Lead. Succeed?

We know that the demands of the 21st century require an approach to education policy and practice that goes beyond a narrow curriculum and accountability system. For teachers, that means the integration of faith

with academic subjects, culture and everyday life. It means a respect for Catholic Social Teaching which contributes to productive citizenship and responsible leadership. It means creating an environment that's safe, welcoming and supportive for all children while encouraging and nurturing prayer.

In the interest of creating a safe, supportive school "family," this year our teachers embarked on a unique book study called Discipline with Dignity and integrated what we are learning into our existing Second Step social and emotional learning program.

Data tells us that students engaged in school-based social and emotional learning attain higher grades and score 11 percentile points higher on academic achievement tests than peers who do not engage in such learning. So, Saint Elizabeth Parish School made a commitment to incorporate what we are learning into school life by encouraging children to connect with each other.



Throughout the school year, these eighth grade students and their Kindergarten buddies attend Mass together and participate in various activities like the recent ice cream social during Catholic Schools Week. This year, the buddy program was expanded to include seventh graders paired with first grade buddies.

There's no better place to help students find and establish their voice than in the classroom. Today's students may form the "internet generation," but they are still children who grow within and are shaped by relationships of love and care. It is through their relationships that young people seek understanding of their world. Other than home, school is where students spend most of their time. We strive to show respect by involving students in the decisions that will affect them, challenging them with relevant material that is neither too easy nor too hard,

and both correcting and appreciating them with thoughtfulness and dignity.

Ultimately, our goal is to create an environment that brings out the best in our students. We want to see students empowered to do good and make a difference in the world. It will only happen in a culture of character. We've learned that no matter how well our school year goes, there is always room for improvement. We look ahead to "springing forward" because before you know it, it will be the first day of school AGAIN!

~ Dr. Diane Greco

More Dates of Interest

Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday, April 13-14
Mass: 5:30 PM, 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM,
11:30 AM

Holy Thursday, April 18
Mass of the Lord's Supper: 7:30 PM

Good Friday, April 19
Solemn Passion Service: 3:00 PM

Holy Saturday, April 20
Blessing of Easter Foods: 11:00 AM
Easter Vigil Liturgy: 8:00 PM

Easter Sunday, April 21
Mass: 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM

Memorial Day
Monday, May 27
Mass: 9:00 AM

Holy Day of the Ascension of the Lord
Thursday, May 30
Mass: 7:30 AM, 12:00 PM, 7:00 PM

Prayer, Clear Vision and Mission Sustain a Community

In a pastoral letter mailed to all parishioners in January, Father Mullin reminded the Saint Elizabeth parish community that we are sustained through prayer and by a clear vision and mission. His letter began as follows:

"As we begin this new year, I am deeply aware of how troubling and distressing a time it has been for us who are members of the Catholic Church in the wake of the public disclosure of the abusive actions of so many ordained ministers and the negligence of many church leaders in addressing these sinful behaviors within the Church. It is indeed a difficult time to be a Catholic believer when one's faith has been weakened and one's trust in the Church has been undermined by the clergy sexual abuse scandal. Here at Saint Elizabeth, many of our parishioners are struggling with their faith, as was clearly evident in the two open town meetings held at our parish in the fall."

Two open parish meetings held at Saint Elizabeth provided a safe venue for parishioners to share their concerns in an open dialogue with one another and to explore how to respond as Catholic believers, specifically in light of the public release of the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report on clergy sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. Both sessions were facilitated by parishioner Regina Lennox.

The first meeting took place in September and drew more than 120 parishioners to pray with each other and discuss their thoughts and personal reactions to a church in crisis. Nearly 70 parishioners attended a second open parish meeting in early December to con-

tinue addressing parishioners' concerns about the clergy sexual abuse crisis.

The many concerns voiced by participants at the September meeting were organized into four topic areas for break-out discussions at the December meeting. These areas were:

1. Concerns about the ongoing care for the victims of clergy sexual abuse
2. Concerns about the handling of abuse perpetrators and negligent church leaders
3. Concerns for struggling and alienated church members
4. Concerns about existing Church structures and the role of the laity in the Church



Father Mullin, parishioner Regina Lennox and Father Stokely hosted two open parish meetings to address parishioners' concerns about the clergy sexual abuse crisis.

Since the December meeting, a number of parishioners have expressed an interest in getting together to explore some concrete steps to address the issue of clergy sexual abuse on a broader level. Several parishioners have be-

gun meeting informally on their own for that purpose.

In his pastoral letter, Father Mullin went on to affirm: *"I wish to reassure you that in the midst of all that is happening in the Church at large, Saint Elizabeth Parish remains committed to carrying out Jesus' own mission of proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed. As a parish community, we strive to continue growing together as disciples of Jesus, nourished and sustained by the celebration of the Sacraments. We continue to provide ongoing opportunities for parishioners of all ages to deepen their faith and to understand more fully why we are Catholics. And as grateful stewards, we seek ways to share with one another and with those in need the many gifts with which God has blessed us.*

This is the Vision and the Mission proclaimed in our 2017-2021 Pastoral Plan. This is what God calls us to embrace as a parish community."

As we carry on our mission as disciples of Jesus Christ and continue to pray for one another and for those who have suffered any form of abuse,

particularly at the hands of ordained ministers or other members of the Church, may our community be sustained by the Holy Spirit.

~ Deacon Barry Midwood

A Call to Stewardship (cont'd)

one or more of the over 40 ministries here at Saint Elizabeth parish. Another way might be to participate in other local or worldwide community service projects. Perhaps the best thing we can do is to simply become more conscious of the gifts with which we have been blessed and offer those gifts each day to those we meet. In other words, start **LIVING BEYOND SUNDAY**. The parish mission statement says it this way, "By the conviction of our words, the goodness of our deeds and the witness of our lives, we reflect the presence of Jesus living within us."

Parishioners will soon begin to see **LIVING BEYOND SUNDAY** branding across our campus. In fact, students at Saint Elizabeth Parish School have been "living beyond Sunday" since September! The Saint Elizabeth Parish Stewardship Council will introduce three phases of this stewardship campaign:

1. **Growing** in faith and stewardship is the phase that will kick off the program this fall
2. **Praying** is the focus as we welcome the New Year 2020
3. **Serving** our communities and each other will be the theme through the winter of 2020

Guided by the Holy Spirit, call it the **GPS of LIVING BEYOND SUNDAY**! Along the way, the Parish Stewardship Council will be communicating ideas and fun activities to keep stewardship in our hearts and minds.

Start **LIVING BEYOND SUNDAY** now, by getting involved in one of Saint Elizabeth's many ministries. Visit www.stelizabethparish.org and look for the link to "Finding My Path in Stewardship."

~ Mike Maher

Saint Elizabeth Basketball: Trust the Process

This year, the SEAM basketball program was packed with 21 teams: 3 JV Girls, 4 JV Boys, 5 Varsity Boys, 2 Varsity Girls, and 7 High School teams. In fact, the 2018/2019 season represents the largest number of high school basketball teams in the program's history and was led by High School Basketball Director Vince O'Connell. Vince expanded the program to support a larger wave of participants. Greg Grant, the Grade School Basketball Director, also did a tremendous job managing the facilities, schedules, referees, players, and coaches.

"Greg and Vince did an amazing job juggling many different elements that go into a basketball program of this size and quality," said Bob Ferraro, SEAM Director. "Thank you to all of the volunteers who stepped up to give their time in stewardship service to our parish youth," he said.



A special shout-out goes to the Varsity Girls Regional team, which made it to the semi-finals in play-off action, and also came in first place at the Immaculate



Conception holiday tournament. The season was highlighted by the annual Saint Elizabeth Turkey Tournament over Thanksgiving week where all parish JV and Varsity teams competed in a round-robin style tournament. Good luck to all athletes as they end their basketball seasons and keep playing with God in their hearts... and, always trust the process!

~ Lisa Barbadora

Family Spirits: Meet The Sciabacucchi Family!

Jaime and Mark Sciabacucchi (pronounced Shab-a-cookie) both grew up in the Scranton area and met in Wilkes-Barre, PA while earning undergraduate degrees from King's College: Mark with a Bachelor's in Finance in 2005, and Jaime with a Bachelor's in Accounting in 2003. They had mutual friends but were first introduced at a meeting with an alumnus who had volunteered to mentor them. The two went on their first date at a family favorite Italian restaurant and discovered they had much in common.



Jaime and Mark Sciabacucchi, shown here with their children Julianna and Lucas, show their stewardship by participating in several programs at Saint Elizabeth.

Both grew up in families very active in their parishes. "Growing up, the church was an anchor to our family that went beyond going to Mass," said Mark. "My parents were active participants in parish ministries and when I was old enough, I began following their example by serving as an altar server, lector and pitching in at church fundraisers."

Jaime continued, "Common faith and family values were very

important in determining who I wanted to share the rest of my life with." Both Jaime and Mark realized that they had found "The One," at Jaime's brother's wedding a year after their first date. During a visit to campus on Mark's birthday, Mark surprised Jaime by proposing. They were married on October, 20, 2006, in King's College chapel by the college president, assisted by their two home-parish pastors.

They began their married life living in Lafayette Hill, and moved

to Chester Springs in 2007. "We love it here, as it reminds us of where we grew up. Most importantly, we found a new home at Saint Elizabeth and believe this is the best place for us to raise our family," said Jaime.

The Sciabacucchi's jumped in to parish life right away and continue to offer their stewardship service today.

Jaime has served as a lector for six years and is a volunteer in the school library. She enjoys running and her cooking wins high praise from her family. Mark is a member of Knights of Columbus Saint Elizabeth Council #13141 and helps with the Joseph's People ministry. He enjoys golfing and hopes his kids will someday as well, since they've taken an interest in using the golf clubs given to them recently! Both Jaime and Mark also assist with

the Pre-Cana and Pre-Jordan programs at Saint Elizabeth. Their favorite family summer vacation spot is the Outer Banks in North Carolina.

Mark works in relationship management at Vanguard in Malvern. Jaime previously worked for an accounting firm in Philadelphia, earning her CPA license and working as an auditor and finance manager. When Jaime became pregnant with twins, she placed her career on hold and has been a full-time mom to Lucas and Juliana ever since. "They are the best gifts we could ever receive," smiled Jaime. Lucas and Juliana now attend Saint Elizabeth Parish School and will celebrate their 6th birthday this winter.

Lucas plays baseball, soccer, mini-golf, and is an enthusiastic Lego builder. Juliana enjoys soccer, mini-golf, dance, and is a budding artist. They both love Kindergarten, especially the activities during Star Student weeks, like "Show and Tell," and having Mom and Dad as guest readers in their classroom!

Jaime and Mark live their belief that 'you get out of a parish what you put into it,' and encourage others to participate more actively. "If you're thinking of getting involved in the parish, start simple like we did with one activity," suggested Jaime. "Stop at the Help Desk in the narthex before or after Mass and tell someone you're interested in sharing your talent. You won't regret it."

~ Elisa Sheronas

Nourishing and Growing a Holy, Faithful and Vibrant Community

This is part two in 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 Implementation Committee, focuses on the Mission Statement.

“Together with the Lord, we are committed to nourish and grow a holy, faithful and vibrant community rooted in the Word of God and the Sacraments” — does that sound familiar? It is the opening paragraph of the 2017-2021 Pastoral Plan Mission Statement. A vibrant faith community is often the way Saint Elizabeth Parish is described by parishioners and others who are familiar with the parish — what a compliment, too.

How did this come to be? Well, it was not by accident, but rather through conscious effort, dedication and prayer on behalf of thousands of members of the parish led by Father Mullin.

The Mission Statement continues, “As followers of Jesus Christ, we warmly welcome everyone and invite all to enrich their lives by sharing in the fullness of our Catholic faith.” When people walk through the doors of the church for weekend Mass, they rarely escape a smile and friendly “hello” from Fr. Mullin, Fr. Stokely or one of the many parishioners serving as greeters. It’s important that all who enter know they are welcome.

A welcoming community thrives all year long, with invitations to Sunday donut socials, faith formation events, Lenten Soup Suppers, social fellowship activities



and many more opportunities to get to know each other and share our faith. The parish activities come with no strings attached and usually no fee, either!

“As a stewardship parish, in grateful acknowledgement of God’s abundant gifts, we generously share our time, talent and treasure in service to the needs of others.” We all have gifts to share and our parish encourages us to do so in whatever way possible.

In 2018, parishioners prepared over 1,500 casseroles for Saint John’s Hospice. The Stewardship Day of Service held every spring often brings out more than 300 parishioners (of all ages) who generously give their time in service to a variety of worthy projects throughout the community. Another annual service day calls parishioners to help package ingredients for healthy, nutritious meals to be sent to citizens in Burkina Faso. In 2018, 100 people participated in this worthy cause, assembling and shipping nearly 20,000 meals! To learn more about parish stewardship initiatives, read the cover article in this newsletter and explore the

“Finding My Path in Stewardship” link on the parish website.

The Pastoral Plan Mission Statement concludes, “By the conviction of our words, the goodness of our deeds and the witness of our lives, we reflect the presence of Jesus living within us. With the grace of the Holy Spirit, we strive to extend God’s kingdom every day, one person at a time.”

If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:12). We are the face of Christ, so live and love the vision and mission of Saint Elizabeth’s Pastoral Plan!

~ Diane Shoemaker

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Congratulations to the more than 220 middle and high school boys and girls who are wrapping up another successful basketball season with the Saint Elizabeth Athletic Ministry. Hats off, also, to the high school boys' JV1 team that won the regional championship and qualified for Archdiocesan playoffs. Pictured above, this kind-hearted team of 10th-graders led by Coach Duane Oakes, should also be commended for their stewardship support of Saint Elizabeth's Burkina Faso project. Read more about the SEAM basketball season on page 5.



Saturday, April 6

Registration is now open for the Stewardship Day of Service (SDOS).

Go to our parish website at www.stelizabethparish.org to register and view the day's schedule.

Parishioners of all ages are welcome to participate, but children must be accompanied by a parent.

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