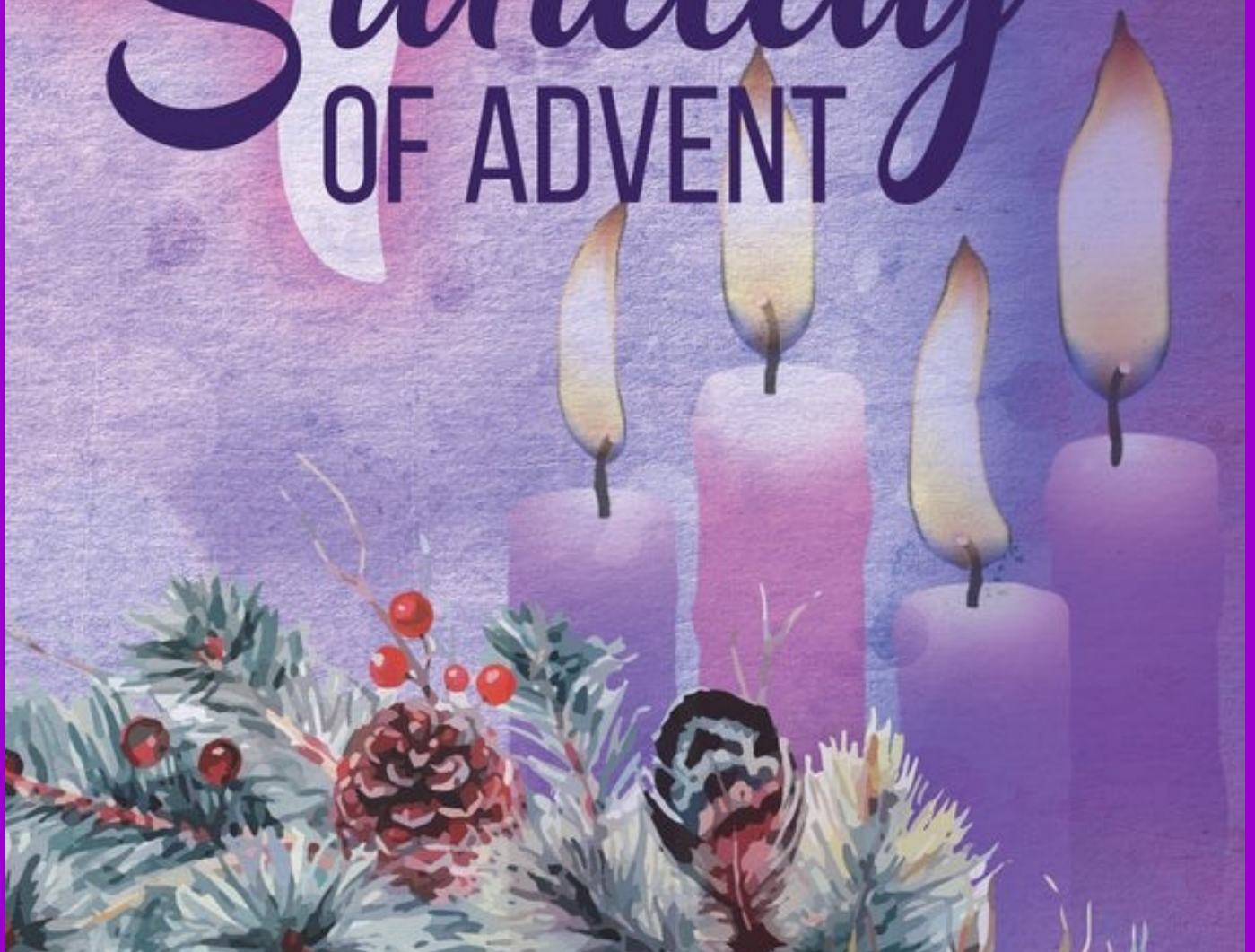


4th Sunday OF ADVENT



St. Elizabeth of Hungary/St. Mark

5700 Bear Creek Boulevard, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania 18602

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT / DECEMBER 21, 2025

St. Elizabeth Church (E)
5700 Bear Creek Blvd
Bear Creek, PA 18602

St. Mark Church (M)
1052 Bear Lake Rd
Thornhurst, PA 18424

Mission Statement

Humbly guided by the Holy Spirit, our mission is to help people:

~ Through prayer and worship, discover God's desire to be in a relationship with us ~ Discover and develop the gifts and talents God has bestowed on each person ~ Share our faith in Jesus Christ through a welcoming community, beautiful liturgy and ongoing faith formation ~ Be of service to one another, to the communities in which we live and especially to those in need. ~

SERVED BY

Rev. Rawel Toppo
Administrator
rawelt81@gmail.com

Rev. Anthony M. Urban
Pastor Emeritus

Rev. William J. Karle
Pastor Emeritus

PARISH WEBSITE

Churchofstelizabethstmark.org

FIND US ON FACEBOOK



The Roman Catholic Community
of St Elizabeth of Hungary and
St. Mark



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Monday-Wednesday, Friday 9:00AM
(E)

First Fridays — Adoration after Mass—
12Noon (E)

Weekend Masses

Saturday 4:00PM (M)

Saturday 6:00PM (E)

Sunday 8:30AM (M)

Sunday 10:30AM (E)

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

St. Mark's Church—1/2 hr before all
Masses

St. Elizabeth's Church —1/2 hr before
all Masses

~ or anytime by appointment ~

OFFICE STAFF

Amanda Proch
Business Manager
stelizabethbearcreek@
outlook.com

Mer Rish
Office Secretary
Director of Music & Liturgy
stelimar@ptd.net

OFFICE HOURS / PHONE

Tuesday & Wednesday
9AM—3PM

Phone.....570-472-3061

Fax.....570-472-3503

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Emily Bell
Renee Sipple

Directors of Religious Education
saintelizabethccd@gmail.com

DAILY TV MASS

WARMING FAITHFUL HEARTS

Cathedral of St Peter in Scranton, available on
CTV: Catholic Television of the
Diocese of Scranton.

Weekdays 12:10p.m., 3:30p.m. and 7:00p.m.

Weekends, Saturday Vigil Mass 5:30 p.m. and
rebroadcast on Sunday morning at 10:00a.m.

STEWARDSHIP

Dec 14, 2025

Weekly \$1342.00

Online \$921.00

\$2263.00

Diocesan -\$115.00

TOTAL \$2148.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

The Parish Budget is set at \$5000.

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday, Dec 20, 2025 — Sunday, December 28, 2025

Sat, DEC 20

FOURTH SUNDAY of LENT

- 4:00pm (M) Tom & Carol Silvi
Liz & John Strasberger
- 6:00pm (E) Elmer & Margaret Petlock
Family

Sun, DEC 21

- 8:30am (M) All Souls' Day Intentions
- 10:30am (E) Joseph & Carol Waytul
Mario & Ellen Sindaco

Mon, DEC 22

- 9:00am (E) Rose Marie Pesotine
Ted & Dale Baird

Tues, DEC 23

- 9:00am (E) Joan Sandy
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph DeSanto

Wed, DEC 24

CHRISTMAS EVE

- 4:00pm (M) For the Parishioners
- 10:00pm (E) For the Parishioners

Thurs, DEC 25

CHRISTMAS DAY

- 8:30am (M) For the Parishioners
- 10:30am (E) For the Parishioners

Fri, DEC 26

- 9:00am (E) NO MASS

Sat, DEC 27

- 4:00pm (M) Maryann Bielski
Nancy Bielski
- 6:00pm (E) Tyrone Gayeski
Gail, Ty & Troy Gayeski

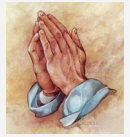
Sun, DEC 28

HOLY FAMILY

- 8:30am (M) Alice & Felix Hamill
David & Linda Hamill
- 10:30am (E) Edmund Pachucki
Dr. Gary & Benedetta Lawrence



This week we pray for our sick, elderly and homebound parishioners and friends, especially...



Noreen Catani Amico,
Laurie Ayre, Ginny Corcoran, Richard Emmert,
Lea Furlong, Kevin Gardner, Bernard Hendrzak,
Erin Himes, Jake Johnson, Joseph Kachurak,
Patrick Kildea, Michael Lilienthal,
Mollie Litchman, Carolyn Palencar,
Jessica Lawrence Rorke, Donald Scharf,
Mary Soos, Byran Stanton, Verna Stavish,
John Tucker, Rev. Anthony Urban,
Hank Walker, Loretta Washick, Michelle Welebob

Please notify office when names should be removed. 570-472-3061

Father Rawel's Corner



FULFILMENT OF GOD'S PROMISE

The three readings invite us to contemplate the mystery of God's promise fulfilled in Jesus Christ. In the first reading the prophet assures King Ahaz that God himself will give a sign. This prophecy speaks of God's fidelity even amidst human fear and doubt. Emmanuel, "God with us", is not a distant promise but a living reality, assuring us that God's accompanies His people in their struggles and uncertainties.

In the Gospel, the promise takes flesh in the quiet faith of Joseph. Faced with confusion and fear, Joseph listens to God's message in a dream, "Do not be afraid." By accepting Mary and naming the child Jesus, Joseph participates in God's saving plan. His obedience transforms doubt into trust, showing us that faith often requires courage and silent surrender. As we journey through Advent, we are called to open our hearts to Emmanuel, God who is with here and now. Like Paul who identifies himself as the servant of the Gospel, let us also recognize how we are called to be bearers of God's good news. To proclaim to the nations His fidelity and assurance of accompaniment amidst fears and doubts that envelop the world. Let us prepare with faith, humility, and joy, so that Christ may be born anew in our lives and shine through us to the world.

Loving Lord, grant us grace to recognize your presence and to experience your peace and grace in every struggle of life, so that we may faithfully co-operate with your holy will.

HAVE A BLESSED ADVENT SEASON!



Please keep Sue and Gary Walker in your prayers. Gary passed away Sunday, December 14th after a courageous battle with cancer. He was a talented musician and member of St. Elizabeth's choir. Gary, with his beautiful voice and humble demeanor will be greatly missed by all. Angels carried him to heaven to sing for our Lord's birthday. Gary's funeral was held this past Saturday at St. Elizabeth's Church.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him and all the faithfully departed. Amen.

Collection	Weekly	\$2272.00
Week of	Online	<u>\$448.00</u>
Nov 29/30		\$2720.00
	Diocesan	<u>-\$0.00</u>
		\$2720.00
Thanksgiving Dinner Donations		<u>\$367.00</u>
TOTAL:		\$3087.00

Collection	Weekly	\$3246.00
Week of	Online	<u>\$983.00</u>
Nov 6/7		\$4229.00
	Diocesan	<u>-\$20.00</u>
TOTAL:		\$4209.00

Worship & Meditation

Readings for the week of December 21, 2025

Sunday:

Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 (7c, 10b)/
Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24

Monday:

1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/
Lk 1:46-56

Tuesday:

Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and
14/Lk 1:57-66

Wednesday:

Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps
89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29/Lk 1:67-79

Thursday:

Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29
(2a)/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or
1:18-25

Night: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13
(Lk 2:11)/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14

Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/
Lk 2:15-20

Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 (3c)/
Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

Friday:

Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and
8ab, 16bc and 17/Mt 10:17-22

Saturday:

1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12/Jn 20:1a, 2-8

Next Sunday:

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 (see 1)/
Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.
The English translation of Psalm Responses from Lectionary for
Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in
the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.



Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

A priest friend recently told me a remarkable story. One of his cousins reported having a vivid dream in which an angel told him the family needed to exhume their grandmother's body from a cemetery in New York and return it to her birthplace in Romania. She had been dead nearly ten years. As you might expect, the family thought it was, well, crazy. But astonishingly they exhumed her body. It was incorrupt, showing no signs of decomposition. That experience sparked healing, faith, and reconciliation throughout the family.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Joseph also receives a dream. He's confused, afraid. But in the quiet of sleep, God speaks: **"Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home" (Matthew 1:20).** When he wakes, Joseph acts. He doesn't overanalyze or dismiss the message. He trusts, and acts.

God still speaks — not necessarily through literal dreams but through those deeper intuitions of the heart. St. Ignatius of Loyola taught that God's voice draws us into peace, courage, and love. But we have to listen to it. Advent is a time for stillness. As we prepare for Christ's coming, we're invited to enter that quiet space where God's voice can be heard.

When and how do you become most receptive to God? Is it in silence? In prayer? In nature? At Mass? This week, go there. Be still. Listen. And like Joseph, have the courage to act on what God shows you.

— *Father John Muir*

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign:
the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,
and shall name him Emmanuel. (Isa 7:14)

Psalm:

Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory. (Ps 24)

Second Reading:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom 1:7)

Gospel:

"Joseph, son of David,
do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home.
For it is through the Holy Spirit
that this child has been conceived in her.
She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus,
because he will save his people from their sins." (Mt 1:20-21)

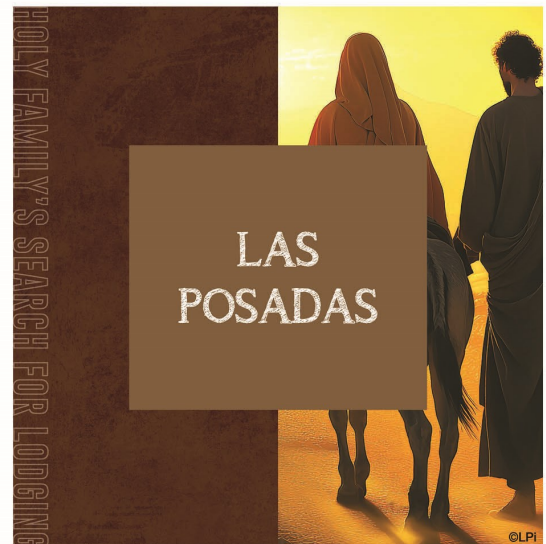
Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.
The English translation of Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997,
International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Sometimes we want God's instructions to be clear and precise — like the angel in Joseph's dream. But Joseph's understanding was only as strong as his devotion to God's will. If we give our lives to God as Joseph did, we will know what he asks of us.

Observances for the week of December 21, 2025

- Sunday:** 4th Sunday of Advent
Tuesday: St. John of Kanty, Priest
Wednesday: Christmas Eve
Thursday: The Nativity of the Lord
Friday: St. Stephen, First Martyr
Saturday: St. John, Apostle and Evangelist
Next Sunday: The Holy Family



Devotions, *Explained!*

Las Posadas is a Mexican tradition which recreates the Holy Family's search for lodging in Bethlehem. This nine-day devotion anticipates the birth of Jesus Christ, who seeks refuge in the heart of every man and woman.

Prayer for Advent - Miracles

Dear God,
You are in the miracle business.
I still believe that You can move
mountains and separate seas.
Break into every unknown and
astound us with Your goodness
and grace.
Amen.

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Mini Reflection: Advent is drawing quickly to a close, and Christmas is coming soon. The change is upon us. Do we rise to accept it, or do we fall on our faces in fear?

The First Transfiguration

I imagine Joseph waking up the morning after the dream, blinking in the dim half-light of the dawn.

One day, decades from now, the baby his wife carries will stand on a mountaintop. His face will shine like the sun, and those who look upon him will fall down upon their own faces in fear.

We call this the transfiguration, and Joseph won't be there to see it. But that doesn't matter. What those men will learn on the mountaintop, Joseph already knows. He learned it last night.

Today, he shrugs off the remnants of slumber and stands up.

"Rise, and do not be afraid." This is what the baby — a baby no longer, but a man now, one in the last days of his life — will say to his companions on the mountain a few decades from now. They will look up to see him standing there the same as he always was, and they will realize that he did not change at all. They did.

"Do not be afraid." This is what the angel said last night as he revealed to Joseph the will of God: that Joseph take Mary and the Child as his own, despite having so many reasons not to do so. And today Joseph wakes up and the world is the same as it always was: Mary is pregnant, and the Child does not belong to him.

No, the world has not changed. Joseph has.

He rises, and goes to Mary.

Advent is drawing quickly to a close, and Christmas is coming soon. The change is upon us. Do we rise to accept it, or do we fall on our faces in fear?

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that?

Catholic Life Explained

Question:

What is the difference between tithing and stewardship?

Answer:

Both tithing and stewardship are part of a spiritual way of life that calls us to use all of our resources for the service of the Gospel. Everything we are and everything we have comes from God. Offering back to God what He has given us is part of how we worship and give thanks to God.

Tithing is the practice of giving back 10 percent of what we earn. It comes from the Old English word for "ten." The first Scriptural example of tithing came from Abraham who gave a tenth of his possessions to the priest Melchizedek. He did so as an act of thanksgiving to God.

Stewardship as a way of life calls us to use well all that we have and all that we are, placing all things in service of others and God. Stewardship helps us see the good we can accomplish by making God and our spiritual life the most important values in our life. Whatever we accumulate in this life stays here. We can't take it with us! Both tithing and stewardship help us remember that nothing is mine or even ours ... all belongs to God.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. - Mt 1:23-24

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah prophesies to King Ahaz that a virgin would bear a son and name him, Emmanuel ("God is with us"). When have you felt close to God this Advent season?

Second Reading:

Paul instructs the Roman Christians that they are "called to be holy." What do you see as some of the steps toward growing in holiness?

Gospel:

We hear how Joseph struggled initially with the news of Mary's pregnancy. How do you discern making difficult decisions?

THIS CHRISTMAS...

INSTEAD OF JUST
MAKING A LIST
OF THE THINGS
YOU WANT...
MAKE A LIST OF
ALL THE THINGS
YOU'RE GRATEFUL
THAT GOD HAS
GIVEN YOU
ALREADY!



Holiday Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve

December 24th—4:00pm St. Mark

10:00pm St. Elizabeth

Christmas Day

December 25th—8:30am St. Mark

10:30am St. Elizabeth

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

(Holy Day of Obligation)

January 1, 2026

9:00am St. Elizabeth

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

"May the light of Christ shine brightly in your hearts this Christmas, filling your days with peace, your home with love, and your life with unshakable hope. As we celebrate the birth of our Savior, may you be reminded of God's endless grace and the joy that comes from knowing Him. Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year! May His blessings be with you now and always."

*"For unto us a child is
born..."*

*Joy & Peace,
Fr. Rawel & Staff
(Amanda & Mer)*

2025