

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

BUT I SAY TO  
**YOU.**

— MATTHEW 5:34 —



©LPI

*St. Elizabeth of Hungary/St. Mark*

5700 Bear Creek Boulevard, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania 18602

# SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME | February 15, 2026

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](http://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

Feb 8, 2026

Weekly	\$2441.00
Online	<u>\$936.00</u>
	\$3377.00
Diocesan	<u>-\$65.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3342.00</b>

*Thank you for your continued generosity.*

The Parish Budget is set at \$5000.

# Eucharistic Celebration

Saturday, February 14, 2026 — Sunday, February 22, 2026

## Sat, FEB 14

- 4:00pm (M) Robert Rish  
*Steve & Mer Rish*
- 6:00pm (E) Leon & Elva Knorr  
*Cronauer Family*

## Sun, FEB 15

- 8:30am (M) For the Parishioners
- 10:30am (E) Adele & Francis Polachek  
*Dr. Diane Polachek & Family*

## Mon, FEB 16

- 9:00am (E) Clarence Michael  
*Mary Rose Ratay*

## Tues, FEB 17

- 9:00am (E) Donald Popper  
*Butch & Jeannie Bidwell*

## Wed, FEB 18 **ASH WEDNESDAY**

- 9:00am (E) Carol Pitcavage  
*Steve & Mer Rish*
- 6:00pm (M) Elizabeth "Betty" Antol  
*Eleanor Morrison*

## Thurs, FEB 19

- 9:00am (E) **NO MASS**

## Fri, FEB 20

- 9:00am (E) Clarence Michael  
*Paul & Linda Schneider*
- 6:00pm (M) **Stations of the Cross**

## Sat, FEB 21

- 4:00pm (M) Donald Popper  
*Women's Cornerstone*
- 6:00pm (E) Gary Walker  
*Dr. Gary & Benedetta Lawrence*

## Sun, FEB 22

- 8:30am (M) For the Parishioners
- 10:30am (E) Dr. Mike "Mickey" Stretanski  
*Steve & Mer Rish*



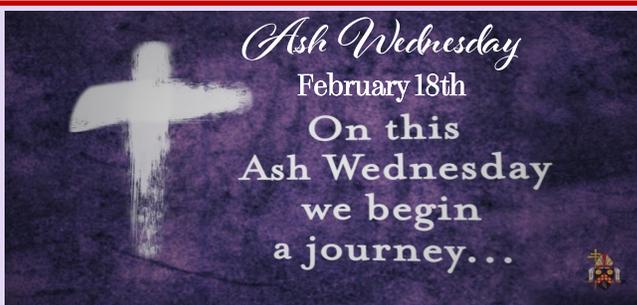
This week we pray for our sick, elderly and homebound parishioners and friends, especially...



*Noreen Catani Amico,*

*Ginny Corcoran, Richard Emmert, Lea Furlong, Kevin Gardner, Bernard Hendrzak, Erin Himes, Jake Johnson, Joseph Kachurak, Patrick Kildea, Michael Lilienthal, Mollie Litchman, Amber Moyer, Carolyn Palencar, Donald Scharf, Mary Soos, Byran Stanton, Verna Stavish, Scott Tiger, John Tucker, Rev. Anthony Urban, Hank Walker, Loretta Washick, Michelle Welebob*

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



Masses with distribution of ashes

**St. Elizabeth 9:00AM**

**St. Mark 6:00PM**

## 2026 Lenten Holy Hours with Bishop Bambara



February 19	Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Wyalusing
February 24	Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Brodheads ville
February 25	Saint Ann Parish, Williamsport
February 26	Divine Mercy Parish, Scranton
March 2	Saint Thomas More Parish, Lake Ariel
March 3	Saint Carlo Acutis Parish, Olyphant
March 5	Saint John Bosco Parish, Conyngham
March 12	Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Duryea
March 16	Saint Therese Parish, Shavertown
March 19	Saint John Vianney Parish, Montdale
March 23	Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Peckville
March 24	SS. Peter & Paul Parish, Plains

All Holy Hours to begin at 7 p.m.



## Station of the Cross

Friday 2/20/2026

6:00PM

St. Mark

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## Father Rawel's Corner



### BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE FIRE

God does something risky today: He trusts us. Sirach says it plainly; life and death are set before you. Not fate. Not compulsion. Choice.

God does not pull strings from heaven; He places the fire and the water in front of us and steps back. Love always does that. Then Paul whispers a secret: there is wisdom deeper than the rules, hidden not from us but for us. A wisdom that the eye cannot see and the ear cannot hear, because it must be lived, not merely learned. This wisdom does not shout; it burns quietly within.

And Jesus? He takes the Law and moves it from stone tablets to the human heart. "You have heard it said...", yes. But now, listen again. Murder begins long before blood is spilled; adultery long before bodies meet; truth is broken long before a lie is spoken. Jesus is not fighting the law; He is deepening love. He is less interested in controlling behavior and more in healing desire. Holiness, then, is not about how carefully we avoid sin, but how courageously we choose love when no one is watching. Every day, in small unnoticed moments, we choose fire or water. Freedom or fear. Life or death. God does not force us into goodness. He invites us into wisdom and waits for our yes.

Lord, purify our hearts, so that our choice may spring from love and lead us to life. Amen.

HAVE A BLESSED WEEKEND!



St. Elizabeth's Way is sponsoring a fundraiser dinner to support our good work for the community.

**Sunday** Feb. 22nd from 3:00 to 5:00

(take out available).

Menu is Pierogi, Kielbasa, Haluski with soup or salad and desert for \$15.00 per person.

Please call 570-841-0213 to reserve your meal, leave a message with your name and phone number and how many meals and soup or salad or

Email : [stelizabethbells@outlook.com](mailto:stelizabethbells@outlook.com)

Someone will call to confirm your order.



## St. Elizabeth/St. Mark Parish

5700 Bear Creek Blvd, Bear Creek Village, PA 18702

# Soup Supper

Monday 5 – 7pm

Feb 23, Mar 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Eat In - \$12 All you can Eat Soup & Salad, Dessert  
Take Out - \$12 Pint of Soup, Salad, Roll, Dessert  
(\$6 per extra Pint of Soup)



Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers are needed for 4:00PM Mass at St. Mark's Church. Please contact office at 570-472-3061 if interested.



The 2026 Offertory Envelopes are available in Cry Rooms of both Churches for pick-up. If you cannot find your envelopes, please call office as they might have been delivered to wrong Church. Also, if you know of a family that wants their envelopes, but is unable to pick them up, please deliver the envelopes to them. Our Church depends on everyone's gracious contributions.



## St. Elizabeth / St. Mark Parish

5700 Bear Creek Blvd, Bear Creek Village, PA 18702



# Corned Beef/Ham & Cabbage Dinner

Sunday 15-Mar-2026 2-4 PM

Eat In / Take Out - \$18

Call **570-851-0213** or e-mail [stelizabethbells@outlook.com](mailto:stelizabethbells@outlook.com), please include your name, phone number and the number of people that will be attending

## LENTEN FASTING & ABSTINENCE FOR CATHOLICS

WHEN

Ash Wednesday & Good Friday = Fasting & Abstinence  
Every Friday = Abstinence

WHO

Catholics 14+ practice abstinence  
Catholics 18-59 practice fasting

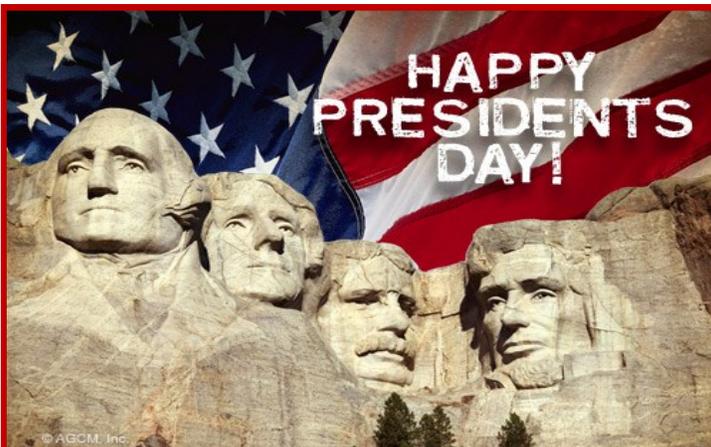
What is fasting?

One full meal &  
Two smaller meals ≠ one full meal

What is abstinence?

No meat

Little Black  
Books  
& Rice Bowls  
are in  
vestibule.



# Worship & Meditation

## Readings for the week of February 15, 2026

### Sunday:

Sir 15:15-20/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34/  
1 Cor 2:6-10/Mt 5:17-37 or 5:20-22a,  
27-28, 33-34a, 37

### Monday:

Jas 1:1-11/Ps 119:67, 68, 71, 72, 75, 76/  
Mk 8:11-13

### Tuesday:

Jas 1:12-18/Ps 94:12-13a, 14-15, 18-19/  
Mk 8:14-21

### Wednesday:

Jl 2:12-18/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and  
17/2 Cor 5:20-6:2/Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

### Thursday:

Dt 30:15-20/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/  
Lk 9:22-25

### Friday:

Is 58:1-9a/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19/  
Mt 9:14-15

### Saturday:

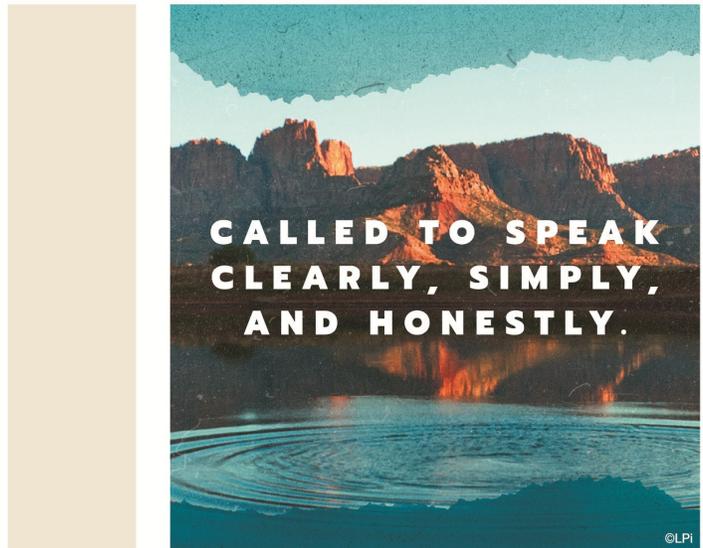
Is 58:9b-14/Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6/Lk 5:27-32

### Next Sunday:

Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7/Ps 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17/  
Rom 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19/Mt 4:1-11



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## Gospel Meditation

### Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

A few years into my priesthood, I hit a wall. I had taken on too many commitments: Masses, meetings, ministries, projects. I couldn't keep up. I was double-booking, forgetting things, running late, and letting people down. My boss at the time, a wise priest, and our shared secretary, noticed. For my birthday, the two gave me a stack of 100 flashcards, each with one word printed in a different language: "NO." It was funny, but also painfully true. If I couldn't say no, my yes was in danger.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus says, **"Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the Evil One"** (Matthew 5:37). He's not just giving advice about polite speech. He's showing us something about the freedom of Christian discipleship. The follower of Christ is called to speak clearly, simply, and honestly. There is joy in that kind of freedom.

The Church Fathers often linked this kind of straightforward truthfulness with spiritual maturity. The devil is the father of lies, but Jesus is the Word made flesh. When we hedge, flatter, exaggerate, or avoid, we open space for the shadows to creep in. That little stack of flashcards reminded me that God does not want us enslaved to the expectations of others or to the fear of disappointing them. He wants us to enjoy the peace of saying yes and meaning it, and saying no, and meaning it, too.

**Lenten Challenge:** Practice one moment of honest, peaceful speech this week. Maybe it's a sincere "yes" to something important, or a humble "no" to something you cannot do. Let it be a quiet step into the freedom Jesus offers.

— *Father John Muir*

# Weekly Prayer

## Sunday's Readings

### First Reading:

No one does he command to act unjustly,  
to none does he give license to sin. (Sir 15:20)

### Psalm:

Blessed are they who follow the law of the Lord! (Ps 119)

### Second Reading:

Rather, we speak of God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden,  
which God predetermined before the ages for our glory.  
(1 Cor 2:7)

### Gospel:

"I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses  
that of the scribes and Pharisees,  
you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:20)

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## Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Jesus does not want us to live within the law — he wants the law to live within us. God's law, fulfilled by His Son, is rich soil. We must let it nourish the words and the decisions of our Christian life — only then will it flow forth into the world.

## Observances for the week of February 15, 2026

**Sunday:** 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

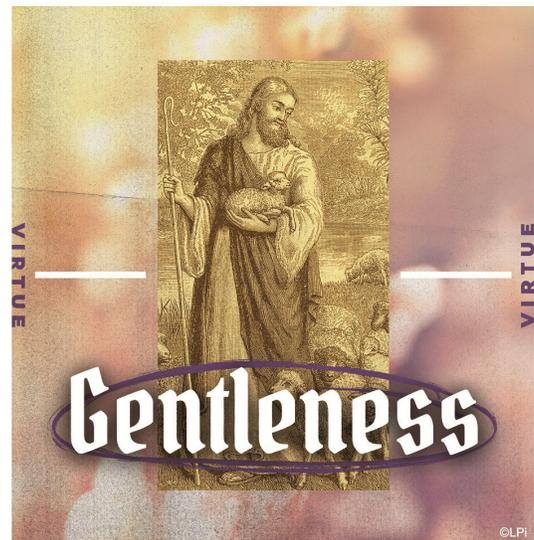
**Monday:** Presidents' Day

**Tuesday:** The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order

**Wednesday:** Ash Wednesday

**Saturday:** St. Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

**Next Sunday:** 1st Sunday of Lent



## Virtues, Explained!

Gentleness disposes us to receive the inspirations of the Spirit, who "reveals to men who Jesus is" (CCC 152). In cultivating a spirit of gentleness, we more closely resemble Christ, who was unfailingly gentle, even in the face of violence and death

## Blessing of Love

Heavenly Father,  
Ignite us with Your love.  
Reveal to us Your will,  
guide us in Your path.  
Pour Your blessings upon us,  
You who are the giver of every  
good thing.  
Help us to live, work, act, and  
speak  
in ways that bring honor and  
glory to You.  
Amen.

## ( PRACTICING ) CATHOLIC

**Mini Reflection:** The law of Moses was like a good deck, admirably built. You could say “*Raqa*,” your heart filled with anger, and the law didn’t break. But that anger treads heavily. Over time, it becomes too much to bear. And that board — that law, that heart — it’ll break. Just you wait

### **The Carpenter and the Law**

My husband and I couldn’t believe our luck: our new house had a deck. It was more than a couple of broke millennials had ever dared to dream. Lounging in our patio furniture drinking coffee and watching the cars drive past, we felt like Kennedys at Hyannis Port. We had arrived.

Well, until it started falling apart.

To be fair, my husband knew this was going to happen all along, because he’s a person who uses words like “joist” and “weight-bearing” correctly. He took one look at the deck at the open house and knew it wasn’t up to code. “We’re going to have to reinforce this at some point,” he told me. “Whatever!” I replied, daydreaming about twinkle lights and porch parties.

Sure enough, our second summer in the house, he had to rip the rotting surface boards off. The biggest issue was that the joists were too far apart; when we stepped on the boards, they bowed and almost cracked, lacking adequate support beneath. But we weren’t going to redo the whole deck — we’re not *actually* Kennedys. We (okay, *he*) simply ripped the surface boards off, added the necessary joists, and replaced the decking with newer, better, stronger wood.

Simply put, my husband did not come to abolish the deck, but to fulfill it.

The law of Moses was like a good deck, admirably built. You could say “*Raqa*,” your heart filled with anger, and the law didn’t break. But that anger treads heavily on boards not adequately supported. Over time, the anger becomes too much to bear. And that board — that law, that heart — it’ll break. Just you wait.

And when it does, you’ll see why: there wasn’t anything beneath, holding it up.

So God sent a Carpenter to reinforce the law. The Carpenter crafted joists from prudence, fortitude, justice and temperance — strong virtues that can withstand a lifetime of battery, if properly maintained.

And the law still holds.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

## **Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained**

### **Question:**

Why is the Church against stem cell research, especially if it offers the possibility of cures for diseases like Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s?

### **Answer:**

Like so many issues, the truth about stem cell research is more complicated than a few sound bites and vague promises of cures. For the Church, the problem is with *embryonic* stem cell research, not the research itself. The destruction of human life, even for a seemingly noble cause, is never acceptable. The ends cannot justify the means. Stem cells can be obtained in other ways, including from the placenta as well as from adults. So research is possible without the destruction of other life.

On the other hand, stem cell research shows much promise, but no concrete results. Some scientists also dispute what diseases might be cured by new discoveries. The research is still in its early stages. The question for our country is whether we should invest a lot of money in research now, looking for cures that will probably remain out of reach for most people, or should we invest that money in other programs with more immediate benefits, especially those that stress prevention and education. It is indeed a complex issue that requires close scrutiny and investigation before we jump to inaccurate conclusions or make decisions based on good, but misinformed, intentions.

“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.* But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment.”

- Mt 5:21-22a

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## Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

### First Reading:

Sirach speaks of the human freedom to choose between good and evil and of God’s desire for us to act justly. What good could you do this week for a friend or family member?

### Second Reading:

Paul teaches that God reveals His wisdom to us through the Holy Spirit. How might you be more open to listening to the Holy Spirit in your daily life?

### Gospel:

Jesus offers stern warnings against breaking the commandments, holding grudges, committing adultery, divorcing your spouse, and falsifying oaths. Why do you think Jesus holds us to such high moral expectations?

