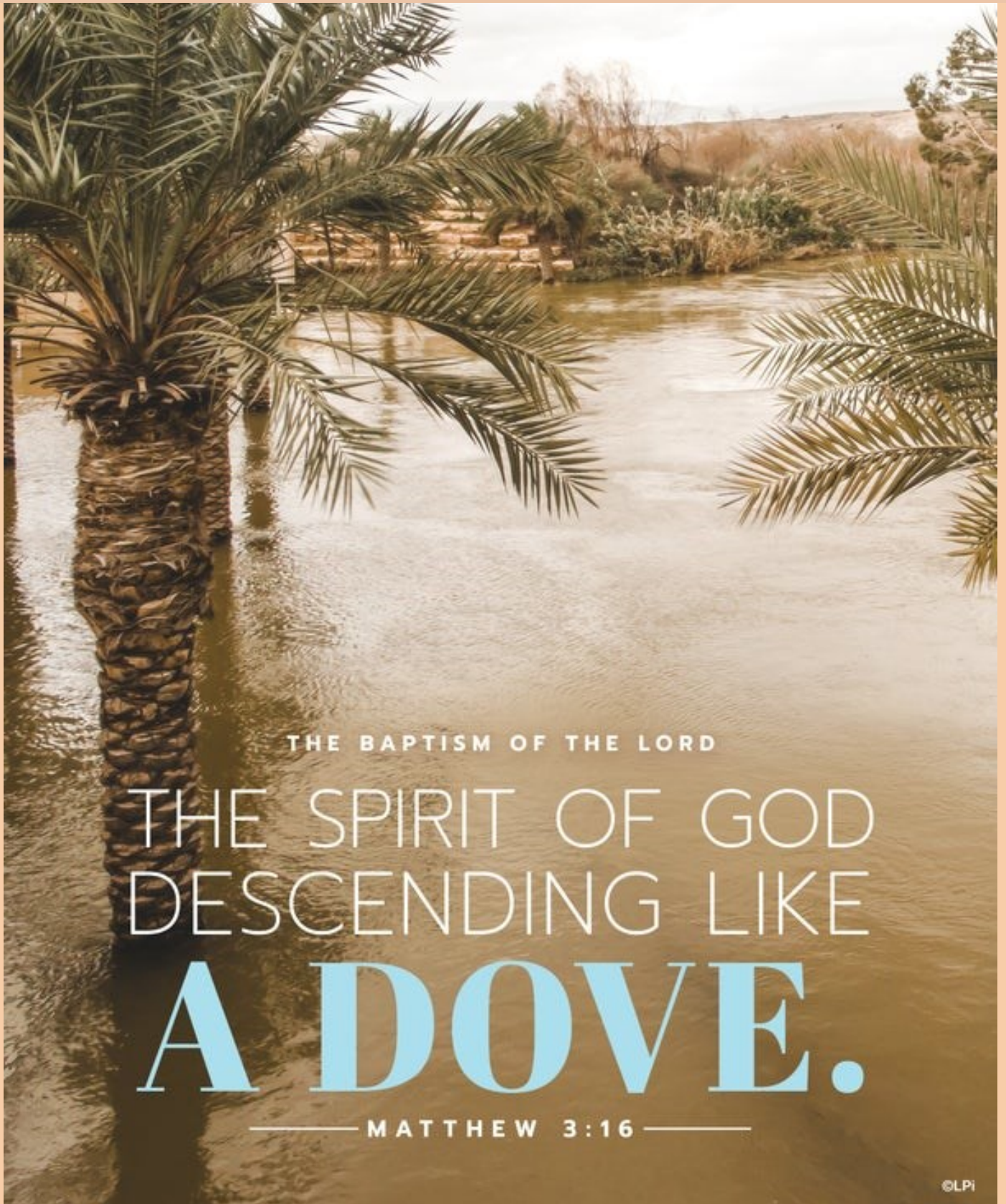


St. Elizabeth of Hungary/St. Mark

5700 Bear Creek Boulevard, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania 18602



THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

THE SPIRIT OF GOD
DESCENDING LIKE

A DOVE.

— MATTHEW 3:16 —

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD / JANUARY 11, 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

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

Jan 4, 2026

Weekly \$2303.00

Online \$857.00

\$3160.00

Diocesan \$85.00

TOTAL \$3075.00

Christmas \$200.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Eucharistic Celebration

Saturday, January 10, 2026 — Sunday, January 18, 2026

Sat, JAN 10

4:00pm (M) John "Jack" Kelly
The DeScipio Family

6:00pm (E) Gary Walker
Steve & Mer Rish

Sun, JAN 11 **THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

8:30am (M) For the Parishioners

10:30am (E) Ryan Schmutte
Theodore & Diane Haas

Mon, JAN 12

9:00am (E) John "Jack" Kelly
Rose Paulowskey

Tues, JAN 13

9:00am (E) Paul O'Donnell
Judy Pomento

Wed, JAN 14

9:00am (E) John McAndrew
Ann Marie & Charlie Schank

Thurs, JAN 15

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

Fri, JAN 16

9:00am (E) Robert Kunik
Tom & Betty Ann Barber

Sat, JAN 17

4:00pm (M) Elizabeth "Betty" Antol
Eleanor Morrison

6:00pm (E) Richard Polney
John & Rita Polney

Sun, JAN 18

8:30am (M) Walter "Lucky" Marshall
Frank & Joannie Tiripicehio

10:30am (E) Dr. Mike "Mickey" Stretanski
Dr. Diane Polachek & Family



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, 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



Notice Regarding Sexual Abuse of a Minor

It is the policy of the Diocese of Scranton to report any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor to law enforcement. If you are a victim of sexual abuse committed by a priest, deacon, religious or lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton, you are encouraged to immediately report the matter to law enforcement. If any priest, deacon, religious, lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Scranton has cause or reason to suspect that a minor has been subjected to any form of abuse, including child sexual abuse, the matter will be reported to law enforcement.

It is also the policy of the Diocese to adhere to all civil and state regulations. In accordance with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Laws, reports of suspected child abuse should also be made immediately by phone to the 24-Hour Child Abuse hotline (ChildLine) at 1-800-932-0313 or electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis. To this end, the Diocese is equally committed to adhering to the norms of the Code of Canon Law and to upholding the tenets of the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which includes supporting victims of sexual abuse in their pursuit of emotional and spiritual well-being. As such, information regarding an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor should also be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator Mary Beth Pacuska at 570-862-

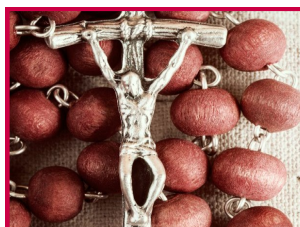
Mass Intentions (\$10.00) are now available for the 2026 year. Please book early to reserve your special dates.



Also, the Sanctuary Candle (\$10.00) and the Bread and Wine (\$20.00) are available at both Churches for your loved one's intentions.



Request a
Mass Intention



Pray the
Rosary

Father Rawel's YOU ARE PRECIOUS AND NOT FORGOTTEN

Jesus came to the Jordan River to be baptized, choosing to stand with the people who were struggling and looking for a clean start. He didn't separate himself from those who felt broken or ashamed. He entered the same water where sinners stood, showing that God's love is close to those who suffer.

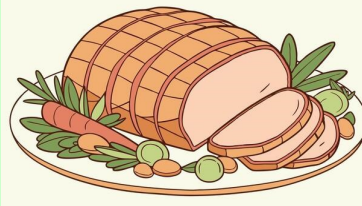
When Jesus was baptized, the heavens opened, the Spirit came like a gentle dove, and God revealed Jesus as His beloved. This moment shows God's desire to bring peace, healing, and freedom to all. The first reading tells of a servant who will not crush the weak but will gently lift them up.

The Mission of Jesus is to give light to those who are in darkness and to release those held in any kind of bondage.

The Second reading reminds us that God's shows no partiality. Every human being is loved equally, no matter what their past, their failures, or their social position. God sees the pain that people carry and wants to give them new hope. Even when life feels heavy or the world seems unfair, God's love remains faithful. No prison wall, no poverty, and no rejection can block God's care. Every person has dignity and a purpose. Just as water washes and refreshes, God's love can renew the human heart and give strength to begin again.

May the loving God, be close to all who feel weak, afraid, or forgotten. Fill every heart with courage and peace. Help us believe that new beginnings are possible and that we are always held in your love.

HAVE A WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS SEASON!



St. Elizabeth / St. Mark Parish

5700 Bear Creek Blvd,
Bear Creek, PA 18602

Pork Roast Dinner

Sunday 18-Jan-2026
2-4 PM

TAKE OUT ONLY

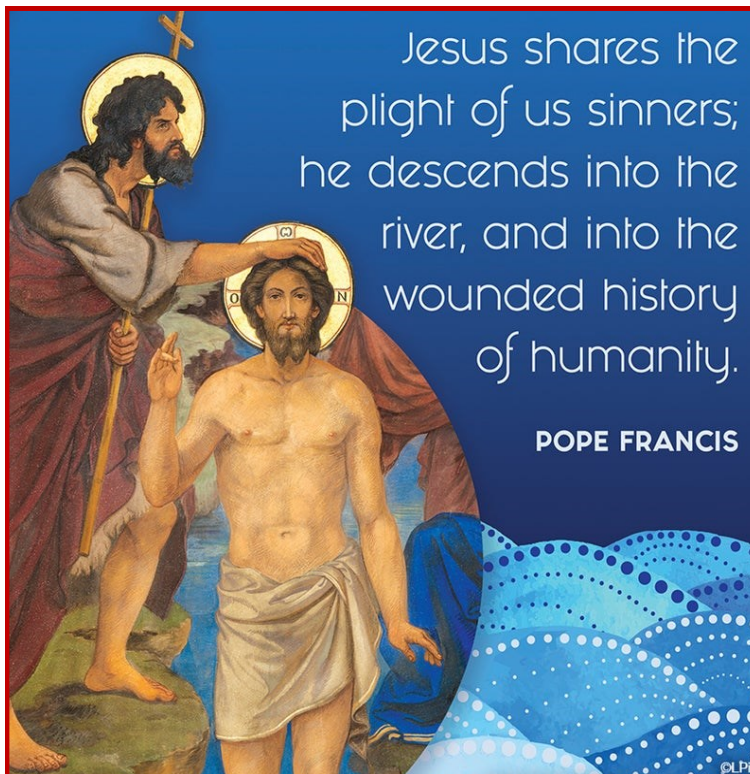
Pork Roast w/ Cabbage & Sauerkraut, mashed potato, green beans, dinner roll butter & cake

Take Out Only - \$15

Call 570-851-0213 or e-mail stelizabethbells@outlook.com

Please include your name, phone number and the number of people that will be attending. Someone will contact you to confirm.

LIVE OUT YOUR BAPTISM



Jesus shares the
plight of us sinners;
he descends into the
river, and into the
wounded history
of humanity.

POPE FRANCIS



Holy God,
you sent your Son to be baptized among sinners,
to seek and save the lost.
May we, who have been baptized in his name,
never turn away from the world,
but reach out in love to rescue the wayward;
by the mercy of Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.



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Worship & Meditation

Readings for the week of January 11, 2026

Sunday:

Is 42:1-4, 6-7/Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10/
Acts 10:34-38/Mt 3:13-17

Monday:

1 Sm 1:1-8/Ps 116:12-13, 14-17, 18-19/
Mk 1:14-20

Tuesday:

1 Sm 1:9-20/1 Sam 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/
Mk 1:21-28

Wednesday:

1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20/Ps 40:2 and 5, 7-8a,
8b-9, 10/Mk 1:29-39

Thursday:

1 Sm 4:1-11/Ps 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25/
Mk 1:40-45

Friday:

1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a/Ps 89:16-17, 18-19/
Mk 2:1-12

Saturday:

1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a/Ps 21:2-3, 4-5, 6-7/
Mk 2:13-17

Next Sunday:

Is 49:3, 5-6/Ps 40:2 and 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10/
1 Cor 1:1-3/Jn 1:29-34



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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

Apple ran a commercial not long ago called “Behind the Mac – Greatness.” It shows artists and creators, such as Kendrick Lamar, Billie Eilish, and Lady Gaga, working behind their MacBooks. The narration says, “There’s a certain kind of person who doesn’t wait for greatness. They make it.” It’s a compelling message. There’s beauty in using our gifts with passion and purpose. But there lies a hidden weight in that idea: If you are what you make, what happens when you can’t anymore? When the project fails, the passion fades, or the spotlight moves on, where is greatness then?

Today’s Gospel offers a differing vision of greatness. Jesus steps into the Jordan River. He hasn’t preached, healed, or performed a single miracle. Then the heavens open, and the Father speaks: **“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”** It’s not a reward for success. It’s not earned. Before he does anything “great,” Jesus receives the greatness of his identity from the Father.

And so do you. At your baptism, God said the same thing over you: “You are my beloved.” That is your true identity, not constructed or earned but received. When we see ourselves and others this way, everything changes for the better. We discover a greatness that can never be taken away.

This week, reflect on your baptism: look up the date, thank God for it, pray for those baptized with you, or visit the church where it happened. Let your identity be rooted there.

— *Father John Muir*

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

I, the LORD, have called you for the victory of justice,
I have grasped you by the hand;
I formed you, and set you
as a covenant of the people,
a light for the nations. (Is 42:6)

Psalm:

The Lord will bless his people with peace. (Ps 29)

Second Reading:

"In truth, I see that God shows no partiality.
Rather, in every nation whoever fears him
and acts uprightly
is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34-35)

Gospel:

And a voice came from the heavens, saying,
"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am
well pleased." (Mt 3:17)

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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

John could not believe that Jesus would seek baptism from him, a lowly mortal man. But our God is a humble God. He does not fear our weakness. He extends his hand, saying, "It is fitting." So take his hand. Begin the work he has set out for you.

Observances for the week of January 11, 2026

Sunday: The Baptism of the Lord
Tuesday: St. Hilary, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
Saturday: St. Anthony, Abbot
Next Sunday: 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time



Virtues, Explained!

Joy is the experience of achieving what we most desire — and what we most desire is love. God made us in love and for love, and so, in the same way that a flower seeks the sunlight, our souls seek the warmth of true, selfless love.

Blessing for Baptismal Grace

Dear God,
Through Baptism, You called and claimed us as Your own, chosen and loved.
Pour Your blessing upon us as we remember our Baptism.
Plant Your identity in our hearts.
Help us to live as Your beloved.
Amen.

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Mini Reflection: When the voice of God declares, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” he is referring, of course, to Jesus. But I think He would say the same of John the Baptist — and of all those who welcome Jesus into the waters, ready to do as he bids.

When Jesus Wades In

Usually, when God comes to us, we aren't ready.

We think we are. Like John the Baptist, we stand in our waters of baptism, certain of our mission. We know how it's going to go. We know what's going to be asked of us. We're sure of it.

Christ wades into the waters. And he screws up all our plans.

To be clear, I don't think John the Baptist lacks faith when he balks at the idea of baptizing Jesus. I think it is, in fact, a testament to his humility. But whatever motivated John's actions, he is — if even for a brief moment — hesitating to do the will of God. Just a few chapters after this in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus will acknowledge that John is the greatest person “born of women” — with the caveat that even he is not perfect enough for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Not yet.

Jesus didn't give John an explanation as the two stood in the River Jordan. He merely said, “Allow it for now.” John could have resisted further, demanding to understand why. He could have grown suspicious at the simplicity of Jesus' answer, at the strangeness of this request. He could have clung desperately to his version of How Things Are Supposed To Be, and in doing so, fostered doubt in his heart. He could have even stormed off, confused and angry.

He did none of these things, because John is, as Jesus says, the greatest born of women.

When the Holy Spirit descends and the voice of God declares, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” he is referring, of course, to Jesus. But I think He would say the same of John the Baptist — and of all those who welcome Jesus into the waters, ready to do as he bids.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that?

Catholic Life Explained

Question:

At times, temptation seems so powerful that it is almost impossible to resist. How can I be stronger in my resolve to avoid sin and temptation?

Answer:

The saints have written that every human person desires the good. In a sense, we don't desire sin itself. Temptation is powerful because there is at least some bit of good in it. Even in the blackest of sin, there is something good that becomes twisted. We can look for good in sin when we feel it is lacking in our own life. When we lack true relational intimacy, it can be easy to turn to lust. When we lack confidence in God in our own lives, it can be easy to judge others or to grasp for control over situations. When we lack peace in the present moment, it can be easy to compete with others or to treat others poorly in our quest for success.

Overcoming temptation isn't just about repressing our sinful desires. If that's all we do, they'll just burst out someplace else! If there is a recurring temptation in your life, prayerfully consider why this is so appealing to you. Submit this to God and bring it to a wise person. And in the meantime, continue to resist temptation to sin. If we fail to choose God in small choices, we're several steps down the road towards failing in larger ones. Pray for the grace to persevere!

Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him. - Mt 3:13-15

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

Isaiah speaks of God using a servant to deliver justice to the nations of the world. When have you felt God calling you to do His work?

Second Reading:

Peter testifies how God and the Holy Spirit were active in the life and public ministry of Jesus. Do you sense the Holy Spirit present in your life?

Gospel:

John the Baptist initially hesitates baptizing Jesus. Do you have a friend or co-worker who needs your encouragement?

BAPTISM OF THE LORD



Parish Financial Report
St. Elizabeth - Bear Creek
TREND ANALYSIS

	Fiscal Year July 1 - June 30				
	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Revenue					
Collections	177,148	167,816	163,647	163,065	155,855
Faith Formation Fees	400	410	370	600	440
Fundraising/Development	27,517	8,107	71,795	24,711	10,689
Other Income	5,095	9,850	8,992	9,298	7,909
Designated Income/Grants/PPP Loan	524	2,636	1,112	-	2,500
Transfers Savings Account/Other	3,883	-	3,071	50,885	61,604
Diocesan Special Collections	4,082	5,729	5,918	5,076	5,327
Total Revenue	218,649	194,548	254,905	253,634	244,324
Expenses					
Administration	95,605	95,481	102,388	97,936	104,331
Rectory	10,754	20,259	10,176	6,504	73
Liturgy	31,467	30,689	26,404	39,001	17,609
Faith Formation	-	237	411	1,790	498
Social Justice	1,816	1,164	-	3,053	4,137
Operation & Maintenance of Plant	41,916	26,396	35,659	27,105	19,269
Fixed Expense	10,036	13,594	18,054	18,162	14,821
Debt Service	-	4,124	-	-	-
Capital Outlays	54,798	74,832	22,576	1,923	13,172
Designated Expenses /Transfers Out	2,131	1,961	2,408	730	11,259
Catholic School Assessment	13,939	19,934	43,595	44,110	39,099
Diocesan Special Collections Remittance	7,293	6,941	6,118	5,481	5,301
Total Expense	269,754	295,612	267,789	245,794	229,569
Parish Surplus/(Deficit) - CASH Basis	(51,105)	(101,065)	(12,884)	7,840	14,755
(Increase)/Decrease in Unpaid Diocesan Obligations	**(SEE NOTE)**	(42,461)	(29,286)	21,612	14,882
Actual Parish Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(93,566)	(130,351)	8,728	22,722	21,897
NOTE					
Outstanding Diocesan Obligations could include: Diocesan assessments, School assessments, health insurance, self-insurance, pension and other expenses.					
End of Year Unpaid Diocesan Obligations	71,862	29,401	115	21,727	36,609
Beginning of Year Unpaid Diocesan Obligations	29,401	115	21,727	36,609	43,751
(Increase)/Decrease in Unpaid Diocesan Obligations	(42,461)	(29,286)	21,612	14,882	7,142
Diocesan Loan/Debt	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A