

St. Elizabeth of Hungary/St. Mark

5700 Bear Creek Boulevard, Bear Creek, Pennsylvania 18602

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

STRIVE
TO ENTER
THROUGH THE
NARROW GATE.

— LUKE 13:24 —

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME | AUGUST 24, 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

Aug 17, 2025

Weekly	\$2591.00
Online	+\$868.00
Holy Day	+\$260.00
	<u>\$3719.00</u>
Diocesan	-\$.00
TOTAL:	\$3719.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Eucharistic Celebration

Saturday, August 23, 2025 — Sunday, August 31, 2025

Sat, AUG 23

4:00pm (M) Memorial Mass for Ron Petro
Family

6:00pm (E) Larry Youngblood Jr.
Debbie & Rich Mitchell

Sun, AUG 24

8:30am (M) Francis Michael
Chrissy & Kevin Nordmark

10:30am (E) David M. Soda
Ted & Diane Haas

Mon, AUG 25

9:00am (E) Joseph Dotzel

Tues, AUG 26

9:00am (E) Carolyn Maurer
Barbara Chalk

Wed, AUG 27

9:00am (E) Filip Peixoto (Brother-in-Law)

Thurs, AUG 28

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

Fri, AUG 29

9:00am (E) Helen Orloski
Alice Lance

Sat, AUG 30

4:00pm (M) Tom & Carol Silvi
Liz & John Strasberger & Family

6:00pm (E) Joseph Tucker
John & Ann Tucker

Sun, AUG 31

8:30am (M) Annette Marie Barbini
Charlie & Elaine Morehead

10:30am (E) Mrs. Anna Cox
Theodore & Diane Haas

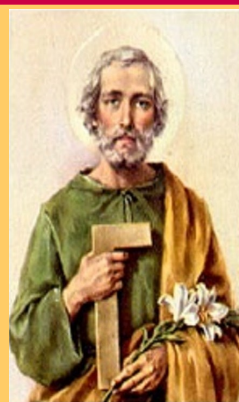


This week we pray for our sick,
elderly and homebound
parishioners and friends,
especially...



*Noreen Catani Amico,
Andrew Chismar, Lea Furlong, Tyrone Gayeski,
Bernard Hendrzak, Jake Johnson,
Joseph Kachurak, Patrick Kildea,
Michael Lilienthal, Mollie Litchman,
Carolyn Palencar, Richard Sawicki, Mary Soos,
Byran Stanton, John Tucker,
Rev. Anthony Urban, Gary Walker,
Hank Walker, Loretta Washick*

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



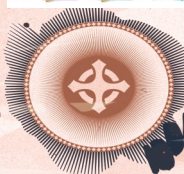
TRIDUUM MASS HONORING ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER

Next weekend, August 29 - 31, the Oblates of St. Joseph will host their annual Labor Day Triduum of Masses honoring St. Joseph the Worker in their chapel located at Route 315, Laffin. Masses will be offered each day at 12 Noon only. Confessions will precede all Masses and devotions to St. Joseph the Worker will follow. On Labor Day morning (Sept. 1), a special Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. for all area workers and the unemployed. Bread will be blessed & distributed to all as a symbol of the fruit of our labor.

Mass Intentions
for 2026 are now available.

Reserve Now

TRIVIA



Did you know that
two saints with
August feast days
died in World War II
at Auschwitz?

**Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross—Aug 9th
Saint Maximilian Kolbe—Aug 14th**



In today's readings, Jesus speaks about the kingdom of God and the cost of discipleship. He invites us to reflect on our commitment to Him, even if challenges, and on our role in building a community of love and unity.

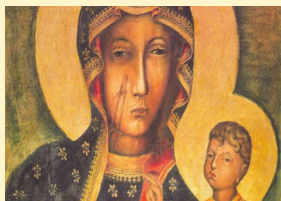
The first reading shows the return of God's people to Jerusalem - a sign that God keeps His promises and restores us to Himself. He sends us to proclaim the good news to all.

The Gospel highlights the final judgment at the gate of God's kingdom, urging us to make right choices and form a true relationship with God. In a world seeking shortcuts and instant results, Jesus calls us to take the narrow path - the way of discipline and depth. It is this road that leads to divine revelation. Christ reminds us that while the invitation to His feast is open to all, we must actively prepare and persevere to enter. We do this by staying focused, using every opportunity to grow in faith, and embracing His inclusive love and discipline.

Today, let us ask ourselves: what principle guides my choices when faced with two paths?

Lord, help us to follow you with open hearts and minds. Guide us as we walk along the narrow path. Give us the strength to embrace our cross and stay faithful to You on our journey.

HAVE A BLESSED WEEKEND!



Our Lady of Czestochowa—

August 26th

Our Lady of Czestochowa is also known as the "Black Madonna".

The image, which has been crowned the "Queen of Poland" and is highly venerated throughout Europe, is a given stop for any Pope who visits the country.

Legend has it the image dates to the time of the Twelve Apostles, and was painted by the hand of St. Luke the Evangelist, who is believed to have used a tabletop from a table built by Jesus during his time as a carpenter.

According to the legend, it was while Luke was painting Mary that she recounted to him the events in the life of Jesus that would eventually be used in his Gospel.

The same legend states that when St. Helen came to Jerusalem in 326 AD to look for the true Cross, she also happened to find this image of Our Lady. She then gave it as a gift to her son Constantine, who built a shrine to venerate it.

In a major battle with the Saracens, the image was displayed from the walls of Constantinople, and the Saracen army was subsequently defeated, leading many to credit the portrait with saving the city.

The image eventually fell to the care of Charlemagne, who presented it to Prince Leo of Ruthenia (northwest Hungary). It was placed in the Ruthenian palace where it remained until an invasion in the 11th century.

Fearful for the fate of his city, the king prayed to Our Lady to assist his small army. The result, according to legend, was that a (cont.)

darkness overshadowed enemy troops, leading them to attack one another.

In the 14th century the image was transferred to Jasna Gora in Poland as an answer to a request made in a dream of Prince Ladislaus of Opola. The history of the image is better documented while in his care.

In 1382 Tartars invaded the prince's fortress at Belz, and during the attack one of the Tartar arrows struck the painting and lodged in the neck of the Madonna. The prince, fearful that the image would fall into the enemy's hands, fled during the night, and stopped in the town of Czestochowa.

The painting was placed inside a small church, and the prince later had a Pauline monastery and church built at the location to ensure the painting's safety.

However, in 1430 the Hussites overran the monastery, attempting to take the image. In the process one of the looters took the painting and put it into a wagon and tried to drive away. But when the horses refused to move, he struck the painting twice with his sword. As he raised his hand to strike it again, he suddenly fell over writhing in pain and died.

Despite previous attempts to repair the scars from the arrow and the blows from the sword, restorers had trouble in covering them up since the painting was done with tempera infused with diluted wax. The marks remain visible to this day.

Later, in 1655 when Poland was entirely overrun by King Charles X of Sweden, only the area surrounding the monastery remained unconquered. Miraculously, the monks who lived there were somehow able to defend the portrait throughout a 40-day siege, and Poland was eventually able to drive out the invaders.

After the miraculous event, King John II Casimir Vasa crowned the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa as Queen of Poland, placing the entire country under her care and protection.

More recent stories surrounding the image involve the Russian invasion of Poland in 1920, holding that when the Russian army was gathering on the banks of the Vistula River and threatening Warsaw, they saw an image of Our Lady in the clouds over the city, prompting them to withdraw.

The image of Our Lady of Czestochowa gets its nickname "Black Madonna" from the soot residue which discolors the painting because of centuries of votive lights and candles burned in front of it.

Since the fall of communism in Poland, pilgrimages to the image have significantly increased.

Czestochowa is regarded as the most popular shrine in Poland, with many Polish Catholics making a pilgrimage there every year. Since 1711, a pilgrimage leaves Warsaw every 6 August for the nine-day, 140-mile trek. Elderly pilgrims recall stealing through the dark countryside at great personal risk during the Nazi occupation. Pope John Paul II secretly visited as a student pilgrim during World War II.

Worship & Meditation

Readings for the week of August 24, 2025

Sunday:

Is 66:18-21/Ps 117:1, 2 (Mk 16:15)/
Heb 12:5-7, 11-13/Lk 13:22-30

Monday:

1 Thes 1:1-5, 8b-10/Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a
and 9b/Mt 23:13-22

Tuesday:

1 Thes 2:1-8/Ps 139:1-3, 4-6/Mt 23:23-26

Wednesday:

1 Thes 2:9-13/Ps 139:7-8, 9-10, 11-12ab/
Mt 23:27-32

Thursday:

1 Thes 3:7-13/Ps 128:1-2, 4-5/Mt 24:42-51

Friday:

1 Thes 4:1-8 (429)/Ps 97:1 and 2b, 5-6, 10,
11-12/Mk 6:17-29

Saturday:

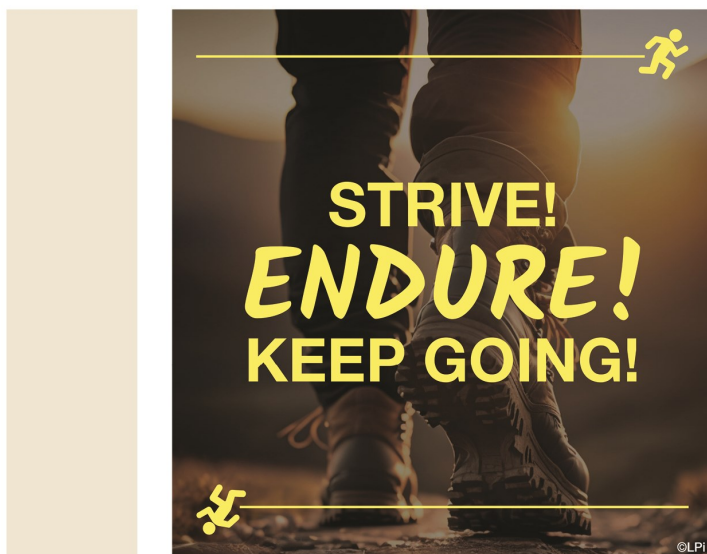
1 Thes 4:9-11/Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9/Mt 25:14-30

Next Sunday:

Sir 3:17-18, 20, 28-29/Ps 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5
(1a)/Heb 12:18-19, 22-24a/Lk 14:1, 7-14



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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

I've been hiking Camelback Mountain in Phoenix, Arizona most of my life. It is a vigorous forty-five minutes to the top. Near the peak, the end suddenly appears much further away, and steeper. At that moment, a descending hiker often offers encouragement: "Keep going! The peak is right there. It's not as far as it looks. You can do it!" It usually works. After another five minute push, you summit and enjoy a glorious panorama of the Sonoran Desert in the Valley of the Sun.

When Jesus is asked about how many people are saved, he says: "**Strive to enter through the narrow gate**" (Luke 13:24). How many? Strive! Focus on your journey. What does heavenly census taking have to do with you or me? How would it help a hiker on a mountain to ask the others coming down, "How many people are going to make it to the top?" A normal response would be something like: "How is that a relevant question? Carry on!"

Jesus links one virtue directly to salvation: perseverance (cf. Matt 24:13; hypomone in Greek). Strive! Endure! Keep going! The one absolutely necessary virtue is perseverance, to not give up on our journey. The mountain we struggle to climb is often our own weakness, failures, and sins. Persevere in prayer. Keep celebrating the sacraments. Embrace daily duties. With God's grace, you are strong enough to keep going. Perhaps the peak is not as far away as you might fear. Keep going!

— Father John Muir

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

I know their works and their thoughts,
and I come to gather nations of every language;
they shall come and see my glory. (Is 66:18)

Psalm:

Go out to all the world and tell the Good News. (Ps 117)

Second Reading:

So strengthen your drooping hands and your weak knees.
Make straight paths for your feet,
that what is lame may not be disjointed but healed.
(Heb 12:12-13)

Gospel:

For behold, some are last who will be first,
and some are first who will be last." (Lk 13:30)

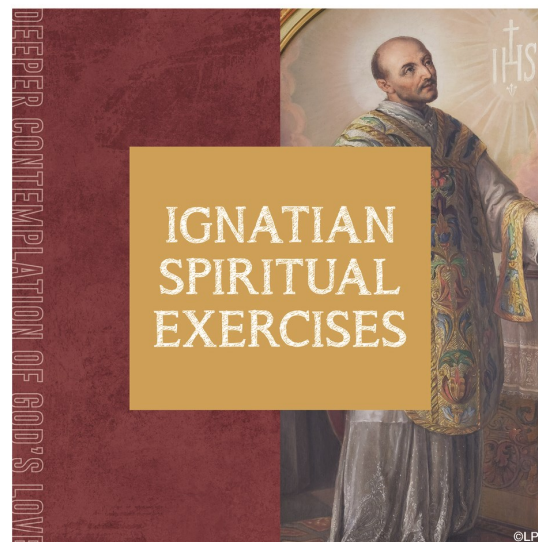
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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

"Strive to enter through the narrow gate,"
Jesus tells us. "Many will attempt...but will
not be strong enough." So let us never be
so foolish that we rely on our own strength.
Narrow does not mean unpassable — not if
we ask for help.

Observances for the week of August 24, 2025

- Sunday:** 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
Monday: St. Louis; St. Joseph Calasanz,
Priest
Wednesday: St. Monica
Wednesday: St. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor
of the Church
Friday: The Passion of St. John the Baptist
Next Sunday: 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time



Devotions, *Explained!*

The Ignatian Spiritual Exercises are prayers and meditations which are meant to accompany souls on a journey toward deeper contemplation of God's love and a more meaningful understanding of His call to discipleship.

Prayer for Holiness

Good Shepherd,
Guide me through the
narrow gate. Remove from
me anything that distracts
me from You, Your love, Your
invitation, Your mission. Keep
me close to You, familiar at
every step.
Amen.

Liturgical Life

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Mini Reflection: Jesus' whole thing was that you *can* sit with us, whoever you are, wherever you're from and whatever you've done. But there are a lot of lunch tables in the world, and not everyone wants to be at one with rules like "repent" and "be good to that person you really don't like."

Heaven and Regina George

There are certain phrases that serve as a kind of shibboleth for millennials, a dog whistle that only ears formed between 1981 and 1996 can discern. "You can't sit with us!" is one of those phrases.

It's from the movie *Mean Girls*, (which, I hear from my younger family members, has now become cool with the kids again, so maybe my point about it being niche is incorrect). The character Regina George, merciless ruler of the cool kids, is rejected from the ultra-exclusive lunch table she herself formed when her minions, tired of her cruelty, serve her the most devastating words a teenager can hear in public: "You can't sit with us."

So passes earthly glory, as they say.

At first blush, this Gospel gives "Mean Girls" vibes. We have an image of the unlucky masses clamoring for entry into the kingdom of heaven as God locks the door against them, saying, "I do not know where you are from."

Very "you-can't-sit-with-us."

But we need to remember that the people pounding on the door of heaven in today's Gospel aren't people who wanted a seat at God's lunch table — at least, not until it was the only lunch table left, because they had Regina George'd their way out of all the other ones.

Jesus' whole thing was that you *can* sit with us, whoever you are, wherever you're from and whatever you've done. But there are a lot of lunch tables in the world, and not everyone wants to be at one with rules like "repent" and "be good to that person you really don't like." It's not always an easy table to sit at, especially when there are so many other options.

We have to choose heaven before heaven becomes our only choice.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that?

Catholic Life Explained

Question:

What is the difference between a basilica and a cathedral?

Answer:

Basilicas are churches that are so titled because of their antiquity, dignity, historical importance, or significance as centers of worship. A cathedral is the principal church of a diocese, which contains the chair of the bishop, or "cathedra" in Latin. The chair is the symbol of the bishop's teaching authority.



“People will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God. For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”
- Lk 13:29-30

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

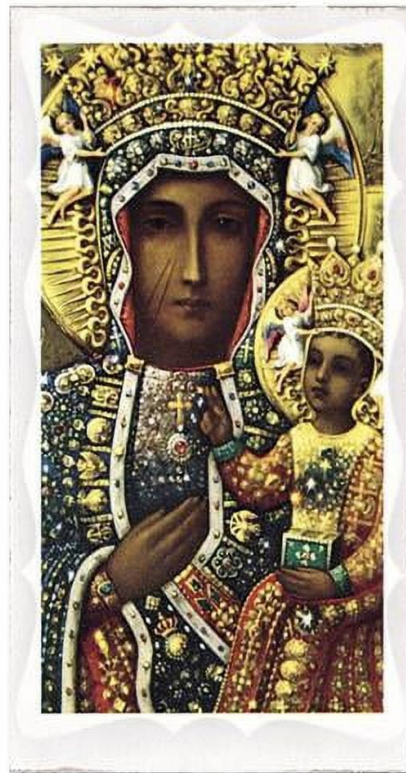
Isaiah reveals to us God’s plan to gather and unite all His people and witness His glory in the age to come. What are you hoping for in the future?

Second Reading:

The author of Hebrews offers words of encouragement for community members struggling and discouraged in their faith. Is there a friend or co-worker you could look to support this week?

Gospel:

Jesus speaks to the crowds of the dire consequences of rejecting his call to salvation. What could be some effective ways to bring others to faith in Jesus?



Prayer to Our Lady of Czestochowa

(To be said each day upon arising)
HOLY MOTHER of Czestochowa, Thou art full of grace, goodness and mercy. I consecrate to Thee all my thoughts, words and actions – my soul and body. I beseech Thy blessings and especially prayers for my salvation.

Today, I consecrate myself to Thee, Good Mother, totally—with body and soul amid joy and sufferings to obtain for myself and others Thy blessings on this earth and eternal life in Heaven. Amen.

Imprimatur:
Most Rev. Patrick A. O’Boyle, D.D.
Archbishop of Washington

SP-284

MADE IN ITALY



Young Adult Hike Day

Connect with God through Nature

**Ricketts Glen
State Park**

Falls Trail Loop

Sat, Sept. 6th

To Register,
Scan the QR



- Schedule:**
- 9:30 AM – Meet at Lake Rose Trailhead Parking
 - 9:45 AM Welcome & Opening Prayer
 - 10 AM Rosary Hike – Falls Trail Loop Approx. 3 hours
 - Fellowship to follow at The Crooked Creek Pub & Restaurant (Optional)

Ages 21-40

please pack water and snacks, food is not provided



We will be hiking the Falls Loop Trail which spans 3.2 miles and features 17 waterfalls! Throughout the hike we will be pausing to pray the joyful mysteries of the Rosary. The hike will take about 3 hours and following the hike all are welcome for fellowship at the Crooked Creek Pub & Restaurant. Must be 21-40 to attend. For more info contact:

Program Coordinator, Family Life:

Bridget Guarnieri

[570-207-2213, ext. 1133](tel:570-207-2213)



Anchored in Hope YOUTH RALLY

SAT, SEPT 27

1:30 – 8:00PM

NOTRE DAME JR/SR HS

80 SPANGENBURG AVE, EAST STROUDSBURG, PA 18301

Open to Youth in Grades 7-12

\$30 Registration (covers dinner & t-shirt)

CONTACT US TO REGISTER BY SEPT 13

ALL REGISTRATIONS MUST COME THROUGH THE PARISH POINT PERSON



The Scally Brothers



Dan Harms



Bishop Bambera



For More Info

VIVA CRISTO REY!

All students in grades 7-12 are invited to participate in the 2025 Diocesan Youth Rally!

The theme of our third annual Diocesan Youth Rally will be: Anchored in Hope: ¡Viva Cristo Rey! Come dive deep into who we anchor our hope in as Catholics and learn how to be the anchor of hope in today's world. It will be a day to deepen your faith, make new friends, and experience fun and fellowship!

The Diocesan Youth Rally will take place at Notre Dame High School in East Stroudsburg from 1:30 – 8 p.m. Check-in opens at 12:30 pm. The youth will hear from people such as Dan Harms, a well-known Catholic performer and inspirational speaker, and music by the Scally Brothers, a dynamic brother duo from Toledo Ohio, and many more.

Additionally, the participants will experience Adoration with other young Catholics and Mass with Bishop Bambera. Registration includes dinner and a t-shirt.

Registration closes September 13.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

THEOLOGY ON TAP 2025

7-9 PM

**SEP 11TH
OCT 9TH
NOV 13TH
DEC 11TH**

AGES 21-40

**SABATINI'S
BOTTLE SHOP**
1901 WYOMING AVE
EXETER, PA 18643



TO RSVP,
PLEASE
SCAN
THE QR



Join the monthly Theology on Tap Gathering of the Young Adult Ministry of the Diocese of Scranton. Each month we gather at Sabatini's Bar & Bottleshop with a new speaker who discusses a variety of topics of faith. For Ages 21-40, \$5 Cover at the door, includes soft drinks and Pizza!