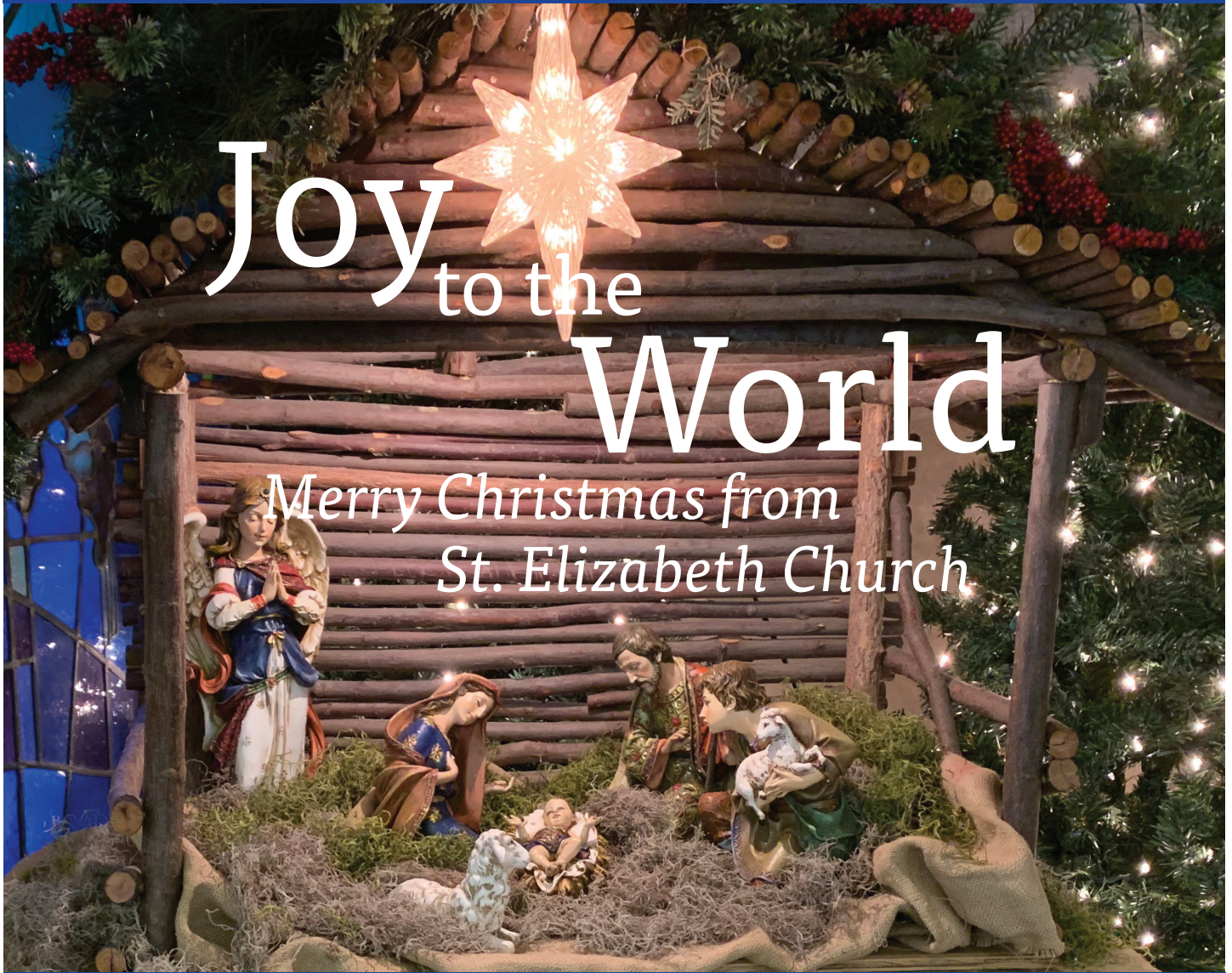


# Disciples Stewards

St. Elizabeth Catholic Church & School

Granite City, Illinois ♦ Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

Fourth Sunday of Advent ♦ December 24, 2023



Joy to the World  
Merry Christmas from  
St. Elizabeth Church


2300 Pontoon Road  
Granite City, IL 62040


Phone 618-877-3300


Fax 618-877-9800


After-Hours Emergencies  
314-266-8387

Web: [stelizabethgc.org](http://stelizabethgc.org)

 [@stelizabeth.gc](https://www.facebook.com/stelizabeth.gc)

 [@stelizabeth.gc](https://www.instagram.com/stelizabeth.gc)

 [@stelizabeth\\_gc](https://twitter.com/stelizabeth_gc)

 [@stelizabethgc](https://www.youtube.com/stelizabethgc)

## PASTORAL STAFF

**Rev. Alfred Tumwesigye, Pastor**  
Office x1002 | Residence x1201  
[pastor@stelizabethgc.org](mailto:pastor@stelizabethgc.org)

**Deacon Michael Halbrook**  
x1005 | [mhalbrook@dio.org](mailto:mhalbrook@dio.org)

**Bret Ware**  
Parish Secretary & Office Admin  
[secretary@stelizabethgc.org](mailto:secretary@stelizabethgc.org)

**Jackie Jones, Bookkeeper**  
x1003 | [jjones@stelizabethgc.org](mailto:jjones@stelizabethgc.org)

**Chris Spanberger**  
Director of Religious Education (School)  
[cspan@stelizabethgc.org](mailto:cspan@stelizabethgc.org)

**Cathy Cassy, Director of Music**

## SCHOOL & PRE-SCHOOL

School Phone: (618) 877-3300 x2

School Fax: (618) 877-3352

Pre-School: (618) 877-3300 x2003

**Michelle Williams, Principal**  
[mwilliams@stelizabethgc.org](mailto:mwilliams@stelizabethgc.org)

**Loretta Joyce, School Secretary**  
[ljoyce@stelizabethgc.org](mailto:ljoyce@stelizabethgc.org)

## CALVARY CATHOLIC CEMETERY

2910 S. State Route 157  
Edwardsville, IL  
(618) 656-5464

## ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS

Finance Council: Charlotte Charbonnier

School Board: Adam Meyenburg

Parent/Teacher Org.: Natasha Reidl

Ladies Sodality: Tammi Mooshegian

Holy Name Men's Club: Rob Hutson

Men at Prayer: Tom Cholevik

Funeral Dinners: Pam Ames

Athletic Director: Joe Philips

Maintenance Team: Bud Charbonnier

**Strong in Faith  
since 1871**

*Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, pray for us.*

## PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

We commit ourselves to the discipleship and stewardship way of life as commanded by Jesus Christ and revealed by Sacred Scripture and Tradition. We are committed to implementing the Four Pillars of Discipleship and Stewardship of our diocese:

**Hospitality:** To maintain a warm and welcoming environment, and invite others to join us in prayer, especially Sunday Mass;

**Prayer:** To journey the path to Heaven together through celebration of the sacraments and ever-deepening lives of prayer;

**Formation:** To continue sharing, learning, and accepting the teachings of our Lord and His Church; and

**Service:** To share our Lord's Love by reaching out to all in service, especially the afflicted.

## PRAYER & LITURGY

### LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

**Sunday-Monday, December 24-25**

**The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)**

4:30 p.m. Sunday Evening Mass:

Merry Trtanj+ by Dr. Albert Trtanj

11:00 p.m. Sunday Night Mass:

Romana Lofink+ by Kevin & Toni Diercks

9:00 a.m. Monday Morning Mass:

Melanie Rees+ by Norma Lesko

**Tuesday, December 26**

**St. Stephen, Deacon & First Martyr**

6 p.m. Mass:

Cheryl Jones+ by Janet Davinroy

**Wednesday, December 27**

**St. John, Apostle & Evangelist**

8:15 a.m. Mass:

Betty Lampitt+ by Family & Friends of Betty

**Thursday, December 28**

**The Holy Innocents, Martyrs**

8:15 a.m. Mass:

Romana Lofink+ by Charles & Joann King

**Friday, December 29**

**Fifth Day in the Octave of Christmas**

Cheryl Jones+ by Janet Wilmsmeyer

**Saturday, December 30**

**Sixth Day in the Octave of Christmas**

No Mass

**Saturday-Sunday, December 30-31**

**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, & Joseph**

4:30 p.m. Saturday Evening Mass:

Parishioners of Saint Elizabeth

8:00 a.m. Mass:

Dorothy Willaredt+ by Janice Willaredt

10:30 a.m. Mass:

Jerry Prejean+ by Cathy Cassy

Mass offerings are available (\$10), as are memorials on the 14 Day Candle / Sanctuary Lamp, and Altar Flowers. Contact the parish office.

December is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for December:

**For persons with disabilities: We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.**

**This Sunday: Fourth Sunday of Advent**

2 Sam 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38

David ruminates on building a house for the Lord. However, the Lord reminds David how he has favored him and states that it is God who will build a house for David. Paul gives glory to Christ, acknowledging the prophets and wisdom through the ages that have all participated in this revelation. The angel Gabriel announces that Mary will conceive a son – the Son of God – and Mary accepts the honor, saying, *may it be done to me according to your word.*

**Next Sunday: The Holy Family**

Gen 15:1-6; Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk 2:22-40

In the first reading, Abram puts his faith in God's promise of a child despite his and Sarah's old age. In the second reading the author emphasizes all that Abraham did was by faith. In the Gospel, Joseph and Mary present Jesus at the temple, and meet Simeon and Anna who prophesy about the child.

### 14 DAY SANCTUARY LAMP

This week, the 14-day Sanctuary Lamp reminds us to pray for **Bill Loftus+ by Pat Loftus**. To offer the 14 day candle in honor or a loved one, contact the Parish Office.

### ALTAR FLOWERS

This week, the Altar Flowers are **in memory of Merry Trtanj+ by Dr. Albert Trtanj**. Honor a loved one with the altar flowers. Contact the Parish Office.

### FIRST FRIDAY MEMORIALS

Deceased Members of Holy Name Men's Club  
Czornog & Ostrenga Families

Kierski Family

Bill Loftus

John & Theresa Straubinger

Carl Williams

Alan Winters

Keith Winters

Brinker & Soboleski Families

Delores Brinker

Paula Gushleff Koliste

DeRuntz & Pfaff Families

Louise Harrison

Kenneth Jaimet

Deceased Members of

St. Elizabeth Choir

Gene Cassy

Jim Deder

Cassy Family

Pieper Family

Crawshaw Family

Charles Dickey

Binney Family

Alma & Greg Voss

Chad Sigite

Lisa Garcia-Fensterman

Jim Alsop and Family

Gus & Angeline Scaturro

Dortch Family

Richard A. Willaredt

Lisa Dellamano

Rosalie Boyd

Joseph & Victoria Krystopa

Michael & Leona Bonach

Richard Horbelt

Gus & Angie Scaturro

Johnson Family

Jones & Harbin Families

Lesko & Danheiser Families

Mary Mennerick

Glen Hommert

Marvin Wiedemer

Mark Malone

Bill Mathes

Angela & Ronald Briggs Jr.

Robert & Lorraine Joshu

Jesse & Lorraine Gonterman

Jim Noeth & Brothers

Noeth & M. Papp Families

Brian Foreman

Tony & Mary Bellue

Jim Dittman

Pattie Jackson

Ida Gragg

Pawlak & Sertich Families

Deceased Members of Ladies Sodality

Betty Lampitt

Connie Hayes Family

Bursik/Votoupal Family

Ann Fabisher

## Be with Jesus

### Adoration

Thursdays 9 am - 9 pm

### Holy Hour

Sundays 7:30-8:30 pm

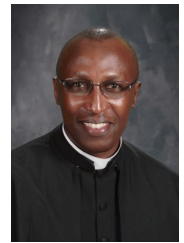


### An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.



## From our Pastor Father Alfred



Dear Saint Elizabeth Parishioners and School Families,

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year 2024! “For a child is born to us, a son is given us, upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:5-6).

These words: “a child is born to us, a son is given us” speak to me of how this festive season is a “Communal Celebration” not just a family affair for us Catholics and the whole world. It takes a community of us to whom “a child is born to us, a son is given us” to delight in this Holy Season starting from making quality Christmas cookies, putting up the Christmas tree, wrapping and opening the Christmas presents, etc. to attending the Christ’s Mass (Christmas) - the Holy Day of Obligation. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a community is “a unified body of individuals: such as a group of people with a common characteristic or interest living together within a larger society.” We are therefore a Christian community for the fact that “a child is born to us, a son is given us” and His name is Jesus Christ.

During these Christmas festivities and celebrations, I am making a trip to my home country Uganda, for my one-month annual vacation, leaving on December 31, 2023, arriving in Uganda on January 1, 2024. In Uganda, “a child is born to us, a son is given us.” Thinking of this brings me to some of the most beautiful memories surrounding the communal celebration of Christmas in that part of the world – known as the pearl of Africa! Well, there is not so much the giving of presents in the celebration of Christmas in Uganda, but the GIVING OF PRESENCE. Whereas most people do not have the financial resources to buy gifts such as toys. Everyone from the community will gather in one place/family and celebrate from there, for several days.



Christmas in Uganda comes at a time marking the end of the harvest of the main millet-growing season. As a child I remember it would take us weeks’ work to grind some 20 kilograms of millet for a team of two or three people in a family, echoing the festive mood among family members despite the laborious task. The only equipment in use is the hand-powered African grinding mill (curved out stone), mortar, and pestle (as in the photo). This was and still is the traditional process of making fine cassava, millet, and sorghum flour. The flour is mingled into millet bread and the sorghum flour is used to make sweetie porridge (obushera). Besides millet flour, they also use other easily available farm produce like Matooke which is a special kind of banana. It is harvested green, peeled, and boiled or steamed in banana leaves.

When they are cooked, they turn yellow. Matooke is best served mashed. Christmas cooking starts on the night of 24 December. My mother (of beautiful memory) used to do most of the cooking preparation on Christmas Eve and then wake up at 4 am on Christmas morning to start the cooking. When we woke at 6 or 7 am, she would mash the matooke and then move on to boiling the chicken or meat for the special feast. Christmas Meal is a shared meal with extended family members, and invitations are given to neighbors, guests, and sometimes visiting Christmas carol groups. All this meal continues until the New Year.

There are also other chores during the season apart from meal preparations and sharing, such as cleaning and decorating homes. Days before Christmas, children and other family members decorate the house and the path leading to the house/family with locally available banana leaves/stems and all sorts of wild and locally grown flowers for Christmas decorations. Also, many families use other decorative materials like hangings and ornaments made of paper on Christmas and New Year. One of my favorite childhood Christmas memories was listening to a carol group singing on the night of Christmas eve and participating in Children’s plays after Christmas mass accompanied by singing and dancing. Sometimes there are also competitions from youth from different churches on the church premises. The parishes carry out competitions for children to participate in Nativity scenes and distribute prizes on Christmas Day.

The best part for me as a priest was the Parish preparations that begin with the season of Advent to help parishioners prepare for Christmas. These range from priest’s exhortations given in different mission outstations through Advent “Safari” to give the Sacrament of Confession to prepare for Christmas, to Catholic volunteers who show up to clean up and decorate the Church campus and the Church buildings.

Now all these are acts of communal joy and spiritual practices that boost faith and unity among the community for “a child is born to us, a son is given us.” As we celebrate Christmas together in our families and as Saint Elizabeth family of God, let us keep the communal celebration vibrant, by GIVING OF PRESENCE to one another for unto us “a child is born, a son is given.” Christmas time is a communal celebration for us, as it was for shepherds in that region of Bethlehem living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock, who joined the multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” (Luke 2:14). As we celebrate Jesus’s coming at Christmas, may there be peace and joy in our families, and communities, our nation and in the world surrounded by upheaval. Together, let us bring Christ’s peace with us into these tumultuous situations!

Merry Christmas!

Fr. Alfred Tumwesigye, Pastor



## Christmas Flower Offerings

Charles Jones Family  
Paul Haldeman Family  
Ralph Lickenbrock Sr.  
Virginia Lickenbrock  
Kenneth Justice  
Loretta Justice  
Doug Conrad  
Weckman and Wilbur  
families and friends  
James Alsop  
Mr. & Mrs. Berto Cerutt  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Ganz  
Melvin C. Wilmsmeyer  
Helen Klenklen  
Paula Gushleff Koliste  
Dr. Barry Gushleff  
Leonard and Dorothy Koliste  
Bill & Pauline Gushleff  
Katherine & Francis Thrasher Jr.  
Secinia Johnson  
Olive Johnson  
George Johnson  
Marty Johnson  
John & Jaimie Kindle  
Emma & John Jakich  
Raymond J. Loftus  
Eli L. Brandibas  
Patricia O. Fultz  
Thomas J. Loftus Jr.  
Paula Rae Borg  
Ralph & Bertha Wesbecher  
Norma Kessler  
Frank & Vi Kessler  
Ralph & Arlene Haldeman  
Annabelle VanHorn  
Fred & Olivia Schmid  
Donald Vaughn  
Helen Gieselmann  
Joseph & Mildred Dallas

Tony Bilello  
Lila Daughy  
Anna Maria von Phul  
Rosalie von Phul  
Rosalie Michau Saugrain  
Poneta & Arth Families  
Sgt. Steven Mennemeyer  
Jim Dittman  
Bill Loftus  
Mejaski & Loftus Family  
Baumann & Szczepanik Family  
Families members of  
Al & Maxine Czernijewski  
Lois & Neva Jackstadt  
Richard & Dorothy Kerch  
Ann Jackstadt VanDyke  
John & Odalee Baumgardner  
Anna & Richard Rosales  
Patsy Bohn  
Carolyn Campos  
Families of Thompson, Ahlers,  
Venditto, and Chilcutt  
Ronald Briggs Jr.  
Angela Briggs  
Lorraine Joshu  
Robert Joshu  
Charlie Boyd  
Deceased members of the  
Boyd and Campos Families  
Mile & Jean Knezevich  
Judy A. Modrusic  
Hill & Byrd Families  
Jesse & Lorraine Gonterman  
Larry & Jean Hanh  
Douglas Oestricker  
Buchmiller family  
Bob & Abby Rotter  
Tony & Mary Bellue  
Anne Miller  
Jack Folkerts

Dennis Folkerts  
Vivian Broadwater  
Bob & Abby Rotter  
Dennis Coffrey  
Lupardus and Mooshegian Family  
Tony & Mary Bellue  
Brian Foreman  
Inez Foreman  
Eddie Foreman  
Lawrece Jaros  
Robert Niemeyer  
LaVern Black  
Danny & Alice Newton  
Rodney Family  
Robert L. David  
Bill Buster  
John & Lorene Gadwell  
Bill Schrenk  
Bill Loftus  
Loftus Family Members  
Mejaski Family Members  
Deceased Members of the  
Charles Jones Family  
Deceased Members of the  
Paul Haldeman Family  
Janet Gremaud  
Linda Newton  
Roger Knobeloch Sr.  
Vivian Broadwater  
Mathes Family  
Pogorelac Family  
Mark James  
Lois & Lew Glasgow





Holiday Mass Times in Granite City & Madison	St. Elizabeth	Holy Family	St. Mary/St. Mark
4th Sunday in Advent December 23-24	Normal Mass times: Sat 4:30 p.m.; Sun 8 & 10:30 a.m.	Normal time: Sat 4 p.m.; Sun 8:30 a.m.	Normal time: Sun 10 a.m.
Christmas Eve (Sun) Dec. 24	4:30 & 11 p.m.	8 p.m.	4 p.m.
Christmas Day (Mon) Dec. 25	9 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	
Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, & Joseph, Dec. 30-31	Normal Mass times: Sat 4:30 p.m.; Sun 8 & 10:30 a.m.	Normal time: Sat 4 p.m.; Sun 8:30 a.m.	Normal time: Sun 10 a.m.
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, Dec. 31-Jan. 1	New Year's Eve, Sun 4:30 p.m. New Year's Day, Mon 9 a.m.	Monday, Jan 1 10:30 a.m.	

**Remember! Sundays are obligatory, as are the Holy Days of Obligation of Christmas (Eve or Day of Dec. 25) and the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Eve or Day of Jan. 1).**

## AROUND THE AREA



### EPIPHANY CONCERT

The Gift of the Magi, Holy Family Parish's First Annual Epiphany Concert, will be held on Sunday, January 7 at 6:30 p.m. at Holy Family Church in Granite City. It is a festive celebration of music, including jubilant organ pieces, instrumental ensembles, and choral numbers. In addition to the Holy Family Parish Choir, several guest artists will be performing, including several music directors from the Alton Deanery and the Father McGivney Catholic High School Choir. There will be free admission, and we hope you can join in this joyful festival of music to celebrate our Savior's birth! Questions, contact Thomas Halbrook, thomas@halbrook.net, Director of Liturgical Music at Holy Family.

### WOMENS PRE-LENTEN PRAYER BREAKFAST

Mass, catered breakfast, followed by National speaker Sister M. Karolyn Nunes, FSGM. Topic: Living Lent for a Change; Saturday, February 10, 2024, 8:00 a.m. to about 11:30 a.m. at St Boniface Catholic Church Edwardsville. See future bulletin for more information and how to register. Space will be limited.

## CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS FOR CATHOLIC FAMILIES

*This is from 'Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families' by Kerri Mecke-Lazano. It includes the Gospel, a reflection, a question to ponder before AND after Mass as well as a section called Living the Word to consider how you can take the Gospel with you for the rest of the week. Please use them to help you and your family get more out of the Mass each week!*

### (For the Gospel at the Mass During the Night)

**HEARING THE WORD:** Read Luke 2:1, 4-7a, 8-14

### REFLECTING ON THE WORD

Mary wrapped her baby in swaddling clothes. Newborn babies feel safe and comfortable when they are wrapped in a blanket, nice and snug. Then Mary lays him in a manger, which is a feeding trough for animals. Jesus is so precious, but is placed in a manger where animals feed. This child is born in such humble conditions, and yet will be a gift that brings joy for all people, glory to God, and peace on earth.

### ON THE WAY TO MASS

Today, we will hear about the shepherds who visit the baby Jesus. after he was born. Perhaps the shepherds didn't know clearly who Jesus was then, but we do today. What do we know about who Jesus is.

### ON THE WAY HOME FROM MASS

What did the angel say? "Do not be afraid! A savior has been born! You will find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." Why do you think Jesus came as a helpless baby wrapped in swaddling clothes rather than as a powerful king with an army? What could this mean for us?

### LIVING THE WORD

What do babies need? Make a list. While we may not be able to purchase items for baby Jesus or for a child in need, we can offer something to Jesus at this moment. Sit quietly with your Nativity set, tell Jesus what is in your heart. You may say it aloud, quietly in your heart, or write it down as a prayer.

# GET INVOLVED AT ST. ELIZABETH

There are so many great ways to get involved at St. Elizabeth! As you look ahead to the New Year and ways to steward your God-given time, talent, and treasure, consider some of these opportunities. Contact Bret in the parish office at 618-877-3300 or via [secretary@stelizabethgc.org](mailto:secretary@stelizabethgc.org) for more information on how to get involved in any of these opportunities.

## ADULT PARISH LIFE & FAITH FORMATION

### 3:00 PM PRAYER GROUP

The 3 p.m. Prayer Group meets in the church each Wednesday at 3 p.m. in prayer for the needs of our parishioners and world.

### ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Through the year, both RCIA for those interested in entering the church and other small group and large group experiences provide opportunities to learn more about our Catholic faith. Keep an eye on the bulletin each week for more information on these ongoing and one-time opportunities.

### EXODUS

The men of Exodus undertake an annual 90-day period of deep prayer, sacrifice, and brotherhood to deepen their relationship with God and their vocations. Through the year, they continue to meet in Fraternity to discuss Scriptures and reflections that continue to form them as men for others.

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The Knights of Columbus is the global fraternal service order for Catholic men. Our local Knights of Columbus Council and Assembly provide fellowship for Catholic men and service and fundraising for our parishes, schools, and other local needs.

### LADIES SODALITY

Our Ladies Sodality provides a forum for fellowship for the women of our parish as well as working together on various fundraisers to help provide for the needs of our church and altar. Come join the ladies of our Ladies Sodality and have fun and make a difference with the other ladies of our parish!

### MEN AT PRAYER

Our Men at Prayer meet every other Sunday between the two Masses to share in prayer for each others' intentions and for the Church and the world.

### MEN'S CLUB

Our Men's Club provides fellowship for the men of our parish and provides the forum in which they organize to help maintain our parish grounds and raise funds via Fish Fries and other efforts that help support our church, especially our youth and our school.

### PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Our PTO helps our school parents and parishioners work together to provide an enhanced experience for our school and its students. Through fundraising and special programs, our PTO is a huge help to our school, faculty, staff, and students.

### QUILTERS

Our Quilters meet weekly to share time together as they craft beautiful quilts for the ongoing Quilt Raffle and other special events in the parish. Consider joining them!

## YOUTH & FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

### PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION (PSR)

Our PSR helps support families of children not enrolled in our Catholic school with the ongoing formation of their children in the faith. PSR is available for grades K-8 and provides age-appropriate formation as children grow and their questions about our faith mature.

### YOUNG DISCIPLES SOCIETY & YOUTH GROUP

Young Disciples Society provides discipleship formation, small group activities, and involvement opportunities in parish life for those who have received the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and First Communion) in 4th grade and beyond.

Our teens are invited to be a part of our newly-formed "Young Disciples Teens" group, which meets frequently on Sundays after 10:30 Mass. Keep an eye on the bulletin for more information on opportunities with Young Disciples Teens.

## LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

### ALTAR SERVERS

Our 4th graders and above have the opportunity to assist Father and serve at the altar at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Deacon Michael continues to work to deepen the involvement and expertise of our servers, and he and Bret are looking for some dads and other men to occasionally serve as adult servers and help provide mentorship to the younger servers.

### CHOIR

The St. Elizabeth Choir practices at various times through the year to help provide music for our liturgies throughout the year. The choir could always use a few more good voices and is a blast to be a part of. Please consider joining them.

### EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION (EMHCs)

When needs warrant, EMHCs assist the ordinary ministers of Communion (the priest and deacon) with the distribution of Holy Communion. Additionally, some of them volunteer to assist Father and Deacon with carrying Communion to those who are unable to join the community for Mass.

### GREETERS

Our greeters meet people at the door and ensure they feel welcome here at St. Elizabeth.

### LECTORS

Our lectors proclaim the Word of God in the readings at Mass.

### USHERS

Ushers help ensure everyone has a seat, all things remain safe and orderly, and issues or distractions are handled during liturgies, in addition to helping with the collection at offertory.

## STEWARDSHIP

### 150 CLUB

The 150 Club welcomes members who contribute each year for the opportunity at a monthly cash raffle drawing and then grand prize cash raffles at the year-end dinner event. In turn, the 150 Club provides a significant financial gift back to the parish each year.

### BINGO COMMITTEE

Our BINGO Committee helps to organize and lead our teams providing Wednesday night BINGO, which in turn helps provide a significant additional financial stream for special projects around our parish and school every year.

### CHURCH CLEANING TEAMS

Our Cleaning Teams provide routine cleaning of our church and the Parish Life Center and offices, helping to ensure our spaces always look and smell wonderful and clean for our parishioners and visitors.

### MAINTENANCE TEAM

Our Maintenance Team brings almost every trade to the table to help ensure our property and buildings are well maintained and cared for. If you have a trade you could share, please consider joining our Maintenance Team.

### MONEY COUNTERS

Our Money Counter teams meet in the parish office every Monday to help count and account for the collection of the previous weekend, including the main parish support and all additional funds and collections.

## PICNIC COMMITTEE

The Picnic Committee organizes and leads the effort around our largest single-event fundraiser, the annual Parish Picnic.

## TECH TEAM

This team helps to manage and maintain the technical infrastructure of our campus, from internet and phone networks and appliances, to security and camera systems, school computer labs and more.

## ADVISORY COUNCILS & BOARDS

### PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The appointed members of the Pastoral Council serve at the pleasure of the pastor, representing the various organizations and constituencies of the parish, and provide advice and input to him and his pastoral leadership team (parish staff) on the pastoral needs and opportunities within the parish.

### FINANCE COUNCIL

The members of the Finance Council serve the pastor in providing input and advice as it relates to the financial and resource stewardship operations of the parish. The members of the Finance Council also serve at the pleasure of the pastor and bring various areas of financial stewardship expertise to the table.

### SCHOOL BOARD

The appointed members of the School Board provides advice, input, and feedback to the school principal and pastor related to St. Elizabeth School.



Exodus

90 days  
to freedom.

We start Jan. 1, 2024:

[MenOfExodus.com](https://MenOfExodus.com)



**Men: Join an Exodus fraternity here at St. Elizabeth this year. Call Bret in the parish office for more info, or find us via the "Men of Granite City" Community in the Exodus App.**

This Week on  
**FORMED**



**The True Meaning of Christmas, Lukas Storyteller**

Christmas is coming and our friends Peter, Agnes, Paul and Anna expect to receive many gifts. but when they caught in one of their antics. Lukas and Noah will help them understand the true story of Christmas and how the birth of the Son of God should change our hearts.

Thanks to our Men's Club, parishioners have access to free Catholic programming on FORMED on any device.

Go to [signup.FORMED.org](http://signup.FORMED.org) and select our parish name.

**Mercy Minute**

"During this Christmas Season, I have sensed that certain souls have been praying for me. I rejoice that such spiritual union and knowledge exist already here on earth. O my Jesus, praise be to You for all this!"

-Diary 1444



**Called to Communion?**

*Journey into the fullness of the Catholic faith*

Has God been calling you - or someone you love - into full Communion with our Catholic Church, or to the Sacraments of Initiation?

Start exploring the opportunity to journey into the Church with Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion next year at Easter.

For those who are already baptized in another Christian tradition, it could be a shorter journey to entering the church at some point sooner.

For those baptized and raised Catholic but just needing to complete their Sacraments of Initiation (Confirmation & First Communion), we can work from where you are.

*Call the parish office for more information and to set up an informational discussion.*

*And join us on Thursday nights for OCIA meetings:*

**LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR FAITH**

Anyone is welcome to join us to learn more about our faith - jump in with the OCIA (those learning more about our faith to potentially be baptized and/or come into the Catholic Church) any given Thursday. Learn more, help ask great questions... Thursdays from 7-8 in the PLC Library:

- 1/4: The Sacraments - Intro & Overview
- 1/11: Baptism & Confirmation
- 1/18: The Eucharist
- 1/25: Penance & Anointing of the Sick



**JOIN US IN INDIANAPOLIS NEXT JULY**

The U.S. Bishops invite us to join them in Indianapolis next year for the first National Eucharistic Congress in 83 years. The National Eucharistic Congress will be held at Lucas Oil Stadium and Indianapolis Convention Center from July 17-21, 2024 - next summer.

It's just a short drive from us, so we're hoping to take a contingent from our parish for at least a couple of days of this generational event.

**If you have any interest at all, please contact Bret in the parish office.**

**YOUNG DISCIPLES SOCIETY**

More fun was had again last Sunday by your Young Disciples Teens. More foosball fun was had, and the group enjoyed burgers that Deacon Michael had just grilled. Then we learned about and discussed the "O Antiphons" prayed by the church in the days leading up to Christmas.



**Teens, join your peers at Young Disciples Teens at one of the upcoming opportunities, & bring a friend. Gatherings are after the 10:30 Sunday Mass, until 1 p.m., and include lunch or a snack: January 14, 21, 28.**

Questions? Call Bret in the Parish Office for more information.



## PARISH LIFE & HOSPITALITY, SERVICE

**ON THE LOOKOUT FOR A COOK**  
St. Elizabeth Catholic School needs a cook beginning in January 2024. This would be 2-4 days per week and 3-4 hours per day. If you are interested or know someone that would be, please contact the school or parish office.

### TRIVIA NIGHT!

Please join us for another fun-filled event on Saturday, January 13, 2024! Tables of 8 are \$160.

ONLY 35 tables available. Sodas and snacks will be provided. Please call Loretta Joyce in the School office at (618) 877-3300 to reserve your table or become a sponsor. All net proceeds will go to assist the school with projects and educational needs. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and trivia begins at 6:30 p.m. You must be 21 or older.

If you have never played, or haven't played in a long time, it is a blast! We look forward to another fun evening!

Thank you! - The St. E School Trivia Committee

### CHANGING THE WORLD ONE COOKIE AT A TIME

A big thank you goes out to our talented bakers, our cookie connoisseurs and our generous financial contributors. Because of you, this will be our 8th successful Cookie Sale. We hope that our cookies make your Christmas a "Little Sweeter". We are truly fortunate to belong to a parish that has a special "Gift for Giving".

Wishing you and your family the warm and wonderful Blessings of Christmas.

- Marilyn, Maggie, Carol & Bootsie



### UPDATED ADORATION SCHEDULE/LIST

Please note that we have released an updated version of the schedule for Weekly Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Please be sure to pick up a copy of the new schedule and sub list the next time you come for Adoration. Interested in helping out, please contact the parish office!

### CONGRATS TO OUR 150 CLUB WINNER!

We send out congratulations to our December 150 Club Winner: #1 Agnes Friedel Merry Christmas!

### EPIPHANY CONCERT

The Gift of the Magi, Holy Family Parish's First Annual Epiphany Concert, will be held on Sunday, January 7, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at Holy Family Church in Granite City. It is a festive celebration of music, including jubilant organ pieces, instrumental ensembles, and choral numbers. In addition to the Holy Family Parish Choir, several guest artists will be performing, including several music directors from the Alton Deanery and the Father McGivney Catholic High School Choir. There will be free admission, and we hope you can join in this joyful festival of music to celebrate our Savior's birth! Any questions can be directed to Thomas Halbbrook, thomas@halbbrook.net, Director of Liturgical Music at Holy Family.

## THIS WEEK

**Sunday, December 24**  
NO PSR (Christmas Break)  
No Vespers & Benediction

**Monday, December 25**  
Merry Christmas!  
Parish Office Closed,  
Reopens Tuesday at 8 a.m.

**Tuesday, December 26**

**Wednesday, December 27**  
7 p.m. - BINGO (Columbus Home)

**Thursday, December 28**  
9 a.m. - 9 p.m. - Adoration (Church)  
No OCIA (Break week)  
9 p.m. - Exodus Fraternity (Harmony)

**Friday, December 29**

**Saturday, December 30**

**Sunday, December 31**  
NO PSR (Christmas Break)  
No Vespers & Benediction

**Monday, January 1**  
Happy Solemnity...  
and Happy New Year!  
Parish Office Closed,  
Reopens Tuesday at 8 a.m.  
Exodus 90 Begins

### Coming Soon!

January 1 - Exodus 90 Begins!  
January 4 - School Resumes  
January 5 - Men's Club Fish Fry 4-7 p.m. (Cafeteria)  
January 9 - Papa John's Night



**K of C CORNER** Last Saturday Roy Ponce was entered into the K of C Chapter Hall of Fame. Roy has spent decades, tirelessly, supporting hundreds of fund raisers, meetings, former Grand Knight, and thousands of hours in dedication to help our council. If you see Roy give him a firm handshake and a job well done. He definitely deserves it. The children's Christmas party was a huge success starting with cakes and sausage for breakfast, coloring, a very good magician and the star of the event was, of course, Santa Clause. Thank you to all the brothers that helped with this event. To the men of the parishes, if are not yet a Knight, please consider in joining our council. All that you have to do is go to, [kofc.org/joinus](http://kofc.org/joinus), fill out the 2 page form and put in council 1098. It's as simple as that. You can also call Tom Cholevik at 618-789-0337 for further information. Merry Christmas everyone! Tom Cholevik, Grand Knight



## ST. ELIZABETH SCHOOL

### GRANITE CITY OPTIMIST STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Olive R. and Cade H were selected as the Granite City Optimist December Students of the Month. Cade and Olive are members of Mrs. Meghan Lance's third-grade class. Each honoree will receive a certificate from the Optimists, and St. Elizabeth School will receive an unrestricted donation of \$100.00 in their names.

Olive is 9 years old and is the daughter of Chelsey and Antonio. Taking art classes and spending time in the St. Elizabeth School's library are her favorite things to do. Art helps her express her feelings and create something beautiful. The library has an amazing number of books of all kinds, and a very nice librarian who makes everyone feel welcome. After school, it is all about having fun for Olive. She spends time on her tablet talking with her friends and playing the Roblox video game. She is in training all this year to improve her basketball skills so she can do her best while playing for the St. E's Royals basketball team. With Christmas coming up, Olive was asked what gift she would like Santa to give to her classroom. She thought it would be nice to receive a classroom pet and believes a cat would be the best option for her class. She says cats behave better than other types of pets. Olive has four goals for her future self to achieve. First, she would like to have a family and be a mom, then she wants to become a gymnast, an artist, and a veterinarian who specializes in pet care.

Eight-year-old Cade H is the son of Michael and Amy. Art and P.E. classes are Cade's favorite. Art speaks to his creative side, and P.E. speaks to this athletic side – he loves drawing “cool” things, and he loves to run! When Cade gets home from school, he will go outside and play with his dog and ride just about everywhere on his dirt bike. He also plays soccer and is a member of the St. E's Royals basketball team. As a basketball player, he favors any position that lets him shoot the ball at the basket. Cade thinks Santa should bring the third-grade classroom an Elf on the Shelf to keep an eye on his classmates, letting Santa know who's being naughty and who's being nice. In the future, Cade would like to become a ninja warrior and an expert in martial arts.



## CELEBRATING SUNDAYS FOR CATHOLIC FAMILIES

This is from 'Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families' by Kerri Mecke-Lazano. It includes the Gospel, a reflection, a question to ponder before AND after Mass as well as a section called Living the Word to consider how you can take the Gospel with you for the rest of the week. Please use them to help you and your family get more out of the Mass each week!

### HEARING THE WORD:

Luke 1:31-38

### REFLECTING ON THE WORD

Today's Gospel invites us to ponder the names of Jesus. First, the angel tells Mary that she will bear a son and that his name will be Jesus. The angel also reveals that this tiny child will also be called Son of the Most High and Son of God. To be given the title “Son of” signifies a very close relationship with God, for Jesus is God made flesh. Finally, the angel also tells us that Jesus comes from a long line of servants of God, descending from both the throne of David and from the house of Jacob, two other mighty names in salvation history. Jesus' identity is so rich, so big, and so mysterious that he cannot be identified by one name or image. Many names are needed for us to understand who he is.

### ON THE WAY TO MASS

The name Jesus means “one who saves.” Listen for how often we refer to Jesus' holy name or to Jesus as Savior during Mass.

### ON THE WAY HOME FROM MASS

The Holy Spirit was a part of Jesus' birth story. How has the Holy Spirit been with you since the earliest days of your life?

### LIVING THE WORD

Make a list of all the names of Jesus you can recall. Circle the name you use most often when you talk to Jesus. Underline the name you will use in your prayer this week.



### PRAYERS FOR OUR PRIESTS

The following priests of our Diocese are celebrating birthdays soon: 12/21- Rev. James Neuman Rev. David Beagles 12/23- Rev. Steven Janoski 12/29- Rev. Richard Chiola Rev. Daniel Bergbower 12/31- Rev. Charles Edwards 1/3/24- Rev. Peter Harman 1/9- Rev. John Titus 1/17- Rev. Augustin Koomson 1/18- Rev. John Renken 1/20- Rev. Steven Sotiroff 1/25- Rev. Don Roberts 1/25- Rev. David Lantz

The following are priests and deacons of our Diocese who have died. Please remember them in your daily prayers: 12/23- Rev. Clement T. Stoltz 12/24- Rev. Joseph Hoffman Rev. Victor C. Goyke 12/25- Rev. Brendan M. Keane 12/26- Rev. Lubert Riesen 12/27- Rev. Joseph Meckel 12/28- Rev. Timothy Smith Rev. Bernard H. LaBonte Rev. Richard Peradotto 12/29- Rev. Mike Carroll Rev. Joseph Postner



### PRAYERS FOR OUR MILITARY

Please reach out to the parish office and let us know of any active military persons for whom you would like the parish to pray. Thank you!

*Almighty and Eternal God, protect the members of our Armed Services as they discharge their duties. Protect them with the shield of your strength and keep them safe from all evil and harm. May the power of your love enable them to return home in safety, to all who love them. May they ever praise you for your loving care. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Nolan Yehling- USAF, Whiteman AFB; Brandon Weidner- US Coast Guard, Sault Sainte Marie, MI; Kody Presswood- Staff Sergeant, US Space Force, Colorado Springs, Colorado; Nick Glasgow- USMC, California

# STEWARDSHIP

## Our Financial Stewardship December 17, 2023

	Actual	Goal	Over/(Short)
Week 25 Regular Income	\$5,083.00		
115 Envelopes, Avg. Gift \$44.03			
One-Time Donation			
Loose	\$349.00		
Online Giving	\$1,435.00		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,847.00</b>	<b>\$9,104.00</b>	<b>(\$2,257.00)</b>
<b>YTD TOTALS</b>	<b>\$196,269.68</b>	<b>\$227,600.00</b>	<b>(\$31,330.32)</b>

Weekly and YTD Goals are calculated based on our annual fiscal year budget submitted to the Diocese and what is required to break even.

### Other Gifts:

Tuition Assistance	\$210.00
Building Repair/Mainten.	\$310.00
Special Projects	\$60.00
Votive Offering	\$10.00
Funeral Stipend	\$150.00
Camp. for Justice & Hope	\$5.00
Christmas Offering	\$60.00
Christmas Flowers	\$135.00
Catholic Children's Home	\$25.00
Retired Religious	\$115.00
Other Not Specified	\$973.00

### Parish Tithing Reporting

Our parish tithe to the Diocese to support the administration, ministries, and work of our Diocese is 10% of our regular monthly income. **November tithe: \$3,241.00**

### ONLINE GIVING OPTIONS

Consider online giving through GIVE CENTRAL. For more information, visit <https://www.givecentral.org/location/412/allevants>

### WEEKLY STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

**"Prepare the way of the Lord." - Mark 1:3**

We are all called to live a holy life. We are all called to invite others to live holy lives. Living a stewardship lifestyle, being grateful and generous with our gifts, puts us on the path to holiness and is an example for others to be holy, too. We are responsible not only for our own lives, but for the lives of others as well. How are you helping others get to Heaven?.

**FAST AND SECURE WAY TO DONATE STOCK TO YOUR PARISH OR SCHOOL**

Did you know it is easy, secure, and fast to donate gifts of stock to your parish or school?

A stock gift helps you save on capital gains and income tax. Share your joy and maximize your giving with a non-cash asset!

Ready to donate? Go to [bit.ly/ParishStock](https://bit.ly/ParishStock) or scan the QR code below





Contact Katie Price at 217-321-1121 today to learn more!

**ARE YOU 70 1/2 OR OLDER?**

If you are 70.5 or older, you can support your parish and school directly from your individual retirement account and potentially reduce your taxable income.

If you must fulfill a required minimum distribution, your donation is a compassionate way to fulfill this requirement.

Go to [bit.ly/ParishQCD](https://bit.ly/ParishQCD) to use this free and secure tool to donate from your IRA today!

*Make an impactful gift of joy!*

# SACRAMENTS

**Reconciliation:** If you have been away from the Church and the Sacrament of Reconciliation for a while, feel free to contact the parish office for guidance & materials to help you prepare to return to the Sacraments. In addition to Confessions offered from 3-4 p.m. on Saturdays, you could also schedule an individual time for Reconciliation.

**Anointing of the Sick:** Anointing of the Sick is appropriate for any upcoming surgery, prolonged illness, or in the event of emergency or danger of death. Please call the office if you or a loved one needs to be anointed.

**Infant & Child Baptism:** For children under the age of 8, please submit the forms at [stelizabethgc.org/baptism](http://stelizabethgc.org/baptism) and sign up for a Baptism Preparation class at least a month before your desired date of Baptism. For questions or emergencies, please contact the Parish Office. Baptisms are usually celebrated after the 10:30 Mass most Sundays or at 7 p.m. some Wednesdays.

**Matrimony:** To begin preparation for Holy Matrimony, please contact the parish office to set up initial appointments and preparation at least six months (recommended twelve months) before your desired date. At least an introductory interview must be completed before a date can be set.

**Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, first Holy Communion) for children 8 and over, or for adults:** Contact the parish office.

### PASTORAL CARE

**Entering the Church:** If you are new to the Catholic faith and interested in learning more about the church or about entering the church, welcome! Contact the parish office for a meeting with Father Alfred or Deacon Michael.

**Communion to the Homebound:** If you or a family member are, or are going to be, homebound, whether at home or in a care facility, please notify the parish office. Medical and care facilities are unable to inform us of their Catholic residents and patients. We would be happy to arrange to visit and bring you Holy Communion. Please contact the parish office for arrangements.

**Declarations of Nullity:** In some cases, a man or a woman desires healing through a declaration by a Church tribunal (a Catholic Church court), which does not deny that a relationship existed, but simply states that the relationship was missing something that the Church requires for a valid marriage, falling short of at least one of the essential elements required for a binding union. (Commonly called an 'annulment.')

Father Alfred, Deacon Michael, and Laura Black are available as Advocates before our diocesan tribunal for those needing assistance with declarations of nullity. Call the parish office to set up an appointment.

### BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS & ADVERTISING

Published weekly by St. Elizabeth Catholic Church & School and printed locally by Schwartzkopf Printing in Alton, Illinois. To recommend content for inclusion in the bulletin, email [bulletin@stelizabethgc.org](mailto:bulletin@stelizabethgc.org) prior to Monday at Noon. For information on bulletin advertising, contact Bret Ware in the parish office.





## My Parish Prayer



Almighty God, My parish is composed of people like me. I help make it what it is. It will be friendly if I am. It will be holy if I am. Its pews will be filled if I help fill them. It will do great work if I work. It will be prayerful if I pray. It will make generous gifts to many causes if I am a generous giver. It will bring other people into its worship if I invite and bring them. It will be a parish family of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, and of compassion, charity, and mercy if I - who make it what it is - am filled with these same qualities. Therefore, with the help of God, I will dedicate myself to the task of being all the things I want my parish to be. Bless my journey Lord God, that I might follow Jesus and build the Church for your glory. Amen.



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<p><b>St. Elizabeth Ladies Sodality</b> Meetings in the Harmony Room <b>4th Tuesday</b> 6 p.m. Snack 6:30 p.m. Meeting except June, July, &amp; December <b>ALL LADIES ARE WELCOME</b></p>	<p> <b>The Flower Emporium</b> <b>618-931-6593</b> 520 E. Chain of Rocks Rd., Granite City, IL</p>		<p><b>Exodus</b></p> <p><b>Trade your distractions for deeper peace.</b></p> <p><b>We start Jan. 1, 2024:</b></p> <p>MenOfExodus.com</p> 
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