

# *St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church*

328 Washington Ave. - Dunkirk, NY - 716-366-1750 - [www.seasdunkirkny.org](http://www.seasdunkirkny.org)



**PARISH HANDBOOK**

## Welcome



### **Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton**

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821) was a religious leader and educator, and is the first native born U.S. citizen canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. Born into an upper-class family, she married William Magee Seton in 1794. In 1797 she founded the Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children, and in 1803 she was herself left a widow with five children. After converting from Episcopalianism to Roman Catholicism in 1805, she opened a free Catholic elementary school in Baltimore, MD in 1809. In 1813 she founded the Sisters of Charity, the first U.S. religious order, and she served as its superior until her death. She is often considered the mother of the parochial system in the U.S.

### **Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish**

In 1975, because of decreasing congregations St. Mary's Church and Sacred Heart Church were combined to form a new parish at St. Mary's as St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Fr. Kenneth Menge was appointed Pastor on August 2, 1975. The first Mass of the new parish was on September 14, 1975, the day that our Patron saint was canonized a saint by Pope Paul VI. The Parish has grown into a strong and vibrant multicultural faith community celebrating its 37th year in 2012.

### **Parish Vision of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church**

We are a Roman Catholic Church seeking to be a vibrant and diverse faith community. We are nourished by the Eucharist and empowered by the Spirit to spread the message of the Gospel to the larger community through our many ministries and outreach opportunities.



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## Contact

### St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish

328 Washinton Avenue  
Dunkirk, NY 14048

716-366-1750

[www.seasdunkirkny.org](http://www.seasdunkirkny.org)

[st.elizannseton@verizon.net](mailto:st.elizannseton@verizon.net)

### Rectory Office Hours:

Mon: 1-5pm

Tue-Fri: 9-12, 1-5pm

Closed Saturday and Sunday

**Pastor:** Reverend Dennis G. Riter

[pastor@seasdunkirkny.org](mailto:pastor@seasdunkirkny.org)

**In Residence:** Reverend Walter Werbicki

**Administrative Assistant:** Mary Jo Kessler

[parish@seasdunkirkny.org](mailto:parish@seasdunkirkny.org)

**Financial Administrative Coordinator:** Daniel B. Hillman

[finances@seasdunkirkny.org](mailto:finances@seasdunkirkny.org)

**Custodian:** Dan Hayes

**Religious Education Office:** 716-366-2827

**Coordinator of Religious Education:** Wendy Kachermeyer

**St. Mary's Cemetery:** 716-366-2371

**Superintendent:** Kenneth Drozdziel

**Parish Trustees:** Zen Olow and Frank Valone

**Northern Chautauqua Catholic School:** 716-366-0630

**Principal:** Kathy Moser



## Ministries within the Parish

### **Traditional Choir** *Sunday 8 a.m.*

This is an avid group of about 8 adults who love both traditional and contemporary church music. They provide vocal support with accompaniment of the organ or occasionally electronic piano. The group normally sings at the 8:00 a.m. Sunday Liturgy with one practice session per week. They are dedicated to enhancing liturgies so that the Word can further enrich the heart. The choir welcomes anyone to join. Inquiries should be directed to Mary Filutze at 969-2057.

### **Contemporary Choir** *Saturday 5 p.m.*

This group of singers welcomes all who enjoy song or can play an instrument. They aim to complement the celebration of mass with a contemporary selection of music. Rehearsals are held prior to the Saturday evening mass at 4:15 p.m. in the side chapel. For more information please contact Gary Mrowka 366-0964 or gpmrowka@hotmail.com or Dan Smith 366-5908.

### **Contemporary Folk Choir** *Sunday 11 a.m.*

These instrumentalists and vocalists work to support the liturgical action and inspire participation at Sunday and holyday masses. They welcome others who are serious about song as prayer to join them. There are occasional rehearsals, usually before or after Mass. Contact the parish office at 366-1750 for more information.

### **Altar Server Ministry**

Those who desire to be more involved in parish liturgical life are invited to consider becoming an altar server. Training is provided as well as refresher courses. All ages are welcome including adults for funeral services. Servers need to have already made their first communion. Contact the rectory at 366-1750 for further information.

### **Mass Mobile**

When needed, this group will provide transportation for weekend liturgies. Ideally, the person requesting a ride would be served by someone in the same neighborhood. Those needing a ride must be ambulatory and

able to enter and exit their own homes as well as an automobile. Call the parish office at 366-1750 either to volunteer or to request this service.

### **Parish Fund Raising Efforts**

The parish has several activities to generate profit for church use. Among them are the Annual Chicken Barbecue, the Fall Harvest Dinner and the Split Club monthly raffle. Volunteers are always needed for the success of these enterprises. To volunteer in any capacity, simply contact the parish office at 366-1750.

### **Childrens' Liturgy of the Word**

This ministry to young children strives to present the Sunday mass readings in language that can be easily understood by them. It takes place at the same time that adults are hearing the Word at the Sunday 11 a.m. Mass. Any confirmed adult who has completed Protecting God's Children (Virtus) Training will be considered for this ministry. Call the parish office at 366-1750 for more information.

### **Anointing of the Sick**

This sacrament of anointing is intended for those with a significant illness. It is not only for a person in danger of death, but also for anyone who may be preparing for surgery, battling illness, facing hospitalization or who has become elderly and infirmed. We also celebrate the anointing as a community within mass at least once a year. In addition, the parish priests are available to celebrate the sacrament whenever there is a need, either at home or in church. Simply call the rectory (366-1750) or talk with one of the priests.

### **Ministry in Nursing Homes**

This parish serves St. Vincent's Home as well as the Chautauqua County Nursing Home. We depend on volunteers to bring wheelchair bound residents to mass, offer Holy Communion to residents, provide music at mass, lead rosary services and, in a general way, serve as an extension of the church to those who are not able to attend their home parishes. If you wish to assist, please contact Sandy Bain (St. Vincent's) at 672-6478 or Ann Budniewski (C. C. Home) at 366-1995.



## **Communion to the Sick and Homebound**

We believe that the Eucharist is the very presence of the Crucified and Risen Lord and is especially appropriate in times of trouble and illness. Certain special ministers of the Eucharist are commissioned to take Holy Communion on a regular basis to those who are unable to join us around the table of the Eucharist. If you would like to be part of this important ministry, please contact the parish office at 366-1750

## **Worship Environment Committee**

This group strives to enhance parish liturgies, both seasonal and weekly, through tasteful arrangements of plant and flower, color and light, seasonal furnishings as well as other adornments. The purpose is always to complement the liturgy. For information on how you can help, please contact Jim Palmatier at 366-5857.

## **Parish Sacristans**

A sacristan is responsible for maintaining the sanctuary and mass accessories such as the altar cloths, candles and removing dropped leaves and flowers. In general the job involves keeping the sanctuary and sacristy in good order for worship. For more information please contact James Palmatier at 366-5857.

## **Pre-Baptismal Parent Preparation**

Prior to the baptism of a child, parents should attend a special session that deals with the sacrament and your role as the primary teachers of the faith. We strongly encourage the attendance of prospective godparents at this time if at all possible. The session normally takes place around the rectory kitchen table and is guided by the pastor and a lay parishioner. During the session we discuss faith, experiences of church life and your hopes for your child's faith life. We proceed to the church to better understand this parish's celebration of the sacrament. Lay volunteers have an important role in welcoming participants and sharing their own experiences of raising a child in the faith. They also assist on the actual day of baptism by setting up for the celebration and welcoming the family of those to be initiated. If you wish to schedule a pre-baptism session, please call Fr. Dennis Riter at 366-1750. Volunteers who wish to assist at these sessions please call Becky Conti at 672-7181.

## **Marriage Preparation Course**

Those who intend to be married in the church should first contact the pastor. After an initial interview, he will direct you to an appropriate resource for a premarital preparation session. Possibilities include Perspectives on Marriage, a couple to couple dialogue in the home of trained presenters, Journey into Love, a diocesan marriage program with a team of several couples, or Cana II, a program designed for couples in which one person is widowed or divorced. For information, contact Fr. Dennis Riter at 366-1750 or pastor@seasdunkirkny.org.

## **Funeral or Memorial Arrangements**

For inquiries concerning the purchase of a grave, mausoleum space or columbarium niche for ashes, call the parish office at 366-1750. If the family has already talked with a funeral director, the funeral home will usually suggest that a representative of the family call us so that we can meet briefly to discuss planning the funeral liturgy. We want to be helpful to families at a very difficult time.

## **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**

Catholics believe that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist. The custom of praying before the Tabernacle or before the consecrated host on display for the veneration of the faithful is an extension of that belief. Each Tuesday, from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and each First Friday we encourage parishioners to spend an hour of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. This time of silent veneration and prayer takes place in the side chapel of the church just off the parking lot. If you wish to be scheduled for a regular hour of prayer, please call Rene Tarnowski at 366-4059 or the parish office (366-1750).

## **Faith Formation Classes**

**Sessions for youth**, pre-k to high school, are held at Northern Chautauqua Catholic School on Sunday mornings from 9:15a.m. until 10:45a.m. throughout the school year. We expect those being formed in the Catholic faith to attend Sunday mass. To enroll a child, contact the coordinator, Wendy Kachermeyer, at 366-2827 or reledseas@yahoo.com.

**Sessions for adults**, wishing to become Catholic or with baptism only, are arranged through the Adult Catechumenate (R.C.I.A.). For information contact Wendy Kachermeyer 366-2827 or Fr. Dennis Riter 366-1750.



### **Sacramental Formation of Youth/ Children**

A young person must faithfully attend the faith formation program for two years prior to the reception of a sacrament. Normally the child would receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the second grade, First Eucharist in the third grade and Confirmation in 10th or 11th grade. The program is coordinated by Wendy Kachermeyer at 366-2827.

### **Children's Catechumenate**

In a situation when a child has not received baptism as a baby and is 9 years old or beyond, special arrangements will be worked out for sacrament preparation. This depends on the cooperation of the parents or god-parents. Parents accept the responsibility for ensuring that the child will attend faith formation classes and that a parent or parent figure is willing to participate in their faith formation. Contact the rectory at 366-1750.

### **Youth Ministry**

The mission of this ministry is to provide an environment with shared leadership with high school youth leading to Christian maturity through service opportunities and involvement in parish and diocesan programs. Prospective volunteers for this program will be interviewed prior to completion of Protecting God's Children (Virtus) requirements. For information, please contact Peter Notaro 679-9055 or Fr. Dennis Riter 366-1750

### **Outreach to the Hispanic Community**

The parish has a considerable population of Spanish speaking parishioners. The pastor is bilingual and, assisted by lay volunteers, responds to pastoral needs. There is a weekly Sunday afternoon mass (2:30 p.m.) in Spanish. On significant feast days such as the Feast of the Three Kings (Tres Reyes) and the Feast of our Lady of Guadalupe (Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe) there are special celebrations. For information please contact Fr. Dennis Riter at 366-1750 or [pastor@seasdunkirkny.org](mailto:pastor@seasdunkirkny.org).

### **Pro-Life Committee**

The Pro-Life/Respect Life committee's goal is to underline the sacredness of life from birth to death. Activities are held throughout the year. For more information contact the parish office at 366-1750 and you will be referred to a member of the committee for more information.

### **Ushers**

This group of parishioners assists in making our liturgies orderly and friendly and are especially welcoming to those who are new to our church. They offer assistance to anyone in need, especially the elderly, disabled and small children. Ushers collect the offering, escort the gifts and attend to special needs at specified times during our celebrations. Call the parish office at 366-1750 for more information.

### **Communication Committee**

This committee seeks to coordinate the efforts of our parish ministries in making the larger area aware of what is happening at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. They work on notices to the community via the *Dunkirk Observer*, *Western New York Catholic*, the *Chautauqua Star* and electronic media. Help is always needed to try and engage other parishes in order to coordinate fund raisers, services of special interest, etc. Call the parish office at 366-1750 for more information.

## **Pastoral Council and Related Committees**

### **Parish Pastoral Council**

The Council is a policy advisory group that collaboratively assists the pastor thereby sharing in parish leadership. The members assess parish needs and propose plans for the future that are sensitive to the history, culture and lived reality of the parishioners. The membership is comprised of both elected and appointed members plus others who serve in virtue of a parish office or representing parish organizations.

### **Finance Council**

Church Law mandates that each parish have an advisory council in a consultative role to the pastor. This council is responsible for the stewardship of parish financial resources. It consists of the pastor, a representative of the pastoral council, the two lay corporate trustees plus 4 others appointed by the pastor. The finance council is responsible for developing the annual budget, monitoring expenses, ensuring that accounts are complete and accurate, reviewing the annual fiscal report and approving all major expenditures. Members are chosen based on fiscal or managerial experience.



## **Adult Education and Faith Formation**

This committee uses retreats, lectures, films, evenings of reflection, music, literature and Scripture Study to nurture faith in adults. It is part of the pastoral council and aims to help parishioners build a relationship with God and become engaged with revealed truth. The committee meets monthly and includes some subcommittee work. If you are interested in a project or wish to serve on the core committee, please call the parish office at 366-1750.

## **Building, Grounds, Cemetery Committee**

Members meet as necessary to ensure that the church is properly maintained and that, in general, the physical plant of the parish is kept in good condition. The work of this committee also extends to overseeing St. Mary's Cemetery, its graves, mausoleums and grounds, as well as its equipment. It assesses labor needs to provide for an adequate work force. Those interested in the work of this committee should contact Zen Olow at 672-2172.

## **Ministries Toward the Community at Large**

### **Cursillo Weekend**

A Cursillo is an intense short course in Christianity. It consists of a three-day retreat that helps build a deeper spirituality through a series of talks given by laypersons, clergy and religious. It includes discussion, song, mass, and prayer time. For more information, please call Rene Tarnowski 366-4059 or Tom and Sally Keppel 366-0445.

### **Parish Food Pantry**

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish sponsors a food bank for those in need. The major supplier is WNY Food Bank. This service is available each Wednesday at the side door of NCCS School (facing Washington Ave.) from 3:15 p.m. until 7:15 p.m. Those in need of food items should bring some form of identification. Traditionally the ministry was staffed by the youth of the CYO with assistance from adult advisors. Recently various other members of the parish have started to provide additional help for this important ministry. Since volunteers will have interactions with youth, all prospective adult workers will be interviewed as well as have completed the Protecting God's Children (Virtus) requirements. If interested in being a volunteer contact Pete Notaro 679-9055 or Fr. Dennis Riter 366-1750.

## **Vacation Bible School**

Several area parishes cooperate in putting on an informal summer religious learning camp during a week in the summer. Young children are invited to participate. For information about helping in the Bible School, contact Wendy Kachermeyer 366-2827. This event requires prospective adult workers to be interviewed and complete Protecting God's Children (Virtus) requirements.

## **Prison Ministry**

Retreats are held at the Gowanda and Collins Correctional Facilities. They are led by a team of volunteers from the outside community including several parishioners. The purpose of these retreats is to help Christianize the prison environment. For more information on how to become part of this ministry, please call Marsha Miller 366-4268 (re: the Collins Facility) or Gary and Rita Mrowka 366-0964 (re: the Gowanda Facility). You may also go to [www.keryx.ny.org](http://www.keryx.ny.org).

## **Emergency Diaper Pantry**

This is a parish ministry serving young families with temporary financial difficulty who need diapers. Families may call directly or may be referred through Catholic Charities and Social Services. When available, they are given a small supply of diapers and or wipes. To request help call the parish office at 366-1750.

## **Catholic Charities**

Our local office, located at 425 Main St. in Dunkirk, is part of the much larger Catholic Charities of Buffalo network serving all of Western New York. It is a very extensive provider of social services and embraces all stages of life including various counseling services for individuals, couples and families. Catholic Charities provides programs for a host of issues that people face today including a full range of services to the Spanish speaking, referrals and emergency services. The office is open Monday through Friday, 8:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. For mental health services most insurance programs are accepted but no one is denied for inability to pay. Maria Perez Cruz is the Chautauqua County coordinator and is pleased to attend to your needs. Call 366-3533 in Dunkirk or 484-9188 in Jamestown.

## Additional Helpful Resources

**Parish Website** [www.seasdunkirkny.org](http://www.seasdunkirkny.org)

The parish maintains this site making it very easy to access a host of very useful and informative features. They include: all current ministry schedules, contact information, current and past bulletins, parish news and historical archives and much more including links to other important Catholic websites. To help in this effort, please call Frank Valone at 366-5299 or [fvalone@seasdunkirkny.org](mailto:fvalone@seasdunkirkny.org).

### **Vicariate Calendar**

Occasionally a parish event is scheduled on the very day that a similar event is held in a nearby parish. To eliminate that problem, we have provided a regional activity calendar for coordinating all activities sponsored by the local Catholic Parishes, Northern Chautauqua Catholic School and Catholic Institutions. To check the calendar, simply go to [www.rcchuchnehaut.org](http://www.rcchuchnehaut.org) and click on 'regional activity calendar'. To post an activity please call Mary Jo, administrative assistant at St. Elizabeth Rectory, 366-1750 or [st.elizannseton@verizon.net](mailto:st.elizannseton@verizon.net).

### **Northern Chautauqua Catholic School**

Northern Chautauqua Catholic School opened in September 1989, the result of the regionalization of Holy Trinity School and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School. The mission of the school is "to provide a foundation for Christian living by integrating and nurturing faith through teaching and example and thereby becoming an extension of the Roman Catholic Church. Northern Chautauqua Catholic is Middle States accredited and serves all area parishes as well as interested non-Catholics. Please contact the school at 366-0630 for more information.

### **Outreach to the Disabled**

A volunteer Advocate for Persons with Disabilities is ready to reach out to individuals and families. They can help enable such persons become active participants, to the extent possible, in church life and activities. For example; through this outreach, a person unable to participate in regular sacramental classes due to a handicap, could be prepared to receive First Holy Communion. To request help or to become a volunteer, leave a message at the parish office at 366-1750.