



**St. Matthias Parish Office:**

Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm,  
168 JFK Boulevard, Somerset, NJ 08873  
732-828-1400, fax: 732-828-0866  
[www.stmatthias.net](http://www.stmatthias.net)

**Mass Schedule (in person):**

Sat - 5 PM, Sun - 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM & 12 noon  
M/T/W/Th/F at 8:00 AM  
also on our YouTube channel  
[youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ](https://youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ)

**St. Matthias School (SMS):**

170 JFK Blvd., Somerset, NJ 08873  
[www.stmatthias.info](http://www.stmatthias.info) 732-828-1402  
**School Office Hours**, Monday - Friday,  
7:45 AM - 3:30 PM

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

**Pastor:** Rev Abraham Orapankal, **Abraham**  
Fr. Lancelot McGrath, *Parochial Vicar* **lmcgrath**  
Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, *Business Administrator*  
**mpburke-grospin**

Deacon Ron Caimi, *Senior Deacon*  
Kelly Counts, *Receptionist*, **kcounts**  
Deacon Russell Demkovitz, **rdeankovitz**  
Nathalie Godet, *Website & Bulletin Coordinator*,  
**ngodet**

Leslie Guillen, *Bulletin Editor*, **lguillen**  
Amy Hanna, *Accountant/Databases*, **ahanna**  
Mike Lanyi, *Sacristan*

Sue Lenczewski, *Youth Coordinator*, **SMYLE**  
Julio Montero, *Maintenance Supervisor*  
Dolores R. Nann, *Pastoral Associate for*  
*Faith Formation*, **dnann**

Vinnie Natale, *Bookkeeper*, **vnatale**  
Silvia Nizama, *Housekeeper*

Deacon John Radvanski, **deaconjohn**  
Joan Best Seamon, *Pastoral Associate for*  
*Music Ministry*, **jseamon**

Sr. Marie Therese Sherwood, *OSF, Pastoral*  
*Assoc. for Social Concerns*, **msherwood**

**St. Matthias School** (add @stmatthiasnj.org)  
Mary Lynch, *Principal*, **mlynch**

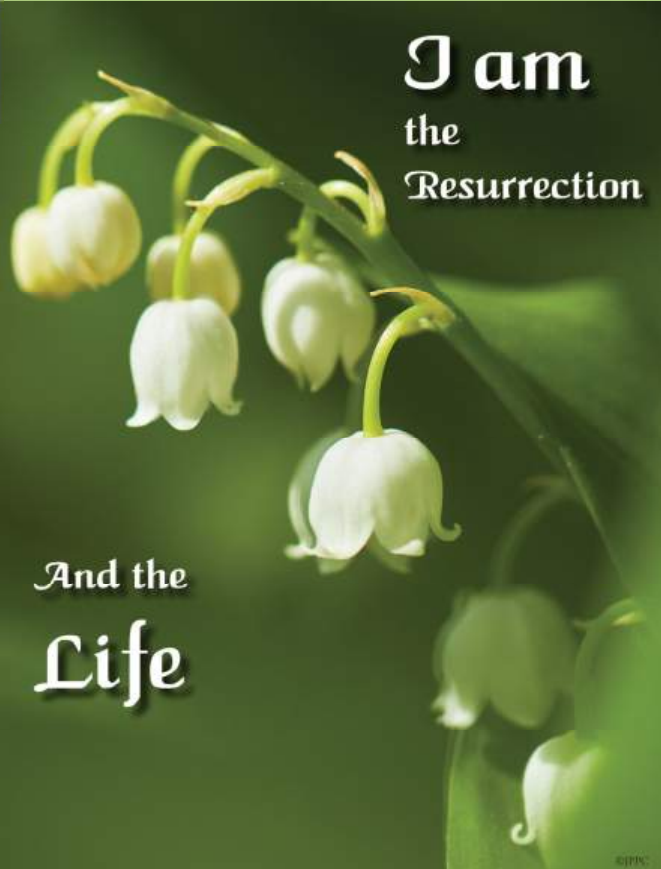
**THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS**  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2024**  
3rd Sunday of Easter



**SAVE  
THE  
DATE  
FOR THE  
SMS GOLF  
CLASSIC**

**May 21, 2024**

For details,  
scan the  
QR code  
below.



**DIOCESAN YOUTH DAY**  
**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS HIGH SCHOOL**  
**EDISON, NJ**  
**APRIL 20, 2024**

**MORE INFORMATION ON PAGE 10**

**ADORATION**  
OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT



**PLEASE COME JOIN THE MANY WHO SPEND SOME  
QUIET TIME WITH THE  
EUCHARISTIC LORD.  
OUR NEXT ADORATION WILL BE  
MONDAY EVENING, APRIL 15, 2024  
FROM 6 PM TO 8 PM.**

Masses are also livestreamed on our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ](https://youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ)

The Church is open for individual prayer  
 Mon-Fri: 7:30 am to dusk, Sat: 9 am to 6pm, and  
 Sun: 7:30 am to 1 pm, unless another service is taking place.

**Sunday, Apr 14, 2024** 3rd Sunday of Easter  
 8:00AM Mass Church  
 10:00AM Mass –Sign Language Interpreter Church  
 12:00PM Mass Church

**Monday, Apr 15, 2024** St. Paternus, Bishop  
 8:00AM Mass Church  
 6:00PM Eucharist Adoration Church

**Tuesday, Apr 16, 2024** St. Bernadette Sonbirous, Received Marian Apparitions  
 8:00AM Mass Church  
 6:30PM SMS: SAC Mtg. de Porres Rm  
 7:30PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal Church

**Wednesday, Apr 17, 2024** St. Anicetus, Pope  
 8:00AM Mass, St. Joseph Novena Church  
 7:30PM Folk Group Rehearsal Church

**Thursday, Apr 18, 2024** St. Galdino Della Sala, Archbishop of Milan  
 8:00AM Mass Church  
 10:00AM Prayer Shawl Ministry Ruiz Rm  
 3:30PM Children's Choir Rehearsal gr. 3&4 Church  
 4:00PM Children's Choir Rehearsal gr. 5-8 Church  
 7:30PM Sunday 10AM Choir Rehearsal Church

**Friday, Apr 19, 2024** St. Leo IX, Pope  
 8:00AM Mass Church  
 6:00PM Sight & Sound Team Mtg. de Porres Rm

**Saturday, Apr 20, 2024** St. Agnes of Montepulciano, Nun  
**Bus Trip to Sight & Sound: Daniel**  
 9:30AM Secular Franciscans Mtg. de Porres Rm  
 3:30PM Reconciliation Church  
 5:00PM Vigil Mass Church

**Sunday, Apr 21, 2024** 4th Sunday of Easter  
 8:00AM Mass Church  
 9:30AM SMS: HSA Spring Craft Fair Cafeteria  
 10:00AM Mass Church  
 12:00PM Mass Church



**Bulletin Article Requests:**

If you would like to send information to be included in our bulletin, please email it to [bulletin@stmatthias.net](mailto:bulletin@stmatthias.net) by 9 AM, MONDAY, 5 business days before the needed bulletin date (earlier for holiday weekends). Approved content is published on a space-available basis.



Dear Friends,

We are now pretty familiar with the tradition of having a number of adults receiving one or more of the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation) through our RCIA (or OCIA, the new name that the Bishops have proposed). We had a total of eleven people receiving these at the Easter Vigil this year: Jason Olmedo-Hernandez, Phyllis Carbone, Gigi Fortuna-Clase, Beverly Gilliam, Norvin Gilliam, Maxwell Lumax, Claudia Roque, Chelsea Lopez, Amanda Fortuna Clase, Josh Lumax and Alexis Lumax. We congratulate these neophytes. Now, that is a word we don't hear often. A "neophyte" (its Greek root means the newly planted) is a term used for those who have been initiated as full members of a religion like Christianity or Judaism or one who has joined a religious order. In our context, a neophyte is one who has been incorporated into the fullness of the life of the Church as the Body of Christ. Now these new members enter into the final phase of the RCIA process which is known as Mystagogy, which simply means learning about the mysteries. The RCIA instruction no.244 says: *"This is a time for the community and the neophytes together to grow in deepening their grasp of the paschal mystery and in making it part of their lives through meditation on the Gospel, sharing in the Eucharist, and doing the works of charity. ...."*

What is interesting is that the Church's focus of the mystagogy is the Community into which these new members have been incorporated! It means that mystagogy is a time for us all to grow in understanding the paschal mystery. The entire purpose of the RCIA process is to lead the participants into a relationship of communion and intimacy with Jesus. As the community of St. Matthias, we are an important part of mystagogy.

Our RCIA process is coordinated by Anne-Marie Francis and Mary Frances Reavey with their teammates Gondee Tibay, Mercy Ekwere, Dee Christmas and Carmen Calvimontes. They have been doing an amazing job every year as they guide these men and women in the ways of our faith. I wish to thank them sincerely for rising up to the challenges and carrying out this ministry of faith formation and evangelization of those who wish to be part of the community of faith in Jesus Christ. They are true models and torchbearers of faith.

Let us remember that we all are called to be models and torchbearers of Christian witness and experience to the neophytes as well as to all those we meet in our daily living. The Sunday Mass is key to a successful mystagogy because the three ways mentioned above – meditation on the Gospel and sharing in the Eucharist which leads us to the works of charity – are meant for the whole community's full, conscious and active participation.

I have a request: you may know some adults who may not be baptized, or who are baptized but have not received Communion or Confirmation. Why not speak to them about receiving these Sacraments of Initiation? Why not invite them to join our next RCIA class? That is another sign of you becoming a witness to Jesus.

Your brother in Christ,  
 Fr. Abraham Orapankal

## Readings for the Week

**Monday** Acts 6:8-15 Ps 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30 Jn 6:22-29

**Tuesday** Acts 7:51-8:1a Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 7b and 8a, 17 and 21ab Jn 6:30-35

**Wednesday** Acts 8:1b-8 Ps 66:1-3a, 4-5, 6-7a Jn 6:35-40

**Thursday** Acts 8:26-40 Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20 Jn 6:44-51

**Friday** Acts 9:1-20 Ps 117:1bc, 2 Jn 6:52-59

**Saturday** Acts 9:31-42 Ps 116:12-13, 14-15, 16-17 Jn 6:60-69

**Sunday** Acts 4:8-12 Ps 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28, 29 1 Jn 3:1-2 Jn 10:11-18

## Pray for those getting Married

Amanda Rosa & Gaetano Fattorusso  
April 28, 2024

## Mass Intentions for the Week

|                            |         |   |
|----------------------------|---------|---|
| <b>Saturday, April 13</b>  | 5:00PM  | Mary Ann Vetter,<br>by The Baptismal Bib Ministry |
| <b>Sunday, April 14</b>    | 8:00AM  | Mary Ann Vetter, by The Sharing Group             |
|                            | 10:00AM | Angela Frigiola, by Irene Nowakowski              |
|                            | 12:00PM | Intention of Parishioners                         |
| <b>Monday, April 15</b>    | 8:00AM  | Enid Slutter, by Linda & Al Misuraca              |
| <b>Tuesday, April 16</b>   | 8:00AM  | Rohinton F. Cama, by Barbara & family             |
| <b>Wednesday, April 17</b> | 8:00AM  | Joan Michalak,<br>by Holy Spirit Prayer Group     |
| <b>Thursday, April 18</b>  | 8:00AM  | Emma Deutsch, by The Deutsch Family               |
| <b>Friday, April 19</b>    | 8:00AM  | Jose Lawas, by Agnes                              |
| <b>Saturday, April 20</b>  | 5:00PM  | Intention of Parishioners                         |
| <b>Sunday, April 21</b>    | 8:00AM  | Ellin Ossandon, by the Sharing Group              |
|                            | 10:00AM | Albert Larangeira,<br>By Linda Piscadlo & family  |
|                            | 12:00PM | Beth Calimano, by The Family                      |

## Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office or **email Kelly Counts** at [kcunts@stmatthias.net](mailto:kcunts@stmatthias.net) to add the name to this list. Names will be listed in the bulletin for **6 weeks**. Please let us know if this time period needs to be extended. We want to know how you are doing and want to offer you the support of our prayers.

**New people on our prayer list are noted in blue.**

|                                |                     |                        |                       |   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Beth & Jay Adams               | Vivian Dong         | Amanda Isele           | Alexandra Marquez     | Maria Schwenzer   |
| Rosario Anglo                  | Sanora Doyen        | Baby Elaine Isele      | Christine Matthews    | Amy Shepp   |
| Kristin Baio                   | Andrea Dubuisson    | Nick Isele             | Ann McElwee           | Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF  |
| Olga Marie Bando               | Dennis Enright      | Renée Jolly            | Jessica Marie Merrick | Sr. Bernadine Marie Stemnock  |
| Carolyn Banghart               | Hattie Evans        | Donna Kahora           | Gail Miranda          | Catherine Steele  |
| Brandon Barbarite              | Heinley Gaspard     | Betsy Kondrat          | Menchie Molano-Sotelo | Anita Vance   |
| Ghislaine Baron                | Claudia Gemgnani    | Kathy Langenbacher     | Danny Ongchango       | Eileen Weber  |
| Helen Bell                     | Emma Gergely        | <b>Rose Larangeira</b> | Robert Pellegrino     | Nancy Whelan  |
| Samantha Bellouny              | Claude Godet        | Armando D. Liban       | Robert Pietrowiak     | Theresa Sau-Ling Yung   |
| Carmen Bender                  | Marie Godet         | Mary Lou Litrakis      | Randolff Pinard       | Ginette Zamor   |
| Mary Bostrom                   | Shelly Greene       | John Litrakis          | Valerie Polci         | Anne Zando  |
| Tara Capatosto                 | Linda Hartong       | Denis Loboda           | Kim Price             |   |
| Elizabeth Card                 | Jeff Hentz          | Aries Magali           | Denise Pultro         | <b>And for all who are ill, homebound, elderly, in nursing care, or living with chronic illness, we pray.</b> |
| <b>Rustico Castellano, Jr.</b> | Sloopy & PJ Hoffman | Kenneth & Kelly Magat  | Gabriel Rivera        |   |
| Kyle Davidson                  | Gene Horan          | Al Maglio              | Arina Robinson        |   |
| Lisa DeFeo                     | Marilyn Horvath     | Susan, King & Tosh     | Bob Rotz              |   |
| Zenon DeGuzman                 | Jerry & Donna Hucul | Manansala              |                       |   |

## Pray for those who have died...

— “His mercy endures forever.” Chronicles

## Reflect



### Smile with Your Family



Two Landrovers almost collided at an African cross roads. One driver stuck his head out his window and shouted "Where are you going, for heavens sake?" Billy Graham was in the other landrover and he stuck his head out of the window and smilingly called back "I go everywhere for Heavens sake." 😊

A Pastor was on his way back to the parish from an extended out-of-state trip. Eager to be home before dark, he was traveling well over the speed limit and ended up being pulled over by a state trooper. The officer was not impressed by his explanation or his collar and asked, "Do you want me to give you a little sermon about your driving, Pastor?" "Oh, skip the sermon," said the flustered pastor, "and just take up the collection." 😊

Pastor Andrews' wife called and asked him to pick up some organic kale for that night's dinner on his way home. He arrived at the store and began to search all over for organic kale before finally asking the produce clerk where he might find some. The young clerk seemed confused by the pastor's request, so the Pastor said: "Look, this kale is for my wife. All I need to know is whether it's been sprayed with poisonous chemicals." The visibly horrified clerk replied, "No, Reverend, you will have to do that yourself." 😊

A Recently Spotted Bumper Sticker: "God give me patience....And make it quick!" 😊

Where does a waitress with only one leg work? IHOP 😊

What gets wetter the more it dries? A towel. 😊



### Parenting Tune-Up

Grandparents have access to history that can thrill and surprise their grandchildren. They can tell stories about how life used to be and shed some light on how the child's parent was a generation ago. They are the keepers of tradition. Don't lose the wisdom. Connect.

### Marriage Tune-Up

*"Whoever fails to love does not know God, because God is love." (1 John 4:8)*



Do you know anyone who claims to love God yet does not act lovingly toward a family member, a neighbor, creation? Don't let it be you.

## A SCIENTIST WHO PRAYED THE ROSARY!



A train was racing for Paris. In one of its compartments two men sat opposite each other. The first was a young medical research student who was bored by the long journey. The other was an old man reciting his rosary with closed eyes. The young researcher began to ridicule the old man for his superstitious beliefs. He then went on to tell of the wonders of medical science. The old man just nodded, smiled and continued his prayer in spite of the humiliating comments of his fellow passenger. When they reached the Paris station, the old man enquired where the youngster was going. The young man proudly announced that he was going to attend a lecture by the world-famous scientist, Louis Pasteur. The old man took out a visiting card from his pocket, gave it to the young man and bid him farewell. The card read: "Dr. Louis Pasteur, Academy of Science, Paris."

**Pride and prejudice often blur our vision and occasionally blind us to reality, leading us to wrong judgments as it happened to the apostles in today's Gospel. The same Jesus who, in the Upper Room, prepared his disciples for their preaching and witnessing mission, is present with us in the Eucharistic celebration. He invites us to share in the "Liturgy of the Word of God" and in "The Liturgy of Bread and Wine." In the first part of the Mass, Jesus speaks to us through the "Word of God." In the second part, He becomes our spiritual food and drink. Thus, today's Gospel scene is repeated every Sunday on our parish altars. Like the early disciples, we come together to repent of our sins, express our thanks for the blessings we have received, listen to God's words and offer ourselves to God on the altar along with our gifts of bread and wine. We also share in the spiritual food Jesus supplies, and we are sent to share his message with the entire world.**



## Bill's Last Gift, Best Gift

**"... a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." Luke 24: 35-48**

Thirteen years ago, Tracy Grant's husband of 19 years was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. Tracy became Bill's faithful caregiver. Over the course of seven months, her husband Bill "went from beating me silly at tennis to needing my help to go to the bathroom." It was a difficult, stressful and exhausting time, but Tracy, a deputy managing editor at The Washington Post, writes that those seven months were the time in her life when she felt "most alive." "I was 42 years old. I had become a respected professional, a responsible and, I hope, loving parent. But I had to discover the reason I was on this earth. During those seven months, I came to understand that whatever else I did in my life, nothing mattered more.

"I discovered that the petty grievances of an irksome coworker, a child with the sniffles, or a flat tire pales in comparison with the beauty of spontaneous laughter, the night sky, the smells of a bakery. There were moments of joy, laughter, and tenderness everyday - if I was willing to look hard enough. I found I could train myself to set my internal barometer to be more compassionate than callous. "In the days following Bill's diagnosis and brain surgery, being his caregiver required me to be the best reporter I knew how to be. I found clinical trials and talked to

oncologists in Texas, Pennsylvania, and New York. It gave me a sense of purpose, and it gave Bill comfort - and a few chuckles - to overhear me reading the riot act to some insurance rep who'd told me a treatment wouldn't be covered."

And now, 13 years after Bill's death, Tracy looks at those last seven months with gratitude. "... I haven't started a foundation to cure cancer. I haven't left the news business to get a medical degree. I work. I try to be there for my sons. I will never again have that high a purpose. But every day, I try again to be the person I became during those seven months. I try to be a little less judgmental, a little more forgiving and generous, a little more grateful for the small moments in my life. I am a better person for having been Bill's caregiver. It was his last, best give to me."

**Wherever and whenever true love is present, resurrection is experienced. Tracy experiences that sense of resurrection in her caring for her husband - and it changes her in profound and beautiful ways. And, whether she realizes it or not, her loving generosity is a "witness" to the possibilities for such resurrection in her life and the lives of those she loves. In the compassion and peace we are able extend to those we love and who love us, we become "flesh and bone" signs of the hope and grace of Easter along the Emmaus roads we all walk.**

### "That's it!"



There is a beautiful love story. It concerns the love of Paul Tournier, one of the world's most beloved and respected Christian doctors, for his wife Nelly. In one of his books, Tournier describes how he and Nelly were able to talk about death after her first serious bout with coronary thrombosis while they were in Greece. She knew how gravely ill she was and that a second attack could leave her severely handicapped or could even be fatal. Their last month together was a time of intimate sharing. On the last day she said to him, "Perhaps it would have been better if I had died of my heart attack a month ago."

Tournier responded, "And yet my Greek colleagues have done a good job. They saved your life. You are glad of that." "Yes, of course," she said, "if I can get back to Geneva and see my children and grandchildren." She was silent for a moment, and then added, "But if I had died, I should be in Heaven now, and I should be meeting your parents." Tournier was touched by this. He writes, "You see, she also married my expectation of Heaven!" He replied to her, "Well, when you arrive in Heaven, my parents will thank you for having been the wife that you have been for their son." It was to be Tournier's last words to her. A moment later she put her hand on her heart and exclaimed, "That's it!" He asked, "Are you sure?" She answered "Yes." And she was in Heaven. [Paul Tournier, *A Listening Ear* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 5328).] The world simply cannot deal with that kind of expectation. Without the Easter Faith not only death but life itself is ultimately meaningless. What value is there in love that ends beside a grave?



## The Wounds of Love

There was a man who was very attached to his father, who had been a labourer all his life. When the father died the son was grief-stricken. As he stood quietly gazing down into the coffin in which he was laid out, he was particularly struck by his father's hands.

Even small things can reveal the essence of a person's life. Later he said: 'I will never forget those magnificently weathered old hands. They told the story of a countryman's life in the eloquent language of wrinkles, veins, old scars and new. My father's hands always bore some fresh scratch or cut as adornment, the result of his latest tangle with a scrap of wire, a rusted pipe, a stubborn root. In death they did not disappoint even in that small and valuable particular. 'It is not given to sons to know everything about their fathers, but I have those hands in my memory to supply evidence of the obligations he met, the sweat he gave, the honest deeds he performed. By looking at those hands you could read a better part of the old man's heart.' Jesus said to the apostles: 'Look at my hands and feet ... Touch me and see for yourselves...' He said the same thing to Thomas: 'See my wounded hands and side. Cease doubting and believe.'

***We need to relive the "Upper Room Experience" in the Holy Mass: The same Jesus who, in the Upper Room, prepared his disciples for their preaching and witnessing mission, is present with us in the Eucharistic celebration. He invites us to share in the "Liturgy of the Word of God" and in "The Liturgy of Bread and Wine." In the first part of the Mass, Jesus speaks to us through the "Word of God." In the second part, He becomes our spiritual food and drink. Thus, today's Gospel scene is repeated every Sunday on our parish altars. Like the early disciples, we come together to repent of our sins, express our thanks for the blessings we have received, listen to God's words and offer ourselves to God on the altar along with our gifts of bread and wine. We also share in the spiritual food Jesus supplies, and we are sent to share his message with the entire world.***

### Fresh fish is sold here

To sell fish, a fisherman painted a signboard reading, "Fresh Fish is Sold Here." To disturb business, his foe said, "You don't sell stale fish, do you? So, why write 'fresh?'" Agreeing the fisherman painted a new signboard with just: "fish is Sold Here." Once again, his foe suggested, "Obviously, you're selling fish here, not there!" Nodding his agreement, the fisherman went back and returned with a new signboard "Fish is Sold." Now, the foe appeared a third time and said, "Anybody with eyes will see that you're selling fish, not meat! Wipe off the word 'fish'! The gullible fisherman was so confused that he wanted to make still another signboard,

forgetting that he was selling fish! If there is something one really believes in beyond doubt, then one must cling to that truth even if people offer advice, suggestions and even threats to change one's beliefs. I'd imagine predicament as the fisherman of our story as they sought to comprehend Jesus' life-death-resurrection, and more importantly, to proclaim Him. Today's readings help us to trace out their 'faith-journey' from doubt to faith, from dread to fearlessness.

***Jesus needs us as witnesses to continue his mission. Jesus needs Spirit-filled followers to be his eyes, ears, hands and feet so that we may bear witness to his love, mercy and forgiveness. The Church badly needs dedicated witnesses: priests, deacons, Brothers, Sisters, parents, teachers, doctors, and nurses – all of us. The essence of bearing witness is to testify by our lives that the power of the risen Jesus has touched and transformed us. In other words, Jesus is to speak to other people through us. In Calcutta, a dying old woman with her head in the lap of Mother Teresa, looked at her for a long time, and, in a feeble voice, asked: "Are you the God Jesus who loves the poor and the sick?"***

### Exegetical note on the Resurrection appearance Luke 24:35-48

This apparition of Jesus took place on Easter evening, after Jesus had appeared to the two disciples of Emmaus. The two disciples to whom Our Lord appeared on their way to Emmaus returned hurriedly to Jerusalem to report the glad news that they had met him in the person of the stranger who had explained to them the Sacred Scriptures and whom they had recognized in the breaking of the bread. They discovered that the apostles were convinced, by that time, of the resurrection of Jesus because Simon also had seen him. While they were discussing these things Jesus appeared in their midst, surprising and terrifying them. This story was told and retold and recorded by Luke for at least three reasons:

- (1) Jesus' death and Resurrection fit God's purpose as revealed in Scripture;
- (2) the risen Jesus is present in the breaking of bread; and
- (3) the risen Jesus is also physically absent from the disciples.

***By inviting his apostles to look closely at him and touch him, Jesus removed any fear that they were seeing a ghost. He instilled confidence in them that He loved them by greeting them: "peace be with you." By eating a piece of fish before their eyes, he convinced them that they were not dreaming or having a mere vision or hallucination. Jesus wanted them to be authentic witnesses to the reality of his life as their risen Lord with his glorified soul and body.***

## From Our Pastoral Staff



### “You are Witnesses of these Things.”



Curious Q ... Why didn't the sun go to college? ... Because it already had a million degrees! You just witnessed my Dad joke! I'm writing this article from San Antonio, on Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, anticipating the Eclipse – despite the prediction of cloudy skies! Most Texans are saying because we're in an area of Totality, we'll still need our protective eclipse glasses and will partially see the sun completely eclipsed by the moon. Out of state visitors are already expressing their disappointment they've traveled from New Jersey. If they don't see the eclipse, it'll ruin their day! Another said if they can't see it, they'll doubt it's real. Sound familiar? Many people said the same about Jesus after his resurrection.

What are you a witness to? Are you witnessing Good News or bad news? Are you witnessing the love and grace of God? Or are you witnessing to maintain the status quo of power and privilege? To be a witness means to speak up especially when no one else is talking and ignoring a known injustice – even though we know it's present but not readily visible on a given day.

Our parish youth **smylewithbraces** leadership team (**St. Matthias Youth Living Evangelization - Bringing and Raising Awareness to Combat Existing Stigmas**), witnessed that nothing was being proactively done in our local community about the unspoken need for maintaining mental health, and how stigmas can eclipse someone to remain in darkness. They had chosen to take action and created their first successful Self-Care Fair! I was privileged to be a witness to their amazing efforts, and our many visitors who came to experience many key learnings about self-care, and take home resources to address the stigmas that cloud people's ability to bravely see and respond to mental health issues. We had many people witness by signing and joining the movement to end stigma and discrimination in Somerset County by signing the pledge. (<https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/human-services/stigma-free/take-the-pledge>)

I also witnessed the generosity of many vendors and providers from our community who donated food, supplies, resources, giveaways and their personal time to be present for over 6 hours and make a difference. On behalf of the leadership team, I want to thank the following who had donated food to feed our 16 providers and 50 volunteers - **Piazza Orsillo, Jersey Mike's Subs, Dunkin', Starbucks, and Bagel Market & Deli**. The following donated giveaways or raffle prizes - **Operation Code Red, Freedom From Fear, Fitness Factory, Crunch Fitness, Raritan Valley Community College, Central Jersey Family Health Consortium, NJ Harm Reduction Coalition, Center for Therapy & Counseling Services, RWJ Barnabas Health, and St. Peter's University Hospital Community Service**. The following donated their time, talent, and treasure - **Mary Guardino, Sue Lenczewski, Dr. Florence Francis**. We also were blessed by youth and mentors from **St. Joseph's – Bound Brook - Valeria Morales, Holy Family – New Brunswick - Jennifer Herrera, and St. Augustine's – Kendall Park - Annie & Ric Gonzalez**. And a shout-out to our pet therapy dogs - Tank, Peaches, and Lily. Thank you if you either attended the event, or supported us behind the scenes with your prayers! You are all shining disciples - although sometimes eclipsed - you belong here because you belong to Christ.

Heidi Osborne, executive director of Our Lady of the Pines Retreat Center in Ohio, told the National Catholic Register, **“There's nothing we have found that specifically ties an eclipse to spirituality. However, if you think about it, there are a lot of metaphors between darkness and light.” She added that eclipses often signify beginnings or endings and are times to bring people together, reminding them of their interconnectedness with each other and with God.”**

Our faith is much more than the belief that Jesus is Risen. We are called by faith to live what we believe – even while we have doubts, questions, fears – or finding ourselves under cloudy skies! To live by faith what we believe, our lives should be interconnected because of Resurrection. For many of us, that might mean changing how we live to widen our circles to help those oppressed to truly and safely belong in our society. And yes, it can be scary to experience a new perspective using a different lens. Authentically following Jesus can raise doubts and fears – especially if you are comfortable and like how your life is. If you have unchecked privilege, change can be scary and troublesome when it is being checked. This is frightening for many people! Living Resurrection means death is not the final end. Resurrection loosens the chokehold of death because death is not the final answer. This can be a reassuring thought because in our culture it's been the fear of death that's been used to oppress and threaten people to behave a certain way.

Yes - you too even during an eclipse - can be a **witness of these things** - the transformative power of the Resurrection. Peace be with you!

Deacon John

## Learn



### CAMP INVENTION AT ST. MATTHIAS SCHOOL!

June 17-21, 2024

Thanks to rave reviews from campers, parents, and teachers, we're bringing **Camp Invention** back for its 7th year at St. Matthias School!



Camp Invention®

Even better, our 2024 program is full of all-new, hands-on STEM fun!

Don't miss out—register students going into grades Kindergarten - 6th grade at [invent.org/mylocalcamp](https://invent.org/mylocalcamp) until camp starts. Register by **March 27<sup>th</sup>** using **FUN25** to **save \$25** or by **May 16<sup>th</sup>** using **FUN15** to **save \$15!** If you have multiple children use **SIBLOVE30** to **save \$30** for 2 siblings and **SIBLOVE40** to **save \$40** for 3 or more siblings!

Contact Camp Director, **Christine Taylor** at [ctaylor@stmatthiasnj.org](mailto:ctaylor@stmatthiasnj.org) for any questions.

**Camp Week: June 17-21, 2024**

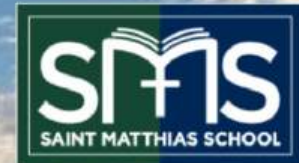
For students 7th grade to 9th grade, you can register as Leaders-in-Training to help support the teachers at a discounted registration fee and for students 10th grade and up you can get 40 volunteer hours by registering and helping that week!

## 2024 SMS Golf Classic

Tuesday May 21, 2024

Neshanic Valley Golf Course

Neshanic Station, NJ



EARTH DAY 2024  
PLANET VS. PLASTICS  
MAKING A MATERIAL DIFFERENCE  
IN A MATERIAL WORLD

On April 18<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM there will be a free webinar with Catholic High School students, talking about their experiences and involvement with Climate Change and the Care of Our Common Home. This is sponsored by RENEW International.

The theme for EARTH Day 2024 is Plastics vs. Planet. If you'd like to attend this free webinar and learn why plastics are problematic visit <https://pages.renewintl.org/earth-day-webinar-2024>. In *Laudato Si'* and *Laudate Deum* Pope Francis reminds us clearly, one can not call oneself Christian and not care for our Common Home, EARTH. If you have questions contact Sister Honora at: [hnoilty@amityvilleop.org](mailto:hnoilty@amityvilleop.org)



### National Eucharistic Congress

This is a very unique event, to be held in Indianapolis in July.

Details and registration for the event can be found at

<https://diometuchen.org/nec2024>.

## AN INVITATION TO ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS, WRITERS, GRAPHIC DESIGNERS, AND ARTISTS

The Diocese of Metuchen extends an invitation to all photographers, writers, and graphic artists residing within the Diocese of Metuchen to participate in the upcoming showcase celebrating World Communications Day 2024.

This year's theme, inspired by the Holy Father, Pope Francis, revolves around "Artificial Intelligence and Wisdom of the Heart: For a Fully Human Communication." **Application deadline is April 30, 2024.** Application and submission guidelines are available at [www.diometuchen.org/wcdshowcase](http://www.diometuchen.org/wcdshowcase)



# Give (and Receive!)

| Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024 |             |               |                                   |
|---|-------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Current Month   | In-Pew/Mail | Parish Giving | Weekly Total                      |
| Week 41 - April 7, 2024   | \$8,123.50  | \$22,957.00   | \$31,080.50                       |
| Week 42 - April 14, 2024  |             |               | \$0.00                            |
| Week 43 - April 21, 2024  |             |               | \$0.00                            |
| Week 44 - April 28, 2024  |             |               | \$0.00                            |
|   |             |               | <b>Month-to-date Total</b>        |
|   |             |               | \$31,080.50                       |
|   |             |               | <b>Current Year-to-date Total</b> |
|   |             |               | \$2,410,398.93                    |

## Stewardship Reflection April 14 2024 3rd Sunday of Easter

*“Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ But they were startled and frightened...” - Luke 24:36-37*

Throughout the day we have many opportunities to “see the face of Jesus” in others and to “be the face of Jesus” to others. Do we take that opportunity to provide “peace” to those we encounter or are we afraid of what others will think of us and do nothing? Pray for the strength and courage to live a “God-centered” life and not a “self-centered” life.

## Reflexiónese - 14 de abril de 2024 - 3<sup>er</sup> Domingo de Pascua

*“Jesús se presentó en medio de ellos y les dijo: “la Paz sea con ustedes”, pero estaban atónitos y asustados...” - Lucas 24:36-37*

Durante el día tenemos muchas oportunidades para “ver el rostro de Jesús” en otras personas y de “ser el rostro de Jesús” para otros. ¿Tomamos la oportunidad de proveer “paz” a los que nos encontramos, o estamos temerosos de lo que otros pensarán de nosotros y no hacemos nada? Rece para tener la fortaleza y el coraje de vivir una vida “centrada en Dios” y no una vida “centrada en sí mismo”.

# Connect



## FAMILY MATTERS

**JOIN US AS WE EMPOWER CATHOLIC PARENTS TO LIVE OUT THE MISSION**

Family Matters is a new initiative of the Center for FaithJustice in partnership with RENEW International. It is a process for nurturing discipleship among parents and caregivers as they enrich their own faith lives to more vibrantly pass on Catholic social tradition to their children.

**St. Matthias will be piloting this program for families/children this year! Join us!**



### Parents and families will have access to:

- Online resources
- In-person gatherings at their parish
- Home based activities
- Mentorship from other Catholic parents in your parish
- Access to Spiritual Direction
- Retreats and Service opportunities with other families

**Interested in joining? We will begin by hosting listening sessions for interested parents and families this spring!**

Sign up for the listening session.

Email Dee Nann: [dnann@stmatthias.net](mailto:dnann@stmatthias.net)

With you on the journey!

Center for FaithJustice, RENEW International

# Connecting to Our Local Community



## SAVE-THE-DATE

### MULTICULTURAL MASS & FAIR

April 20, 2024



St. Francis of Assisi Cathedral, Metuchen

Details to follow

To contact the Office of Multicultural Ministries: Sr. Miriam Perez, Coordinator for Multicultural Ministries 732-529-7933 or [mperez@diometuchen.org](mailto:mperez@diometuchen.org)



## DIOCESAN YOUTH DAY

St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Edison

April 20th, 2024 Check-In Begins at 10:30am. The day will run from 11am-5pm.

The Diocese of Metuchen's Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry will run our Diocesan Youth Day at St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Edison, NJ on Saturday, April 20th, 2024. Throughout the course of this day, 8th-12th grade teens will come together to enter into the sacrament of the Mass, have fun with one another, hear talks from Chika Anyanwu, have the opportunity for Adoration and Confession, enjoy live music, good food, and more!

To register please visit: <https://www.diometuchen.org/diocesan-youth-day>



## THE SPIRITUALITY AND NEUROSCIENCE OF SELF-COMPASSION

Saturday, April 20

Our retreat day will draw upon recent findings in neuroscience and psychology. Far from being self-centered or selfish, when we generate deeper care for ourselves, we enhance our ability to care for others. Lunch is included.

**Presenter: Anne Kertz Kernion Saturday, April 20 from 9am-4pm at the House of Prayer and on Zoom \$50-\$60** as you are able. Information and Registration for all Mount Saint Mary House of Prayer offerings can be found on our website: [www.msmhope.org](http://www.msmhope.org). Call us at 908-753-2091 or email us at [msmhope@msmhope.org](mailto:msmhope@msmhope.org).



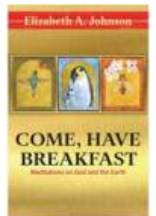
## Come, Have Breakfast: Meditations on God and Earth

A Virtual Evening with Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ  
Sister of St. Joseph Center for Spirituality, 21 Main Ave., Ocean Grove, NJ 07756

Tuesday, April 23, 2024 • 6:30 - 8:00 PM

Virtual Participation Donation: \$20

To register please email S. Joannie Cassidy at [jlc.cassidy@gmail.com](mailto:jlc.cassidy@gmail.com) or call (732) 898-9981.



## Parish Leadership

|  |   |   |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Parish Pastoral Council:</b><br><br><b>Co-Chairs:</b><br>Frank Rees<br><a href="mailto:Frees814@gmail.com">Frees814@gmail.com</a><br><br>Marilyn Wegg<br><a href="mailto:mcw-wam@comcast.net">mcw-wam@comcast.net</a> | <b>Co-Secretaries:</b><br>Stephen Busono<br><a href="mailto:sbusono@gmail.com">sbusono@gmail.com</a><br><br>Bill Isele<br><a href="mailto:t33sm@aol.com">t33sm@aol.com</a><br><br>Al Drabnis<br>Didi Molano | Sheila Tartaglia<br><br>Fr. Lancelot McGrath,<br>Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio<br><br><b>Trustees:</b><br>Pearl Scott<br>Marge Richards | <b>Parish Finance Council:</b><br><br>Kester Hector, Chair<br><b>Finance Council</b><br><a href="mailto:@stmatthias.net">@stmatthias.net</a><br><br>Carmen Driz-Melilli<br>Barry Dusault<br>Joan Pritchard | Cory Panlilio<br><br>Mary Pat Burke-Grospin,<br>Ex-Officio<br><br>Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio |
|--|---|---|--|---|

## About St. Matthias (please contact the staff members on the cover for up-to-date information)

**Parish Registration** — Welcome to St. Matthias! Please register on our website. [www.stmatthias.net/join-us](http://www.stmatthias.net/join-us), or visit the Parish Office.

**Marriage** — Registered parishioners should contact the parish office a year before the desired wedding date.

**Baptism** — Baptismal Preparation Sessions are held four times a year for registered parishioners. Please contact the parish office before the baby is born. The sacrament of Baptism is celebrated on the second and fourth Sunday of each month, except during Lent.

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)** - If you are interested in becoming a Catholic or completing the Sacraments of Initiation--Baptism/Confirmation/Eucharist, please call the Parish Office.



St. Matthias School is a PreK3 through 8<sup>th</sup> grade school rooted in faith, inspired by love, and dedicated to academic excellence. Before and After School Care Programs are available. Come visit! Contact 732-828-1402 to schedule a tour.



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