



**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, 10 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, **rdemkovitz**  
 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, DECEMBER 31, 2023**  
**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**



**PLEASE COME JOIN THE MANY WHO SPEND**  
**SOME QUIET TIME WITH THE**  
**EUCCHARISTIC LORD.**  
**OUR NEXT ADORATION WILL BE**  
**MONDAY EVENING, JANUARY 1, 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, Dec 31, 2023** New Year's Eve

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
12:00PM	Mass	Church

**Monday, Jan 1, 2024** New Year's Day  
Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God  
School & Parish Office Closed

10:00AM	New Year Mass	Church
6:00PM	Eucharistic Adoration	Church

**Tuesday, Jan 2, 2024** Sts. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors

8:00AM	Mass	Church
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**Wednesday, Jan 3, 2024** The Most Holy Family of Jesus  
SMS Back to School

8:00AM	Mass, St. Joseph Novena	Church
9:30AM	Prayer Group 1 Holy Spirit	de Porres Rm
6:30PM	School Finance Mtg.	de Porres Rm

**Thursday, Jan 4, 2024** St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious

8:00AM	Mass	Church
7:30PM	Sunday 10AM Choir Rehearsal	Church

**Friday, Jan 5, 2024** St. John Neumann, Bishop  
Last Night Christmas Trees are Lit  
SMS Dismissal 12:15PM

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:30AM	1st Friday Holy Hour	Church
10:00AM	SMS Epiphany Mass- Student Council Board, Reps, & Kindergarten	Church
10:30AM	Spring Hills Mass	At Facility

**Saturday, Jan 6, 2024** St. Andre Bassette, Religious

3:30PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Vigil Mass	Church

**Sunday, Jan 7, 2024** Epiphany Sunday  
Together in Charity Collection

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
11:00AM	Rosary Altar Mtg.	John XXIII Rm
12:00PM	Mass	Church
1:15PM	Epiphany Sunday-Franklin Madrigals -	Church
2:00PM	GIFT	Classrooms & John XXIII Rm

**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,

Tomorrow we usher in the New Year 2024! January has its name from the Greek God Janus, who presided over doors and beginnings – appropriate for the beginning of the year. Janus was usually depicted with two faces – one looking backward and the other forward. At this time, it is very healthy to look back to the year that was and look forward to the year that will be.

For me personally, as I look back, there are many events and people that I am thankful to God for, and in particular, the wonderful parishioners of St. Matthias. The most recent occasion was the way the 40th anniversary of my ordination was celebrated as a parish event. I was so very touched by the outpouring of love, support, and prayers. The church was packed with our parishioners and some of my family and friends. Many of you communicated to me your inability to attend. Thanks to Joe Mancuso who livestreamed the Mass (so it is available anytime on our YouTube channel) which was a joyful experience with some cultural practices adding to its beauty. The entrance procession with 20 Indian women in colorful garbs, the offertory procession with various objects presented at the altar with a commentary of symbolism of each object, and a hymn in my mother tongue of Malayalam by the Indian choir were all attractions that augmented the worship. The meaningful homily of Msgr. Bill Belford, my first pastor in a New York parish when I first came to the US, focused on the vocation that we are all called to – especially in the Sacrament of Holy Orders and Holy Matrimony. The well worded felicitation given by Didi Molano of the Pastoral Council, representing the whole parish community and the soul-filling music that Joan Seamon directed with our Choir and the Bell Choir were appreciated by all. The food in the cafeteria was varied, plentiful, and delicious, accompanied by song, dance, and words of felicitation – all emceed beautifully by Joe Percoco. All these were meticulously planned and executed by several dedicated parishioners and friends. I am grateful to the Committee that first met in November to plan this event: Alma Valdez, Anne Marie Francis, Emile Capuno, Fran Johnson, Claudette Gaspard, Menchie Ventura, Rita DiNicola, and Frank Rees. Many others gave of their time and talent – too many to name here. In a very special way, I am immensely indebted to Alma and Jaime Valdez for their goodwill and graciousness in sponsoring this event. Echoing the words of Mother Mary, I too say, “My soul glorifies the Lord... for He has done great things for me... Holy is His name.” (Luke 1:46)

You too will have many things to be grateful for in looking back at 2023. In the same spirit, let us all look forward to 2024 and make a plan to correct where we failed and to rededicate ourselves to be better with new resolutions with the grace that comes from the Lord. Some of us may be discouraged by the short-lived resolutions every year. That’s why we need the Lord’s help for this. We have a special Mass to begin 2024. Come and dedicate this New Year at the Lord’s Table tomorrow, January 1st at 10 AM. I believe goals are attainable for all of us if only we persist with His grace. My prayer for you is – to paraphrase the words of St. Paul: May God who began the good work in you bring it to perfection! (Philippians 1:6)

Blessings for the New Year to you and to your families!

Your brother in Christ,  
 Fr. Abraham Orapankal

## Readings for the Week

**Monday, January 1, 2024** Nm 6:22-27 Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 Gal 4:4-7 Lk 2:16-21

**Tuesday, January 2, 2024** 1 Jn 2:22-28 Ps 98:1, 2-3AB, 3CD-4 Jn 1:19-28

**Wednesday, January 3, 2024** 1 Jn 2:29-3:6 Ps 98:1, 3CD-4, 5-6 Jn 1:29-34

**Thursday, January 4, 2024** 1 Jn 3:7-10 Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9 Jn 1:35-42

**Friday, January 5, 2024** 1 Jn 3:11-21 Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 4, 5 Jn 1:43-51

**Saturday, January 6, 2024** 1 Jn 5:5-13 Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20 Mk 1:7-11 or Lk 3:23-38 or Lk 3:23, 31-34, 36, 38

**Sunday, January 7, 2024** Is 60:1-6 Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13 Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6 Mt 2:1-12



## Mass Intentions for the Week

**Saturday, Dec 30** 5:00PM Will Cuddeback, by Mom & Dad

**Sunday, Dec 31** 8:00AM Intention of Parishioners

10:00AM Sophie Teresa Schultz, by The Weeden Family

12:00PM Frank Moran, Sr. by Jerry Gomez

**Monday, Jan 1** 10:00AM Natalie L. Frankowski, by Michelle Kelley

**Tuesday, Jan 2** 8:00AM For The Parish Staff

**Wednesday, Jan 3** 8:00AM Renato Apra, by Mary Nepote

**Thursday, Jan 4** 8:00AM Robert Kudlacik, by Mary & Fred Lau

**Friday, Jan 5** 8:00AM Dorothy Feola, by Mary Nepote

**Saturday, Jan 6** 5:00PM Intention of Parishioners

**Sunday, Jan 7** 8:00AM Marie Preziotti, by Anthony LaTorre & Family

10:00AM Health & Blessings for Heinley Gaspard, by The Gaspard & Guerrier Families

12:00PM Thor Ruck, by Lawrence Pleus

## 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	Gerry & Jack Gernert	Armando D. Liban	Danny Ongchango	Sr. Bernadine Marie
Olga Marie Bando	<a href="#">Claude Godet</a>	Mary Lou Litrakis	Robert Pellegrino	Stemnock
Carolyn Banghart	Marie Godet	John Litrakis	Robert Pietrowiak	Jacqueline Taylor
Samantha Bellouny	Shelly Greene	Denis Loboda	Randolff Pinard	Anita Vance
Tara Capatosto	Linda Hartong	Aries Magali	Valerie Polci	Eileen Weber
Elizabeth Card	Sloopy & PJ Hoffman	Kenneth & Kelly	Kim Price	Nancy Whelan
Kyle Davidson	Marilyn Horvath	Magat	Denise Pultro	Ginette Zamor
Lisa DeFeo	Amanda Isele	Al Maglio	Doris Regan	Anne Zando
Zenon DeGuzman	Baby Elaine Isele	Susan, King & Tosh	Gabriel Rivera	
Marlene DiMaggio	Nick Isele	Manansala	Arina Robinson	<b>And for all who are ill,</b>
Vivian Dong	Bill Johnson	Alexandra Marquez	Bob Rotz	<b>homebound, elderly,</b>
Hattie Evans	Renée Jolly	Christine Matthews	Maria Schwenzer	<b>in nursing care, or</b>
Heinley Gaspard	Bill Kelleher	Ann McElwee	Amy Shepp	<b>living with chronic</b>
Claudia Gemgnani	Betsy Kondrat	Jessica Marie Merrick	Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF	<b>illness, we pray.</b>
Emma Gergely	Kathy Langenbacher	Gail Miranda		

## Pray for those who have died...

— “His mercy endures forever.” *Chronicles*

Sabit Alley, Raymond J. Betterbid Jennifer Marano Coleman



# Reflect



## Smile with Your Family



Parenting is mastering the art of a one-minute-poop and a half-a-minute shower! Yes, and even the art of forgetting when you showered last! 😊

The best part of parenting is the day you realize that you have become everything that you hated about your parents! 😊

I saw my son playing with a used diaper while the air conditioner was on. It was all fun and games until the poop hit the fan 😊

A couple is having a baby soon. After learning they're having a boy, the husband says, "Let's name him Pete!" But the wife says, "Honey, we're having twins." The husband replies, "Well, we can call the second one RePete." 😊

I requested the flight attendant to switch my seat as I was next to a screaming baby. She refused and said, "you are not allowed to do that since the baby is yours!" 😊

Two old men in a retirement village were chatting: "How do you really feel? I mean, you're 75 years old, how do you honestly feel?" The other one answered: "Honestly, I feel like a newborn baby. I've got no hair, no teeth, and I just peed myself." 😊

After a young couple brought their new baby home, the wife suggested that her husband should try his hand at changing diapers. "I'm busy," he said, "I'll do the next one." The next time came around and she asked again. The husband looked puzzled, "Oh! I didn't mean the next diaper. I meant the next baby!" 😊



### Parenting Tune-Up

How will you celebrate today, the last day of 2023? Why not gather the family and remember the joys of the year (birthdays, accomplishments, milestones) and sorrows (deaths, hurts, mistakes)? End with a group hug and affirmations of loving support.

### Marriage Tune-Up

We humans mark time with watches and calendars. As we start a new year, however, perhaps it would be meaningful today, to enter into a conscious NOW with your beloved. As you read this, pause, find your spouse, and look at each other tenderly. Ponder the goodness of being together. Embrace.



### STEWARDSHIP QUOTE:

*"... as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must forgive." - COLOSSIANS 3:13.*

**Forgiveness** – one of the hardest things for people to do. It's amazing how long we can hold a grudge or be angry with someone. As we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family, take this opportunity to give the gift of forgiveness to someone - maybe someone in your family, maybe a friend, maybe a co-worker or neighbor or, maybe yourself. Pick up the phone or text someone right now. (Archbishop Carlson)

### CAN YOU SEE SALVATION IN YOUR OWN JERUSALEM . . . ?

*[Simeon] took [the child] into his arms and blessed God, saying: "... my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel . . ." There was a prophetess, Anna . . . [who] gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem. Luke 2: 22-40*

Her grace and courage in dealing with her illness was an inspiration to all of you. Oh, it was rough when the diagnosis was first determined but she soon found a measure of peace — and gratitude. And your entire family came together to help her make her last days especially happy ones. Yes, she's missed terribly but the memory of your time with her strengthened your bond as a family. In your loved one's spirit of gratitude and peace, in the hope manifested in her courage, you have seen the salvation of God . . .

Losing your job was devastating. The career you worked so hard to establish was derailed, if not lost altogether. But your first boss who became a mentor called immediately and guided you through that difficult time. Her perspective and advice were invaluable. You found a new position and re-established your career — wiser and humbler as a result. In your mentor's care and support, her wisdom and experience, you have seen the salvation of God . . .

Something had to be done. This situation could not go on any longer. But those in charge dropped the ball; those

*continued*

## Reflect

### Can you see salvation in your own Jerusalem . . . ?

responsible were not up to the challenge. So you made some calls. Can we fix this? you asked. Yeah, we can, they all replied. So you all put your individual interests in check and focused on the greater good — and a plan was put in place that made things better without subjecting anyone to suspicion or embarrassment. The good of the community was the focus. In the generosity of heart of these good folks, you witnessed the salvation of God.

You messed up big time, but forgiveness was readily offered and the opportunity to fix your error was afforded. You were pushed aside, thrown under the bus, betrayed — but someone was there to pick you up. In your grief, in your loss, in your brokenness, someone was there to help you put your life back together. In these good folks, you witnessed the salvation of God.

**If we're willing to look around our own Jerusalems with eyes of faith, if we can refocus our vision on the good in our tumultuous lives, we can see the "salvation" of God in our midst: God "saves" us from our self-centeredness when a child or elderly parent calls out to us for help; God "saves" us from despair by enabling us to do good and meaningful things with the abilities and resources we possess; God "saves" us from a sense of "deadness" by revealing his compassion in the forgiveness we seek and give. Behold, as the faithful Simeon realizes, the many signs of salvation in our own lives, the many cracks in our overwhelmingly busy days when the light of God's love manages to break through, the many small resurrections we experience when the Spirit of God lifts us out of our hurt and brokenness.**

### ANNA AMONG US

In Luke's story of the infant Jesus' presentation in the temple, Mary and Joseph encounter Anna, an elderly widow who has dedicated her life to fasting and prayer in the temple.

Luke describes her as "prophetess." Anna — whose name means "grace" — is a figure of hope: despite the hardship of her own life as a widow, she's able to see the goodness of God around her and finds purpose in being a woman of "grace" to everyone she meets in the temple. Like Simeon, Anna realizes who this Child is and what his life will mean to the poor and lost and marginalized, and she doesn't hesitate

### ANNA AMONG US . . . continued

to tell others that, in this infant, the Kingdom of God has come.

Anna lives right here in our own parish and community. She is the elderly neighbor who struggles to come to church every day or prays every morning in her room. She keeps a list of all the people she prays for: the granddaughter who just gave birth to her first great-grandchild, the son and daughter-in-law who are going through a difficult time in their relationship, the grandson off to his first year of college, the neighbor about to undergo surgery. She has a kind word for everyone she meets. She radiates kindness and graciousness.

Most families have an "Anna": the grandmother (or grandfather, for that matter) or great aunt (or uncle) who has become a model of kindness and a source of wisdom for the family and who, with compassion and care, provides a listening heart and loving counsel to all who come to her.

**We are all called to be "prophets" like Anna: to move beyond our own hardships and sadness to realize the love of God in our midst and "tell" of that love in our own simple and unremarkable acts of kindness and understanding and comfort to those we encounter in the "temples" in which we live and work and play and pray. May we embrace the spirit of hope and thanksgiving of Anna in today's Gospel: always finding reason to hope in the light despite the darkness that overwhelms us, always giving thanks for the love of God ever present in our midst.**

### THREE WAYS TO BEGIN THE NEW YEAR

William Barclay's three ways to begin the New Year in a meaningful way:

**Something to dream:** "I have a dream," said Martin Luther King. We should all have a noble plan of action (dream a noble dream) for every day in the New Year.

**Something to do:** It has been truly said that an idle mind is the devil's workshop. We must not be barren fig trees in God's vineyard. We must be always engaged, doing good to others. And,...

**Someone to love:** God must be the center of our love and it must be the realization of God's presence which makes others lovable. Let us light a candle instead of blaming the darkness around us. Just as the moon borrows the sun's light to illuminate the earth, we must radiate the light of God within us. We need to remember the proverb: "Cherish your yesterdays; dream your tomorrows; but live your today's."

# Reflect

## New Year Prayer for the Digitally Savvy

"The Lord is my Programmer, I shall not crash.  
He installed His software on the hard disk of my heart;  
all of His commands are user-friendly.  
His directory guides me to the right choices  
For His names sake Even though I scroll through the  
problems of life,  
I will fear no bugs, for he is my backup. His password  
protects me.  
He prepares a menu before me in the presence of my  
enemies.  
His help is only a keystroke away.  
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my  
life,  
And my file will be merged with His and saved forever."

## CANCER, HEART DISEASE AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

A few years ago, a study was undertaken to find the U.S. city with the lowest incidence of cancer and heart disease. The winner was Rosetto, Pennsylvania. Soon experts descended upon the city expecting to see a town populated by non-smokers, people who ate the correct food, took regular exercise and kept close track of their cholesterol. To their great surprise, however, the researchers discovered that none of the above was true.

**They found instead that the city's good health was tied to the close family bonds that prevailed within the community. This suggests that there is much to be said for a close and loving family relationship.**

*(Robert Duggan & Richard Jajac)*

## A Resolution for the New Year:

**Here's an excellent idea: Resolve to start every morning with a short prayer:**

"Good morning, Lord. Thank You for extending my life for one more day. Please grant me a special anointing of your Holy Spirit so that I may do your holy will today and avoid everything evil." We might also resolve to say a short prayer, every evening, the last thing we do before we go to sleep: "Thank you Lord for helping me to do your will today. Forgive me, Lord, for saying 'no' to your grace several times today. I am really sorry for all my sins of the day. Please pardon me. And, as we close our eyes, we might say: "Good night, Lord. "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."

## 7 UPS FOR THE NEW YEAR

- 1) **WAKE UP**--Begin the day thanking the Lord. It is His day. Rejoice in it.
- 2) **LOOK-UP**--Open your eyes to the Lord. Ask for His strength and blessings for the day. After all, He is your only Savior.
- 3) **DRESS-UP**--Put on a smile. It improves your looks. It says something about your attitude. It enables Jesus living within you smile at others.
- 4) **SHUT-UP**--Watch your tongue. Don't gossip. Don't be judgmental. Say nice things. Learn to listen to others with love. Be sympathetic.
- 5) **STAND-UP**--Take a stand for what you believe. Resist evil. Do good. Have the courage of your Christian convictions by practicing what you believe.
- 6) **REACH-UP**--Spend time in prayer by talking to God with your adorations, confessions, thanksgivings and supplications to the Lord and by listening to Him by attentively reading the Bible and by applying its message to your life.
- 7) **LIFT-UP**--Be available to help those in need--serving, supporting, and sharing. Try to find Jesus in others and serve him who lives in others.

*(Adapted from Rev. Walter Schoedel)*

## SUPREME COURT'S ADVICE TO FAMILIES!

**"Make the family a confessional rather than a court room."** A senior Judge of the Supreme Court recently congratulated the bride and groom in a marriage with a pertinent piece of advice: "See that you never convert your family into a court room; instead let it be a confessional. If the husband and wife start arguing like attorneys, in an attempt to justify their behavior, their family becomes a court of law and nobody wins.

**On the other hand, if the husband and the wife -- as in a confessional -- are ready to admit their faults and try to correct them, the family becomes a heavenly one." Thus we can avoid the dangers we watch in dysfunctional families as presented in TV in the shows like *Married with Children*, *The Simpson's*, *Everyone Loves Raymond* and *Malcolm in the Middle*.**

continued

## Pray

### CHRISTMAS SEASON MASS SCHEDULE 2023-2024

Changes/Updates? Check [www.stmatthias.net](http://www.stmatthias.net)



#### Feast of the Holy Family

Saturday, December 30

5:00 pm

Sunday, December 31

8:00 am, 10:00 am & 12:00 noon

#### Solemnity of Mary Mother of God

Monday, January 1

10:00 am

#### Epiphany of the Lord

Saturday, January 6

5:00pm

Sunday, January 7

8:00 am, 10:00 am & 12:00 noon



### ROSARY FOR LIFE

January 19, 2024

Come Pray a Rosary for Life (in solidarity with those at the March for Life in Washington, DC and across the country).

Bishop Checchio is scheduled to attend!

Friday, January 19, 2024, at 1:00 pm on

Main Street in Woodbridge. Park and

meet in the St. James Parish parking

lot at 12:45 pm (369 Amboy Avenue,

Woodbridge, NJ) There is a 12:10

pm daily Mass at St. James for

those who wish to attend.



For more information, please contact:

[amarshall@diometuchen.org](mailto:amarshall@diometuchen.org)

or

call 732-562-1543.



NATIONAL

**Eucharistic  
Pilgrimage**

### NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC PILGRIMAGE

The National Eucharistic Pilgrimage (NEP) has publicly launched!

The NEP (<https://www.eucharisticpilgrimage.org/>) will consist of four cross-country Eucharistic processions, collectively traversing the entire continental

United States over a two-month period, beginning during the feast of Pentecost, **May 17-19, 2024**.

The pilgrimage is being organized by the National Eucharistic Revival campaign in conjunction with Modern Catholic Pilgrim, a Catholic nonprofit dedicated to deepening the faith across the country through pilgrimages.

Along the way, the pilgrims will make stops in major U.S. cities, churches, Catholic colleges, and holy sites.

Parishes along the routes will host Mass, adoration, devotions, praise and worship, lectures on the Eucharist, and more.

The Seton Route, which will begin in New Haven, Connecticut, will be passing through the Diocese of Metuchen on **May 27-28, 2024**. The four pilgrimage processions will ultimately converge in Indianapolis on **July 16, 2024**, to participate in the National Eucharistic Congress. Adam Carlisle, Secretary for Evangelization and Communication, will be helping to organize our diocese's involvement. If anyone is interested in assisting with this important event, please feel free to contact him at [acarlisle@diometuchen.org](mailto:acarlisle@diometuchen.org).

## Serve



**Volunteers  
Needed**

### HELP WANTED! SATURDAY, JANUARY 13th, 2024 at 9 AM!

All good things must come to an end and that applies to our Spread the Light Trees.

On **Saturday, January 13th at 9AM** please join other parishioners and friends as we remove lights and stack trees. We will need at least 30 to 40 volunteers. Last year this process took less than 3 hours and with a good number of people volunteering we can be finished before noon.

**Please bring SCISSORS OR SNIPS as the zip ties need to be cut to remove the lights.**

A big thank you to all who came to set up, will come to take down, and thanks again for making this a huge success for our parish!

*Pat and Jo-Ann*



## Learn



St. Matthias School is looking for help in the following areas:

- After School Program (Paid Position)
- Substitute Teachers (\$95 a day)
- School Advisory Council (Finance Volunteer)
- Athletic Association (Directors/Board Member Volunteers)
- School Finance Members (Volunteers)
- Marketing (Stipend)

Please email **Mrs. Mary Lynch**, Principal at [mlynch@stmatthiasnj.org](mailto:mlynch@stmatthiasnj.org) for more information.

**LET'S FIESTA!**

PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING NEW, UNUSED ITEMS IN THEIR ORIGINAL PACKAGING TO THE **ST. MATTHIAS SCHOOL NIGHT OF WINNERS!** DONATIONS CAN BE DROPPED OFF TO THE SCHOOL OR PARISH OFFICE.

<b>Jewelry</b>	<b>Vacation Home Rentals</b>	<b>Collectibles</b>
<b>Bottles of Wine/Liquor</b>	<b>American Girl Dolls</b>	<b>Barware</b>
<b>Housewares</b>	<b>Sporting Equipment</b>	<b>Pet Items</b>
<b>Appliances</b>	<b>Gaming Stations</b>	<b>Beauty Items</b>
	<b>Electronics (TV's, iPads, Kindles, etc.)</b>	

Not sure what we might be looking for?  
You can purchase something from the AMAZON WISH LIST:  
[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3A6FWUGQ9Y32T?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3A6FWUGQ9Y32T?ref=wl_share)

## From the Diocese

### CATHOLIC SCHOOL 2024-2025 TUITION ASSISTANCE ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS OPEN

Families interested in applying for tuition assistance to attend an eligible Diocese of Metuchen elementary or high school may apply online now through FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment at <https://online.factsmgt.com/aid>. Online applications must be completed (including all required documentation) by no later than **March 31, 2024**. Applications are available in English and Spanish. Families that need assistance completing the online application or need access to a computer to apply should contact their school.

### ESCUELA CATÓLICA 2024 -2025 ASISTENCIA DE MATRÍCULA PROCESO DE APLICACIÓN EN LÍNEA ABIERTO

Las familias interesadas en solicitar asistencia con la matrícula para acudir a una escuela primaria o secundaria elegible de la Diócesis de Metuchen, pueden presentar su solicitud en línea ahora a través FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment en la dirección electrónica <https://online.factsmgt.com/aid>. Las solicitudes en línea deben completarse (incluida toda la documentación requerida) antes del **31 de Marzo de 2024**. Las solicitudes están disponibles en inglés y en español.

Las familias que necesiten ayuda para completar la solicitud en línea o necesiten acceso a una computadora para postularse deben comunicarse directamente con su escuela.



Thank you to all of our generous parishioners who donated items and cash contributions for our support of Unity Square in New Brunswick. We were able to make 41 blessing bags!! SMYLE is grateful for the support of all our parishioners.





## Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023				Last Year's To-
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giv-	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 23 - Dec. 3, 2023	\$11,088.00	\$16,600.50	<b>\$27,688.50</b>	\$31,740.25
Week 24 - Dec. 10, 2023	\$9,084.00	\$24,533.75	<b>\$33,617.75</b>	\$38,685.75
Week 25 - Dec. 17, 2023	\$9,502.10	\$12,750.25	<b>\$22,252.35</b>	\$22,959.25
Week 26 - Dec. 24, 2023			<b>\$0.00</b>	\$64,137.25
<b>* Christmas and Sunday Collections are Combined for 2023</b>			Month-to-date	Month-to-date
			<b>\$83,558.60</b>	\$157,522.50
			Current Year-to-	Current Year-to
			<b>\$1,997,995.35</b>	\$2,029,108.56



### IF YOU HAVE NOT SIGNED UP WITH PARISH GIVING...

Most of our contributing parishioners have signed up with our online Parish Giving Program. That has been a big help to the parish in so many ways. If you are one of the few who have not, here's why it is helpful to you and important for St. Matthias:

Parish Giving offers secure flexible online giving for our parishioners who would like to make their donations online using a credit card or bank transfer. You never have to bring cash or checks to church. Giving electronically also helps the church save money and plan the budget. If you want to simplify your life, scan the QR code or go to our website [www.stmatthias.net](http://www.stmatthias.net) and click on the Parish Giving Link under 'Give'. Parish Giving offers you complete control over your account to change your giving as needed. You have the benefit to generate a giving report and easily choose the specific collections you wish to support. We thank you for your support which enables St. Matthias to minister to the community.

### Stewardship Reflection December 31, 2023 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

*"... as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must forgive."*  
- Colossians 3:13

Forgiving is one of the hardest things for people to do. We can't give what we don't have. We need to receive God's mercy and forgiveness first before we can give it to others. Go to the sacrament of Reconciliation and receive God's mercy and forgiveness. Then, share the gift of forgiveness with someone – a family member, a friend or a co-worker. Pick up the phone or text someone right now.

### Reflexiónese 31 de diciembre 2023 La Sagrada Familia de Jesús, María y José

*"...Como el Señor los ha perdonado, así deben ustedes perdonar."*  
- COLOSENSES 3-13

Perdonar es una de las cosas difíciles para las personas. No podemos dar lo que no tenemos. Necesitamos recibir la misericordia y el perdón de Dios antes de darlos a otras personas. Acérquese al sacramento de la Reconciliación y reciba la misericordia y el perdón de Dios. Entonces, comparta el don del perdón con alguien - un miembro de la familia, un amigo o un compañero de trabajo. Tome su teléfono y llame o envíe un mensaje de texto a alguien, justo en este momento.



### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The parish office is in need of volunteers Monday - Friday mornings.  
If you have some free time, please contact Mary Pat in the parish office, (732) 828-1400.  
Thank you for all you do for St. Matthias.

# Connecting to Our Local Community



Wednesday, January 2, 2024

7-8:30 pm

## Hybrid Monthly Series: Contemplative Nonviolent Prayer & Practice - Lord, Your Servant is Listening

Today the words “Contemplative Living” are popular, but what do these words mean? This monthly series explores in depth ways to nurture our prayer life and how to live the abundant, holistic life that Jesus has promised us. First Tuesday of the month, 7-8:30 pm (Per session—\$20-30 as you are able)

Presenter: Connie Palmer, LCSW

### January Co-Ed Retreat:

### Exploring the Many Ways of Prayer

January 25-28, 2024

Led by Fr. Joe Costantino, S.J.



Are you in a rut with your prayer life? Perhaps you may even feel as if you have no prayer life at all or maybe your prayer life simply needs to be given a new shot of life and energy. Wherever you are in your prayer life and faith journey, this retreat is for you. This retreat offers an extra night for prayer for those who wish to begin a day earlier.

Loyola Jesuit Center, 161 James Street, Morristown, NJ 07960

## Church of the Sacred Heart, So. Plainfield, 149 Plainfield Ave., South Plainfield, NJ

In God's Image, the Catholic Faith Sharing Group for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people at Church of the Sacred Heart, South Plainfield, meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7:00PM. **Our next meeting is January 10 and will be both in person and online.** Please email for more information. The group is open to LGBTQ adults, 18 and over, and their families. All are welcome for faith sharing, prayer, conversation and support.

For more information:

Contact Fr John at 908 291- 1194 or the group may be reached via email at [sacredheartigi@gmail.com](mailto:sacredheartigi@gmail.com)

## Parish Leadership

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

## 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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[www.diometuchen.org/cemeteries](http://www.diometuchen.org/cemeteries)




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