



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

Mass Schedule (in person):

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

St. Matthias School (SMS):

170 JFK Blvd., Somerset, NJ 08873
www.stmatthias.info 732-828-1402
 School Office Hours, Mon-Fri 8AM to 3PM.

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

Pastor: Rev Abraham Orapankal, **abraham**
Senior Priest: Msgr. Seamus Brennan, **sbrennan**
 Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Business Administrator
mpburke-grospin

Deacon Ron Caimi, *Senior Deacon*
 Kelly Counts, *Receptionist*, **kcounts**
 Deacon Russell Demkovitz, **rdemkovitz**
 Juan Diaz Flores, *Custodian*
 Nathalie Godet, *Website Coordinator*, **ngodet**
 Leslie Guillen, *Bulletin Editor*, **lguillen**
 Amy Hanna, *Accountant/Databases*, **ahanna**
 Mike Lanyi, *Sacristan*
 Sue Lenczewski, *Youth Coordinator*, **SMYLE**
 Mary Jo Loboda, *Parish Staff, Development*,
mjloboda

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**
 Trish Stumper, *Parish Support Secretary*,
tstumper

St. Matthias School (add @stmatthiasnj.org)

Mary Lynch, Principal, **mlynch**
 Joseph Gidaro, Vice Principal, **jgidaro**

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS
SUNDAY, FEB 19, 2023-
Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time



2023
Lenten
Obligations

1. The days of fast and abstinence are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
2. All other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence (see note below with regards to March 17).
3. The obligation of fast applies only to Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59. Fasting in the Catholic tradition means to limit oneself to one full meal and two smaller meals which together are not equal to a full meal, so as to experience hunger.
4. The obligation of abstinence applies to all Catholics who have reached the age of 14. Abstinence in the Catholic tradition means to abstain from meat.



Ash Wednesday
Drive-Thru Ashes

Can you volunteer to help/direct traffic?

Time: 4:00-5:45 PM
on February 22, 2023.

To signup please visit:
www.stmatthias.net/ashwednesday



Might you be called to pray and work with us to help those in need?

Please read the letter from Bob Cherill, President of our SVDP chapter, on page 8.

Join us for the annual St. Matthias Mass in Celebration of Black History Month

Saturday, February 25, 2021 – 5:00 PM

Liturgy and Worship to be led by:

The **UMOJA IMANI CHOIR** under the direction of Aaron Brown and Joan Seamon. **ALL ARE WELCOME.**

The celebration continues with Letter from a Birmingham Jail, see page 7 for details & sign up link.



This Week @ St. Matthias From Msgr. Brennan

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

Black History Month

Sunday, Feb 19, 2023 Live Lent Groups Begin

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

Monday, Feb 20, 2023 President's Day—Parish Office Closed **Sts. Francisco & Jacinta , Visionaries of the Apparition of Our Lady of Fatima**

8:00AM No Mass

Tuesday Feb 21, 2023 St. Peter Damian , Bishop & Doctor of the Church

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:30PM	Confirmation 8	John XXIII Rm
7:15PM	Hand Bell Rehearsal	Church
7:30PM	Pastoral Council Mtg. De Porres Rm & Zoom	

Wednesday, Feb 22, 2023 Ash Wednesday

8:00AM	Mass—St. Joseph Novena	Church
9:00AM	SMS Ash Wed. Mass	Church
9:30AM	Prayer Group 1 Holy Spirit	de Porres Rm
12:10PM	Ash Wed. Mass	Church
2:30AM	SMS Play Practice	School
4:00PM	Drive-Thru Ashes	Parking Lot
7:30PM	Ash Wed. Prayer Service w/Ashes	Church
8:00PM	Folk Group Rehearsal	Church

Thursday, Feb 23, 2023 St. Polycarp of Smyrna, Bishop & Martyr

8:00AM	Mass	Church
3:30PM	Children's Choir Gr. 3&4	Church
4:00PM	Children's Choir Gr. 5-8	Church
7:30PM	Adult Choir rehearsal	Church

Friday, Feb 24, 2023 St. Adela, Princess of England

8:00AM	Mass	Church
2:30PM	SMS Drama Practice	John XXIII Rm
7:00PM	Stations of the Cross	Church

Saturday, Feb 25, 2023 St. Walburga, Abbess

3:30PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Black History Month Mass	Church
6:00PM	SMDP Video, reflections & light dinner	John XXIII Rm

Sunday, Feb 26, 2023 Rite of Sending

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	1st Communion #2 at Mass	Church
12:00PM	Mass	Church
4:00PM	SMYLE Mtg.	Cafeteria



The Miraculous Medal Novena



One of the most popular and widespread devotions in the Catholic Church is the Miraculous Medal Novena. Here at Saint Matthias the novena is prayed every Monday morning after the 8am mass. The miraculous medal had its origin in Paris France in 1830 when Saint Catherine Labouré received an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Catherine was born on May 2 1806. Her mother died when she was 9. Catherine asked the Blessed Mother to be her mother in place of her deceased mother. In January 1830 she joined the Daughters of Charity and in July of that year she had the first of several apparitions of the Blessed Mother. During one of these apparitions in the chapel of her convent in Paris, the Blessed mother showed herself inside an oval frame standing upon a globe with rays of light coming from her hands towards the globe. Around the frame were the words, "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee". Mary asked Catherine to have the image struck as a medal. The image rotated and on the back Catherine saw a large letter M surmounted by a cross with a bar at its base. Below this monogram, there was an image of the Sacred Heart crowned with thorns, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary pierced with a sword.

Initially 2000 medals were made and distributed and some extraordinary healings and miracles occurred so quickly that people began to call the medal The Miraculous Medal. Today millions of Catholics wear the medal as a sign of their devotion to Mary and to implore her intercession.

Reciting the novena prayers takes less than 10 minutes. Among the prayers is the Novena Prayer which goes like this: *O Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of Our Lord Jesus and our mother, penetrated with the most lively confidence in your all-powerful and never-failing intercession, manifested so often through the Miraculous Medal, we your loving and trustful children implore you to obtain for us the graces and favors we ask during this novena, if they be beneficial to our immortal souls and the souls for whom we pray.*

Msgr. Brennan



Readings for the Week

Monday: Sir 1:1-10; Ps 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5; Mk 9:14-29

Tuesday: Sir 2:1-11; Ps 37:3-4, 18-19, 27-28, 39-40; Mk 9:30-37

Wednesday: Jl 2:12-18; Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14, 17; 2 Cor 5:20 — 6:2; Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday: Dt 30:15-20; Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4, 6; Lk 9:22-25

Friday: Is 58:1-9a; Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19; Mt 9:14-15

Saturday: Is 58:9b-14; Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Lk 5:27-32

Sunday: Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7; Ps 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17; Rom 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19; Mt 4:1-11

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, Feb 18 5:00PM John Natale, by Vinnie & Joanne

Sunday, Feb 19 8:00AM Eleuteris Banaag, by Minda Villarica

10:00AM Marion Fischer, By St. Matthias Rosarians

12:00PM Intention Of Parishioners

Monday, Feb 20 8:00AM No Mass - President's Day

Tuesday, Feb 21 8:00AM Susan & James Shinnors, by Mary

Wednesday, Feb 22 8:00AM Sally Hughes, by The Family

12:10PM Frederica Pearl Pilgrim, by Pearl Scott

4:00PM Drive-thru Ashes

7:30PM Prayer Service - Ashes distributed

Thursday, Feb 23 8:00AM Erlinda Bayan, by John & Marvin Bulich

Friday, Feb 24 8:00AM Birthday Blessings for Nina Ripley, by The Family

Saturday, Feb 25 5:00PM Intention of Parishioners

Sunday, Feb 26 8:00AM Sr. Amata Shina, OSF, by Eileen King

10:00AM Sally Hughes, by The Family

12:00PM Mary Dolan, by The Hentz 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 kccounts@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.*

Erika, Jay & Beth Adams
 Carolyn Banghart
 Tammy Baskaran
 Angela Berlund
 Arthur & Regina Berlowitz
 John Blum
 Bishop Paul Bootkowski
 Anthony Brandi
 Barbara Butler
 Bianca Canlas
 Tara Capatosto
 Ellen Catalina
 Kyle Davidson
 Lisa DeFeo
 Michael DiMaggio
 William Dolphin
 Vivian Dong
 Claudia Gemgnani
 Helen Geraghty

Emma Gergely
 Mary Gidaro
 Carol Gryskiewicz
 Sloopy & John Hoffman
 Marilyn Horvath
 Baby Isla-Rose Huffman
 Robert Kashinsky
 Al Kepenis
 Kathleen Lanenbacher
 The Litrakis Family
[Mary Lou Litrakis](#)
[John Litrakis](#)
 Jude Raymond Maceren
 Clarissa & Kevin Magat
 Kenneth & Kelly Magat
 Al Maglio
 Susan, Tosh & King
 Manansala
 Christine Mathews

Beatrice May
 Anne McElwee
 Margaret Menendez
 Carol Millemann
 Sabrina Moloney
 Kathlyn Moore
 Eleanor Nagy
 Janice Navatkowski
 Danny Ongchango
 Paul & Doris Paetow
 Fiorello Parente
 Robert Pellegrino
 Jim Pettit
 Christina Pietrowiak
 Kim Price
 Nathan Reavey
 Caitlin Regan
 Doris Regan
 Gabriel Rivera

Jaxon Rivera
 Arina Robinson
 Arthur Robinson
 Maria Schwenzer
 Tippur Seshagiri
 Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF
 Jeff Sullivan
 Jay Swick
 Tom Szabo
 Nancy Whelan
 Mark Worthington
 Angie Yetyet

And for all who are ill, homebound, elderly, in nursing care, or living with chronic illness, we pray.

Pray for those who have died...

— “His mercy endures forever.” *Chronicles*

Marie P. Hanech, James Gagliastro

Reflect



Smile with Your Family



The Rev. Cleveland Duke of Akron is a part-time judo instructor. He teaches self-defense. He says, "I teach you what to do after you've turned both cheeks." 😊

When I was just a little kid, I used to pray for a bicycle. Then as I grew older, I learned in Sunday school, that's not how prayer works. So I stole a bike...and prayed for forgiveness. I got forgiveness, but I had to return the bike 😊

I am earning \$5,000 monthly. Last month I received \$7,000 and I kept quiet. This month I got \$3,000 so I went to HR to complain. HR asked "why didn't you complain when you received extra last month?" I replied "I normally forgive the first mistake, but I can't tolerate the second." 😊

"Why are you ignoring me?" "I'm not ignoring you, I'm waiting to see how long it takes for you to realize that I just don't like you!" 😊

My husband and I got divorced because of religious differences. He thought he was God. I disagreed. 😊

Dad's advice: "Son, forgive your brother, because Jesus said to forgive your brother not seven times, but seventy times seven." Son's reply: "Great! Not only do I have to forgive my brother, now I have to do Math too!!" 😊

Today, I was thinking about the expression "revenge is a dish best served cold." Then I considered "revenge is sweet." So, I've come to the conclusion that revenge is ice cream. 😊



Parenting Tune-Up

"Love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). Generally, preachers generalize neighbor to mean beyond the person next door. But today, why not take it literally? With your child, choose a neighbor. Make them a treat or do a favor for them together.



Marriage Tune-Up

A good marriage is not recognized by the absence of conflict, but the presence of peacemaking. One sign of a healthy marital relationship is the desire of a husband and wife to seek unity when there are disagreements and differences.

Today's Gospel: I'm not so Sure!

In the movie *Gandhi*, the great Indian leader is walking one day with a Presbyterian missionary, Charlie Andrews. The two suddenly find their way blocked by young thugs. The Reverend Andrews takes one look at the menacing gangsters and decides to run for it. Gandhi stops him and asks, "Doesn't the New Testament say if an enemy strikes you on the right cheek you should offer him the left?" Andrews mumbles something about Jesus speaking metaphorically. Gandhi replies, "I'm not so sure. I suspect he meant you must show courage—be willing to take a blow, several blows, to show you will not strike back nor will you be turned aside."

The second part of today's Gospel passage is perhaps the central and the most famous section of the Sermon on the Mount. It gives us the Christian ethic of personal relationships: love one's neighbors and forgive one's enemies. Above all, it tells us that what makes Christians different is the grace with which they treat others with loving kindness and mercy, even if they don't deserve it. The Old Law never said to hate enemies, but that was the way some Jews understood it. Jesus commands that we are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us to demonstrate that we are children of a merciful heavenly Father. A Christian has no personal enemies. If we only love our friends, we are no different from pagans or atheists.

"What too little forgiveness does to us . . ."

" . . . love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father . . ." Matthew 5: 38-48

It's not that we refuse to love our "enemies." It's that we demand accountability. We expect restitution for our losses — and compensation for the suffering and stress we endured because of another's poor judgment. It's a matter of justice, we insist. But such a perspective of "justice" can crush us in bitterness. The title of Presbyterian minister Timothy Keller's new book says it all: **What Too Little Forgiveness Does to Us**. Keller writes:

"In the 1970s, I was a pastor in a small town that had not a single professional therapist or social worker. I ended up counseling dozens of couples with troubled marriages. I discovered that those who learned and embraced forgiveness usually survived and those who did not never did. Without forgiveness, no human relationships or communities can be sustained." So how do we go about forgiving in a meaningful, constructive way? Keller suggests we keep three things in mind:

First, we need to realize that forgiveness is not

Cont'd on next page

Reflect

What too little forgiveness (cont'd)

“excusing.” We need to name the evil in order for justice to be realized. But, Keller writes, justice is not vengeance. “Vengeance consumes your inward being with anger and hate. If you don’t forgive internally, you won’t confront the wrongdoers for justice’s sake or for future victims’ sake or for God’s sake. You will be doing it for your sake, and the project will go awry.”

Second, we must be willing to “bear the cost of forgiveness.” We must fight the urge to constantly bring up the wrongs committed in order to punish the perpetrators; we have to stop reliving the incident that is fueling our anger. That’s hard, Keller acknowledges, *“but if you pay that cost, you will gradually find yourself escaping the grip of bitterness. Once forgiveness is granted, it clears the way for justice, possible reconciliation and other forms of restoration.”*

And third, forgiveness requires belief in something bigger than ourselves: the maintaining of relationship, the preservation of community. That’s a challenge for us Americans today.

Jesus readily acknowledges that love — love that is and of God — is not easy. It’s demanding, often unreasonable and unfair. It means putting aside our disappointments and expectations in order to maintain relationships and keep community intact. What is often most challenging about today’s Gospel is not loving our “enemies” but loving the obtuse spouse, the thoughtless relative, the boorish coworker. It’s easy to “love” some nameless, demographic group we have little or nothing to do with — what’s hard is to “love” the people we live with and work with and go to school with. In every tense confrontation and unreasonable expectation and in every undeserved cry for help, Jesus asks us to respond with the compassion and mercy of God: to act with the conviction that we can break such cycles of irresponsibility and selfishness, that we can heal one another’s brokenness, that we can bring back the lost and marginalized by seeking to re-create such situations in the “perfect” love of God — if we’re willing to forgive, to bear the cost of forgiving, and seek reconciliation before our own satisfaction.

“The A-4 revolution”

Nationwide protests are rare in China. China’s leaders have no tolerance for any public act of defiance or expression of dissent. But three years of draconian lockdown measures as a result of the COVID pandemic saw

this fall the boldest display of dissent across China since Tiananmen Square in 1989. And the most prominent symbol of dissent in cities across China: blank sheets of paper. The demonstrations began as an expression of anger against China’s strict-zero-COVID policy, which has left the country reeling through cycles of lockdowns even as much of the rest of the world returns to some semblance of normalcy. The blank paper represents everything protesters wish they could say but cannot. The “paper revolution” confronts authorities with a difficult conundrum: arrest people for saying literally nothing at all or allow a simple act of resistance to proliferate unchallenged.

The revolution has been called the “A4 Revolution,” referring to the standard size of paper used in copiers outside the United States and Canada. Blank paper has a long history as symbol of protest globally. At the outset of the war in Ukraine a year ago, protestors in Russia were arrested for holding up blank sheets of paper amid the Kremlin’s crackdown on dissent. A protestor bearing a blank piece of paper at a vigil in Beijing explained that the display of wordless paper “means we are voiceless, but we are also powerful.” The blank paper says what needs to be said without words — everyone, including Chinese authorities, gets the message.

A white sheet of paper becomes a powerful sign when raised by someone whose spirit is moved by the plight of those who suffer as a result of poverty, violence and injustice. It’s that spirit of compassion and empathy that Peter, James and John witness in Jesus on the mountain in today’s Gospel: they behold the divinity, the sacred presence, that Jesus possesses within his humanity. That same spirit exists within each of us, as well: God has instilled in us his compassion and justice that “transfigures” us from “blank, wordless pieces of paper” into ministers of God’s mercy and prophets of his justice, enabling us to “transfigure” despair into hope, anguish into healing, estrangement into community — even dying into living.

“The goal is reconciliation and redemption”

Martin Luther King, Jr. would take this principle from the Sermon on the Mount and use it to revolutionize America. King used to say, “No man can pull me down so low as to make me hate him.” The real goal, said King, was not to defeat the white man, but to awaken a sense of shame within the oppressor and to challenge his false sense of superiority. “The goal is reconciliation, redemption, the creation of the beloved community.” The words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount which Martin Luther King paraphrased, are totally out of step with our present world because our world believes in retaliation. 75 percent of Christians believe in capital punishment because they think we can stop the killing by killing the killers. That’s retaliation.

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Reflect

"The goal is reconciliation" (cont'd)

But Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount rejects even the concession of milder retaliation allowed by Moses. For Jesus, retaliation, or even limited vengeance, has no place in the Christian life, even though graceful acceptance of an offense requires great strength and discipline of character as well as strengthening by God's grace. Jesus wants his disciples to repay evil with kindness. Instead of retaliation, Jesus gives his new law of love, grace, forgiveness, reconciliation and no retaliation.

"Yeah, but it's my way!"

In the 1985 movie, *Witness*, Harrison Ford plays a tough Philadelphia detective who uncovers corruption within his department. To protect himself and a young boy who has witnessed a murder, Ford's character, John Book, hides out among the Pennsylvania Amish, the community from which the little boy comes. In one scene of the movie, Book and several of the Amish go into town for a day of shopping. While they are in town, the buggies driven by the Amish are involved in a traffic jam with a car. The occupants of the car emerge to confront the Amish in the buggies. With unwarranted hostility, they taunt one young Amish man. One of the men from the car, a young tough, smears ice cream in the Amish man's face. Ignoring the protests of an older Amish man, Book goes over to beat up the ruffians who have bullied the young Amish man. The older Amish man insists to Book that, "it's not our way." To which Book responds, "Yeah, but it's my way." The scene from the movie helps us focus on the content of our passage of Scripture for this morning. The Amish, a community in the Anabaptist tradition, sees the Sermon on the Mount as part of their core Scripture. The reason the young man in the scene doesn't fight back against the bullies is that he is turning the other cheek, as Jesus said to do. In order to avoid violence, in order to avoid anyone getting hurt, he willingly accepts humiliation.

We need to have a forgiving heart: Jesus demands that we should forgive, pardon and be generous whether or not our offenders deserve it, and even if we are not loved in return. He also tells us to pray for those who willfully cause us suffering, hardship and unhappiness.

What we grab, grabs us too!

Once there was an eagle which hovered over a lake and suddenly swooped down and caught a two-foot long fish in its talons. Slowly, the bird rose with its ten-pound

catch, but when it reached about 1,000 feet, it began to descend, until it splashed into the water. Later, both the bird and fish were found dead. Apparently, the fish was too heavy for the eagle, but it could not let go, for its talons were embedded in the flesh of the fish. The truth is that what we grab, grabs us. When we grab alcohol, drugs, or sex, it grabs us and brings us down to death.

We are angry over 9/11, but our anger doesn't control us!

In May of 2006, the whole country had to confront an enemy. His cold angry eyes stared at us from our newspapers and television sets. Zacarias Moussaoui was sentenced to life in prison. He was the only person tried in American courts for the terrorist attack on 9/11. Many people in our country, including many family members of the victims of 9/11, had hoped that the courts would sentence Moussaoui to death. Some people see a life sentence as an act of mercy. One juror kept Moussaoui from a death sentence. Technically, one of the issues was just how involved Moussaoui was in the 9/11 plot. Nevertheless, many people interpreted the jury's decision as a declaration that we in the United States are not ruled by vengeance. We can step back from our rage at 9/11 and make careful distinctions. We are angry over 9/11, but our anger doesn't control us.

We need to love our neighbors and our enemies too: The Greek word used for loving enemies is not storge (natural love towards family members), or philia (love of close friends), or eros (passionate love between a young man and woman), but agápe, which is the invincible benevolence or good will for another's highest good. Since agápe is not natural, practicing it is possible only with God's help. Agápe love is a choice more than a feeling. We choose to love, not because our enemies deserve our love, but because Jesus loves them so much that he died for them. We have in the Acts of the Apostles the example of St. Stephen, the first martyr, who prayed for those who were putting him to death.

Parish Updates

If you are now solely using a cell phone, have changed your phone number or address, please call the parish office, so we can update your records. We would also like to update our parish data base with e-mail addresses. Email Kelly at: kcounts@stmatthias.net to have your email address included or to update an email address. Thank you!

If you are moving, please notify the Parish Office so we can keep our parishioner records current. Thank you!

Drive-Thru Ash Wednesday Ministry



Dear Friends,

Besides the four Ash Wednesday Masses/service in the Church, we will continue our practice of the Drive-thru **Ash distribution from 4:00 - 5:30pm**. If you are able to help distribute ashes on **Wednesday, February 22nd**, please visit www.stmatthias.net/ashwednesday to sign up. We would greatly appreciate your assistance, especially with helping to direct traffic. I'm sure many of you will help out as in the past. **Please enter ONLY from JFK Boulevard & then follow directions**. Thank you.

Learn

BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT ST. MATTHIAS – FEBRUARY 2023



LETTER FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL

The 2023 theme of Black History Month nationally is “Black Resistance.” There probably is no greater example of that

resistance than the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His entire life was resistance.

We are all too familiar with the infamous *I Have A Dream* speech but few of us are aware of Martin’s *Letter From a Birmingham Jail*.

Join the St. Martin de Porres Society and the St. Matthias Racial Justice Initiative for the video narration of ‘*Letter From a Birmingham Jail*’ immediately following the Mass in

Celebration of Black History Month. The video is a 56 minute reading of King’s letter, narrated by leaders from the community of Columbus, Ohio. We will close this event with a few reflection questions on what we heard in light of what we know – our faith.

We will have a light dinner with beverages and desserts and then start the video promptly. Please RSVP so that we have adequate amounts of food and drink). RSVP by using this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A054FA4AB2FAAFF2-letter>

ST. JOHN XXIII ROOM 6:00 PM, following the 5:00PM Celebration of Black History Month Mass SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2023. ALL ARE WELCOME



Crispus Attucks

Crispus Attucks is remembered as the first American casualty of the [American Revolutionary War](#), he was an American whaler, sailor, and [stevedore](#) of [African](#) and [Native American](#) descent, who is traditionally regarded as the first person killed in the [Boston Massacre](#), and as a

result the first American [killed](#) in the [American Revolution](#). He died on March 5, 1770. Historians disagree on whether Mr. Attucks was a free man or an escaped slave but most agree that he was of [Wampanoag](#) and African descent.

In the mid-19th century Attucks became an icon of the [anti-slavery movement](#). He was praised by supporters of the abolition movement for having played a heroic role in the founding of the United States.

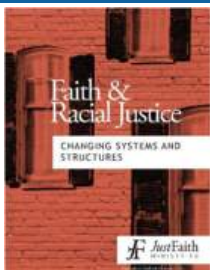
Early Life

Attucks was born in [Framingham, Massachusetts](#) around 1723. Town histories of Framingham written in 1847 and 1887

describe him as a slave of Deacon William Brown, though it is unclear whether Brown was his original owner. In 1750 Brown advertised for the return of a runaway slave named Crispas. He also said that a reward of 10 pounds would be given to whoever found and returned Attucks to him. Attucks's status at the time of the massacre as a free person or a [runaway slave](#) has been a matter of debate for historians.

Attucks became a sailor and whaler, and he spent much of his life at sea or working around the docks along the Atlantic seaboard. Many historians believe Attucks went by the alias Michael Johnson in order to avoid being caught after his escape from slavery. He may only have been temporarily in Boston in early 1770, having recently returned from a voyage to the [Bahamas](#). He was due to leave shortly afterwards on a ship for [North Carolina](#) when the Boston Massacre occurred.

Learn



Changing Systems and Structures.

Sign up now for the third and last module of the Faith and Racial Justice series –

8 Sessions - Saturdays from February 25, 2023 (Retreat) until June 10, 2023

February 25; March 4, 18; April 1, 22; May 6, 20; June 3, 10

(Makeup sessions available for missed sessions)

9:00 – 11:30 AM (Sessions on Zoom)

Contact program facilitators for more information or email: matthiasracialjustice@gmail.com

Neil Purcell

neil.purcell.nj@gmail.com

Kerry Millan

kerrytheinterim@gmail.com

Phyllis Stone

phylliswstone@aol.com

Pray



MASS OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK

All who are in need of healing of body, mind or spirit are invited to the celebration of our Mass of Anointing of the Sick: **SATURDAY, MARCH 18, AT 11:00 AM.**

Connect

MIGHT YOU BE CALLED TO PRAY AND WORK WITH US TO HELP THOSE IN NEED?

The St Vincent de Paul ministry first and foremost is intended to immerse its members in a Vincentian spirituality – seeing the face of Christ in those we serve, while being the face of Christ to those we serve.

Our St Vincent de Paul Society Conference aims to help those in need residing in Franklin Township and in some of the surrounding areas where there are no other SVDP Conferences. Anyone in need can come to us regardless of religious affiliation.

Based on the most recent census data, Franklin Township is the largest town by population in all of Somerset County with a population approaching 69,000 residents. The poverty level is estimated at 6.4% (affecting more than 4000 people).

Over the past 2 years, we have screened and interviewed approximately 146 clients. We have assisted 152 clients and members of their households preventing homelessness, by paying rent or security deposits, and paying to keep the lights on and gas from being shut off. Our assistance over the past two years amounted to over \$110,000 for housing, and more than \$32,000 for utilities and other miscellaneous expenses. In addition, we have sent contributions for hurricane relief and international support for disasters and war (e.g., in The Ukraine), and we have initiated a quarterly contribution to a school in Port-au-Prince Haiti run by the Daughters of Charity, a Vincentian religious order.

All this has been made possible because of the stewardship in this community which has a history of sharing our Time, Talent, and Treasure. In the case of the St Vincent de Paul Society, we give of our:

Time – Time spent in prayer for our benefactors as well as our clients. Time spent interviewing clients either by Zoom or Face to Face meetings. Time in researching potential sources of help from the government/public sector as well as from our Conference funding.

Talent – bringing to the group, and to our clients our life experiences and faith that are key in problem solving and planning to assist those in need.

Treasure – comes from our community in the form of financial contributions shared through special collections throughout the year, from individual contributors who have committed to regular, periodic donations, and by contributions to the poor boxes at the doors of the church.

The COVID pandemic has hit our client base hard. Now that government moratoria on rents and utilities have been lifted and public assistance programs have dried up, we are seeing many cases coming to us requiring people to assist our clients. In 2022, we worked with nearly 6 times as many clients than we did in the previous year.

Over the past couple of years our member numbers have decreased for a variety of reasons. The work is sometimes hard but is extremely rewarding. What we ask is for you to discern whether you might be called to praying and working with us to help those in need.

For further information, you can reach us by email at SVDPatSM@gmail.com

Bob Cherill,
Conference President, SVDP at St Matthias

Connect

Interested in a New Ministry?

A few faith-filled men and women of our parish have initiated a new ministry, (St. Matthias Martha Ministry) with the desire for following Jesus' example to serve others by providing an opportunity to be part of the church community through active care of our worship space.

The mission of the St. Matthias Martha Ministry is to enhance the beauty of the worship space, to create an atmosphere whereby the assembly may heighten their awareness of the purpose and mystery of God through the senses and thus enhance appreciation of the various liturgical seasons in collaboration with the parish staff. The atmosphere of reverence and beauty reflect the glory of God. Thus the worshippers who come to our church,

especially for the weekend Masses, baptisms, weddings and funerals will be welcomed into a pleasing environment.

We are looking for anyone with good will to help and time to volunteer. Teams rotate so time is minimal. Those with creativity and/or experience and imaginative ideas to decorate are welcome.

If you feel called to this ministry, please come to a "kick-off" meeting on Tuesday, February 21 immediately following the 8 AM Mass. For more information, please call Claudette Gaspard 732-406-4118 (Environment) email: gaspard17@aol.com or Nancy Inzano (Altar Linens). 732-261-2530. E Mail: nancy.inzano@gmail.com

Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023				Last Year's Total
	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 32 - Feb. 5, 2023	\$9,108.44	\$18,094.75	\$27,203.19	\$31,073.75
Week 33 - Feb. 12, 2023	\$12,048.00	\$22,434.25	\$34,482.25	\$27,060.25
Week 34 - Feb. 19, 2023	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$26,116.35
Week 35 - Feb. 26, 2023	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,800.14
			Month-to-date Total	Feb Total Last Yr
			\$61,685.44	\$103,050.49
			Current Year-to-date Total	Year-to-date as of
			\$897,786.16	\$896,976.57

Stewardship Reflection Feb 19, 2023 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..." MATTHEW 5:44

Love your enemies, easier said than done. But, remember, the foundation of stewardship is prayer. When we are in close communication with God, it opens our heart and it turns our attention away from "me" and moves it towards God and others. It changes my heart and actions, allowing for a little more empathy for "my enemy." When we pray for others, even our enemies, it may soften their hearts as well.

Reflexiónese 19 de febrero de 2023 7^{do} Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario

"Pero yo les digo, amen a sus enemigos y oren por los que los persiguen..." MATEO 5:44

Amar a sus enemigos, eso es más fácil decirlo que hacerlo. Sin embargo, recuerde, el fundamento de la corresponsabilidad es la oración. Cuando estamos en estrecha comunicación con Dios, nuestros corazones se abren y cambia nuestra atención de "mí mismo" hacia Dios y hacia los demás. Eso cambia mi corazón y mis acciones, permitiéndome un poco más de empatía con "mi enemigo". Cuando oramos por los demás, aún por nuestros enemigos, también se suavizan sus corazones.

Serve

LAZARUS MINISTRY--Welcoming new members

The Lazarus Ministry began in 1996. Its existence grew out of a need for the Catholic Community of St. Matthias to offer support to our parishioners at the time of loss of a family member.

Our service includes attendance at the Funeral masses and Viewing to offer support by our presence.

If you are interested in this Ministry, please contact Sister Marie Therese: msherwood@stmatthias.net

Serve



Phone Ministry to Our Home Bound Parishioners

If any of our homebound parishioners and their caregivers would like to receive a caring, friendly phone call periodically from one of our parishioners, please contact Sister Marie Therese at:

msherwood@stmatthias.net



Part-Time Evening General Maintenance Person

St. Matthias is looking for a **part-time evening general maintenance person**.

This employee will be responsible for maintaining the safety and cleanliness of the church/school.

Please contact **Mary Pat Burke-Grospin** at: mpburke-grospin@stmatthias.net or (732) 828-1400 ext.121.

Connect with Our Local Community



The Cursillo 13th Annual Encounter with Christ

The Cursillo 13th Annual Encounter with Christ will be held at Mary, Mother of God

Parish, 157 South Triangle Rd, Hillsborough, on **Saturday, March 4, 2023** from 8:30am to 12:30pm. Our speakers will be **Fr. Cyril Adim Offiong, SDV** (St Cecelia Church, Iselin and Dcn. Sal Bonfiglio, OFS (Mary Mother of God Church, Hillsborough). The theme will be "Let your face shine on your servant, save me in your unfailing love". As we prepare our hearts during the season of Lent, let us be reminded of God's love and mercy, even as we struggle through the challenges in our lives. There will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation; as well as celebration of the Mass.

There is no charge for the event; but a free will offering will be accepted. **ALL ARE WELCOME.** Please register at:

<http://www.metcursillo.org/events-encounter.htm>

Diocesan Youth Day 2023 March 12th from 11:30am - 5pm St. Thomas Aquinas High School



Theme: Eucharistic Revival!

- The day will begin with check-in at 11:30 AM and begin promptly at 12 noon and run until 5:00 PM.
- All High School aged teens are welcome!
- Sunday Mass with Bishop Checchio.
- Featuring Keynote speaker, Fr. Malachy Joseph Napier, CFR a selected Eucharistic Preacher from the USCCB's National Eucharistic Revival. **For more information to register:** <https://www.diometuchen.org/yyam>

Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council:

Co-Chairs:

Rose Peng, rosepeng@optonline.net
John Taylor, jptaylor1068@yahoo.com

Co-Secretaries:

Frank Rees
Marilyn Wegg
Stephan Busono
Anne Marie Francis
Bill Isele
Maria Tapia-Burch

Msgr. Seamus Brennen,
Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

Trustees:

Pearl Scott
Marge Richards

Parish Finance Council:

Kester Hector, Chair
Finance Council
@stmatthias.net
Carmen Driz-Melilli
Barry Dusault
Gwen Orłowski

Audrey Francis
Joe Porter
Joan Pritchard
Mary Pat Burke-Grospin,
Ex-Officio
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, 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 8th 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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event dates

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