

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 - 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

St. Matthias School (SMS):

170 JFK Blvd., Somerset, NJ 08873

www.stmatthias.info 732-828-1402

School Office Hours,

Monday-Friday 7:45AM to 3:30PM

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

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

Anthony Baio, Maintenance Deacon Ron Caimi, Senior Deacon Maria Cornier, Parish Secretary mcornier Kelly Counts, Receptionist, kcounts Deacon Russell Demkovitz, rdemkovitz Nathalie Godet, Website & Bulletin Editor, ngodet

Amy Hanna, Accountant/Databases, ahanna Mike Lanyi, Sacristan

Sue Lenczewski, Youth Coordinator, SMYLE Julio Montero, Maintenance Supervisor Debra Schurko, Director of Religious Education,

dschurko

Vinnie Natale, Bookkeeper, vnatale Silvia Nizama, Housekeeper Deacon John Radvanski, deaconjohn Joan Best Seamon, Pastoral Associate for Music Ministry, jseamon

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

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2025

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time



Lent is coming. Are you ready? Why not join a Small Faith Group?



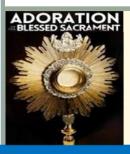
See page 7 for details





Come connect while helping support the Franklin Food Bank.

See page 8 for more information



PLEASE COME JOIN THE MANY WHO SPEND SOME QUIET TIME WITH THE EUCHARISTIC LORD.

OUR NEXT ADORATION WILL BE FEBRUARY 24, 2025 FROM 6 PM TO 8 PM.

WHEN THE DEACON IS AVAILABLE, WE CONCLUDE ADORATION WITH A BENEDICTION.

This Week @ St. Matthias

Masses are also livestreamed on our YouTube channel: 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, Feb 23, 2025

8:00AM	Mass			Church
10:00AM	Mass	(Interprete	r)	Church
11:00AM	RCIA		de Porres Rm &	Ruiz Rm
12:00PM	Mass	(Boy Scout))	Church
1:30	Baptis	ms		Church

Monday, Feb 24, 2025 St. Adela,

		Princess of England
8:ooAM	Mass	Church
6:00PM	Eucharistic Adoration	Church
7:00PM	Cub Scout Pack 195 Mt	g. Cafeteria

Tuesday, Feb 25, 2025St. Walburga, Abbesss8:00AMMassChurch7:30PMHandbell RehearsalChurch

Wednesday, Feb 26, 2025 St. Porphyry of Gaza,

8:00AMMassSt. Joseph NovenaChurch9:30AMHoly Spirit Prayer Groupde Porres Room6:30 PMGirl Scout Roop 63202Pre K Classroom7:30 PMFolk Group RehearsalChurch

Thursday, Feb 27, 2025 St. Gabriel Our Lady of Sorrows, Confessor

8:00AM	Mass	Church
3:30 PM	Children's Choir, Grades 3 & 4	Church
4:00 PM	Children's Choir Grades 5-8	Church
7:30 PM	Adult Choir Rehearsal	Church

Friday, Feb 28, 2025 St. Hillary, Pope 8:00AM Mass Church 6:45PM Boy Scout Troop 154 Cafeteria

Saturday, March 1, 2025 St. David of Wales, Bishop 10:30AM Bible Study 3:30 PM Reconciliation Church

Church

5:00 PM Vigil Mass Sunday, March 2, 2025

8:ooAM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
11:00AM	RCIA	de Porres Rm & Ruiz Rm
11:00AM	Rosary Altar Meeti	ing St. John XXII Rm
12:00PM	Mass	Church
1:30PM	GIFT	Church

BULLETIN ARTICLE REQUESTS:

If you would like to send information to be included in our bulletin, please email it to 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 spaceavailable basis.

A Message From Our Pastor

Dear Friends,

In another week, we will be at the threshold of the holy season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is on March 5 – a day of fast and abstinence. The Jubilee Year 2025 makes this Lent special as both remind us of the journey of life with the



Word of God. During Lent every year, our Small Faith-sharing groups become more active than ever, reflecting on the Scriptures. The participants are greatly enriched with their experience in small gatherings – at church and at homes. Some may wonder why this insistence on small groups? Here are some reasons:

- Small groups are biblical.
- Small groups allow us to dialog with people of differing views.
- Small groups give us a place to talk about personal and spiritual things in a safe environment.
- Small groups help us to experience the power of love and prayer.
- A small group provides us with much needed support and encouragement.
- A small group helps facilitate our faith journey.

This year a special faith-sharing resource based on the jubilee theme: "Pilgrims of Hope" has been prepared by RENEW International. They have aptly titled it as "Jubilee: Join the Journey of Hope." I found them very helpful. The six sessions include topics such as:

- Materialism versus gospel values
- Care for those in poverty, the sick, and the elderly
- Concern for young people
- Compassion and encouragement for prisoners; rejection of the death penalty
- Welcome for strangers
- Forgiveness and reconciliation

These sessions call us to grow closer to God and one another. The testimonies you hear from our own parishioners speak for themselves as to what these small group meetings can do to you personally and for your family.

As I often mention while inviting us all to join small groups, there is no requirement for a long term commitment, but a desire to attend just six sessions during the six weeks of Lent. Let us listen to the promptings that the Spirit of God is giving us and act upon them without procrastinating. Many Catholics will take part in the Jubilee by traveling to Rome or to the Holy Land. But for most of us the more practical way to be a part of a Church "on the move" is through personal reflection and sharing in a small group during Lent. For signing up, please contact **Debbie Schurko**, our Director of Religious Education, at: dschurko@stmatthias.net

Give yourself a chance, and see the difference it will make in your life, especially this Lent!

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal

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Readings for the Week Monday Sir 1:1-10 Ps 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5 Mk 9:14 -29 40 Mk 9:30-37

Tuesday Sir 2:1-11 Ps 37:3-4, 18-19, 27-28, 39-

Wednesday Sir 4:11-19 Ps 119:165, 168, 171, 172, 174, 175 Mk 9:38-40

Thursday Sir 5:1-8 Ps 1:1-4, 6 Mk 9:41-50

Friday Sir 6:5-17 Ps 119:12, 16, 18, 27, 34, 35 Mk 10:1-12

Saturday Sir 17:1-15 Ps 103:13-14, 15-16, 17-18 Mk 10:13-16

Sunday Sir 27:4-7 Ps 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16 1 Cor 15:54-58 Lk 6:39-45



Mass Intentions for the Week

Sat., February 22	5:00 PM	75th Anniversary for Marie & Mauro DeFeo by Lisa DeFeo
Sun., February 23	8:00 AM	Lauren Salvi by The Enad Family
	10:00 AM	Jean Elguicze by Maria Saumell
	12:00 PM	Intention of Parishioners
Mon., February 24	8:00 AM	Natalija Liaukiene by Nijole Klimik
Tues., February 25	8:00 AM	Jose Lawas by Agnes
Wed., February 26	8:00 AM	Birthday Blessings for Nina Ripley by the Family
Thurs., February 27	8:00 AM	Marion Bradford by Pat Dolphin
Fri., February 28	8:00 AM	Miguel & Petra Andrade by Gavilanes Family
Sat., March 1	5:00 PM	Intention of Parishioners and Courtney Onwuz by Dad, Anthony Onwuz
Sun., March 2	8:00 AM	Anne Ritchick by St. Matthias Rosary Altar Society
)	10:00 AM	Helen Bell by Nancy Inzano
	12:00 PM	Birthday Blessings for Menchie Ventura and Don Tibay by Alma Valdez

Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office or email prayer@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.

Connie Adams
Beth, Jim & Jay Adam
Sue Alese
Robert Baker
Edgar Banaag
Carolyn Banghart
Ghislaine Baron
Samantha Bellouny
Carmen Bender
Mary Bostrom
Robert Brisson
Patricia Burke
Karin Cabezaz
Ben Campbell
Tara Capatosto
Rustico Castellano
Pierre Celestin
Lisa DeFeo
Patrick Dolphin
Vivian Dong
Sanora Doyen
Andrea Dubuisson

Derowitsch Family s Hattie Evans Adam Figueriedo Margaret Ann Cichon Ford Sharon Gadomski Heinley Gaspard **Emma Gergely** Gerard Giordano Claude Godet Marie Godet Fr. Ben Gomez OMI Shelly Greene Joan Harris Linda Hartong Jeff Hentz Sloopy & JP Hoffman Marilyn Horvath Jerry & Donna Hucul Nicole Cherill Hynes Nick Isele Rafael Jara

Marilyn Jensen Jean Alix Jolly Marie Claude Jolly Donna Kahora Patty Kerekes **Betsy Kondrat** Kim Krikorian Kathy Langenbacher Rose Larangeira Linda Leone Henrietta Lesiak John Litrakis Mary Lou Litrakis Aries Magali Cynthia Magat Kenneth & Kelly Magat Bobby Manansala Susan, King & Tosh Manansala Colleen Maniscalco Alexandra Marquez Christine Matthews

Joan Mazzacco Frank McCann Ann McElwee Jessica Marie Merrick Gail Miranda Catalina Moran Sarah Braun Morini Robert Pellegrino Robert Pierro Robert Pietrowiak Randolff Pinard Valerie Polci Kim Price Frank Rispoli Gabriel Rivera **Bob Rotz** Marisa Ruppel Gloria Santos Maria Schwenzer Felix Sebastian Patricia Shea

Amy Shepp

Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF Timothy Siclari Catherine Steele Richard Sury Jacqueline Taylor Anita Vance Minda Villarica Eileen Weber Nancy Whelan Ginette Zamor Celia M. Zelinski Anne Zando

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

Rosa Pacheco de Urbina Ann Eileen Roberts Leslie Allen www.stmatthias.net Page 3

Anthony Stone February 23, 2025



Smile with Your Family



This is part 2 of a re-run from the national archives of the letters of pure hearted kids to their pastors proving how pure they are in heart:

Dear Pastor, I think a lot more people would come to your church if you moved it to Disneyland. *Loreen. Age 9. Tacoma.*

Dear Pastor, Please say a prayer for our Little League team. We need God's help or a new pitcher. Thank you, *Alexander. Age 10, Raleigh.*

Dear Pastor, My father says I should learn the Ten Commandments. But I don't think I want to because we have enough rules already in my house.

Joshua. Age 10, South Pasadena.

Dear Pastor, Who does God pray to? Is there a God for God?

Sincerely, Christopher. Age 9, Titusville.

Dear Pastor, Are there any devils on earth? I think there may be one in my class.

Carla. Age 10, Salina.

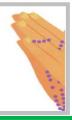
Dear Pastor, How does God know the good people from the bad people? Do you tell Him or does He read about it in the newspapers?

Sincerely, Marie. Age 9, Lewiston



SAVE THE DATES

March 15th for Parish Retreat & March 22nd for Anointing of the Sick





JUBILEE 2025: PILGRIMS OF HOPE 10 THINGS TO KNOW - #7

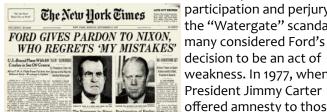
Major Events: Major events are happening in Rome, including jubilee gatherings with liturgies, speakers, and papal audiences to celebrate different groups within the church. Some of them already took place: the Jubilee of the World of Communications on Jan. 24-26, the Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel on Feb. 8-9, and the Jubilee gatherings for artists Feb. 15-18. This weekend is the Jubilee of Deacons (Feb 21-23). The month of March has three

events: 8-9: Jubilee of the World of Volunteering, 28: 24 Hours for the Lord – Lenten Mission, and 28-30: Jubilee of the Missionaries of Mercy.

Reflection: Some of these special gatherings will coincide with major canonizations, such as the canonization of Blessed Carlo Acutis during the Jubilee of Teenagers April 25-27, and the canonization of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati during the Jubilee of Young People July 28-Aug. 3. No matter what the major events are, Pope Francis asks us not to forget those who suffer and are in need of our help as he wrote in the Bull of Indiction of this Jubilee Year 2025: "During the Holy Year, we are called to be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind. ... Signs of hope should also be shown to the sick, at home or in the hospital. Their sufferings can be allayed by the closeness and affection of those who visit them. Works of mercy are also works of hope that give rise to immense gratitude. Gratitude should likewise be shown to all those healthcare workers who, often in precarious conditions, carry out their mission with constant care and concern for the sick and for those who are most vulnerable. Inclusive attention should also be given to all those in particularly difficult situations, who experience their own weaknesses and limitations, especially those affected by illnesses or disabilities that severely restrict their personal independence and freedom. Care given to them is a hymn to human dignity, a song of hope that calls for the choral participation of society as a whole." (numbers 10 & 11, Spes non Confundit)

TWO PRESIDENTS AND A TRUCK DRIVER

When President Gerald Ford granted former President Richard Nixon "a free, full and absolute pardon" for his



participation and perjury in the "Watergate" scandal, decision to be an act of weakness. In 1977, when President Jimmy Carter offered amnesty to those

who, during the Vietnamese War, had avoided being conscripted, he was criticized for not enforcing the law. Both men, one a Republican, the other a Democrat, "took the heat", as it were, because neither was motivated by partisan politics or the pressure of public opinion. Each had chosen to go beyond the limits of strict justice in order to exercise a mercy that was dictated, not by law, but by a conscience formed on gospel principles. During the race riots in Los Angeles, in the aftermath of the Rodney King incident, a truck driver named Reginald Denny was pulled from his vehicle and severely beaten with a brick. When the case went to trial in 1993, Denny stunned the courtroom with his offer of forgiveness to those who had almost killed him. Later Denny said that only by forgiving the perpetrators of the crime against him had he been able to put the event behind him and move on.

The Scripture readings we hear at Mass today are linked together by one main theme: the power of Christian love. when exercised in unconditional forgiveness. The readings also instruct us about our right and wrong choices. The right choices lead us to God, and the wrong ones break our relationship with Him and with one another. The first reading shows us how David made the right choice respecting God's anointed king by forgiving his offenses, while Saul continued to make the wrong choices, perpetuating his misery with his revenge. In the second reading, St. Paul tells us how the "First Adam" made a wrong choice of disobedience, bringing death into the world, whereas Jesus, the "Second Adam," made the correct choice of fulfilling his Father's saving plan. Today's gospel (Luke 6:27-38), gives us Jesus' revolutionary moral teaching about correct choices in our human relationships, placing special emphasis on the golden rule, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." This golden rule is amplified by a string of particular commands: "Love your enemies...Do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you and pray for those who maltreat you." For Jesus, love is a fundamental attitude that seeks another's good. Jesus orders us to love our enemies and to be merciful as God our Father is merciful. Jesus challenges us to do for others what God does for us. "Be compassionate, as your Father is compassionate." He concludes by instructing us to stop judging and start forgiving.

"JUDA BEN HUR, YOU HAVE BECOME A MASSALA"



Some of you will remember that epic Hollywood motion picture titled Ben Hur, starring Charlton Heston. You may remember it for the exciting chariot race at the end. At the time Ben Hur was the most expensive Hollywood movie ever made. In the movie, based on a Lew Wallace book, an old friend named Massala has become Juda Ben Hur's enemy. Because of Massala's evil doing, Ben Hur is captured and forced

into service down in the galley of a slave ship. Meanwhile, his mother and sister are sent off to prison. Ben Hur loses contact with them and later is told that they are dead. Juda Ben Hur, returns to Israel intent on one thing-revenge. Because of Massala, he has lost everything. And now he lives for one thing, to avenge himself upon Massala. This passion consumes Ben Hur to such an extent that his sweetheart, Esther, looking into his tortured eyes exclaims, "Juda Ben Hur, you have become a Massala." That's what hatred does to us. It is impossible to have the Spirit of Christ within us and at the same time to have a spirit of hatred for any other human being.

Solution? Pray for the strength to forgive! At every Mass we pray the "Our Father", asking God to forgive us as we forgive others. Our challenge is to overcome our natural inclination to hate. To meet that challenge we need to ask God for the strength to forgive other. Each of us needs to ask: do I have anyone in my life I call an enemy? Is there anyone who actually hates me? Are there people who would really curse me? Is there anyone in my life who mistreats me--a boss, a teacher, a parent, a co-worker, a family member, a former spouse? These things hurt us, and they are often difficult to forgive. However, we must forgive, because only forgiveness truly heals us. If we remember how God has forgiven us, it will help us forgive others. For those who have hurt us, Jesus tells us our response should be love: "Forgive and you will be forgiven." Let us start forgiving right now by curbing the sharp tongue of criticism, suppressing the revenge instinct and tolerating the irritating behavior of a neighbor.



"WE ARE NOT ADVOCATING VIOLENCE. WE MUST LOVE OUR ENEMIES."



On January 30, 1956, Martin Luther King, Jr. came home from a meeting to find his home had been bombed while his wife and children were inside. Crowds full of anger swarmed in the front yard. After a while, Dr. King

came out to address the crowd. This is what he said: "We are not advocating violence. We must love our enemies. What we are doing is just and God will be with us."

Jesus challenges our willingness to endure unjust suffering for his sake and the sake of his Gospel. For example, we must often endure the suffering that comes when a co-worker calls us "a religious fanatic" because we believe in the Ten Commandments; the pain that comes when family members refuse to associate with us because we take our faith seriously and refuse to compromise our beliefs; the suffering that comes to a practicing Christian youth who is ostracized by his friends because he won't do drugs or engage in promiscuous sexual activity. These are examples of the "little martyrdoms" that Jesus challenges us to embrace every day in his name! (CCC 2264)

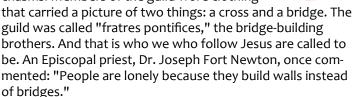
"I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO FORGIVE THE MAN WHO MURDERED MY MOTHER!"

A few years ago the small town of Palm Bay, Florida, experienced a deep community trauma. A crazed alcoholic filled his pockets with high-powered ammunition. Then, taking a semiautomatic rifle, he walked into a crowded shopping center and started killing people at random. By the time he was finally chased into a grocery store (where he held a young woman hostage for several hours before the police persuaded him to give up), he had killed six people and wounded a dozen more some seriously. Emotions ran high. One of the ladies killed was a sixtyeight year-old saint who worked in a church nursery. People were confused. What role did justice play in this kind of situation? Forgiveness? Each person had to arrive at his own conclusion.

But Sandy Thompson, the daughter of the slain woman, made a deliberate decision not to hate. "If I hate him," she told her pastor, "I am also a murderer." She said, "Jesus said, "Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment. But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.' (Matt. 5:2122). He also said: "You have heard that it was said, Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.' (Matt. 5:4344) Therefore," said Sandy Thompson, "I have no choice but to love and forgive the man who murdered my mother."

"FRATRES PONTIFICES," THE BRIDGE-BUILDING BROTHERS

In A.D. 1191, Pope Clement III approved a new guild. Its members included nobles, clergy, and artisans. The work of the guild consisted of clearing dangerous roads for pilgrims and building bridges over rivers and chasms. Members of the guild wore clothing



Practice the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Christian ethics consists, not in merely refraining from evil, but in actively doing good, not only to those who are friends, but to those who hate us or do evil against us. In other words, Jesus expects us to rise above our human instincts and imitate the goodness and generosity of God. The observance of the golden rule makes us like God whose love and mercy embrace saints and sinners alike. At the same time the Golden Rule does not require that we allow others to take advantage of us.

LESSON FROM THE GODFATHER II



Michael Corleone preaches the following principle: "Keep your friends close and your enemies closer yet." Powerful information is wrapped up in criticism. You will always learn more from your enemies than from your friends. Enemies can provide a largely untapped source of truth; they give us tips, either about us or (if the critique is off-base) about those who criticize us. Either way we receive valuable

information. Proverbs 23:12 can be translated as: "Don't refuse to accept criticism; get all the help you can."

What makes Christianity distinct from any other religion is the quality known as grace, i.e., God's own life working in us, so that we are able to treat others, not as they deserve but with love, kindness and mercy. God is good to the unjust as well as to the just. Hence our love for others, even those who are ungrateful and selfish towards us, must be marked by the same kindness and mercy which God has shown to us. When we pray for those who do us wrong, we break the power of hate in ourselves and in others, and release the power of love. How can we possibly love those who cause us harm? God gives the necessary power and grace to those who believe and accept the gift of the Holy Spirit. His love conquers our hurts, fears, prejudices and grief. Only the cross of Jesus Christ can free us from the tyranny of malice, hatred, revenge, and resentment, and give us the courage to return good for evil.

COME PRAY THE ROSARY WITH US



The Rosary Altar Society meets every the Rosary after the 10 am Mass to pray the rosary.

ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN.



Live Lent

JOIN A SMALL GROUP...? BUT WHY?

That is a reasonable question one can pose as we live in a culture that is so inclined to the philosophy of individualism. Let me give just two reasons:



First, The small groups are Biblical:

- ♦ Jesus chose his small group the disciples. (Mark 3: 14-15)
- The early church followed Jesus' example. They gathered regularly in their homes for small group fellowship (Acts 2: 42).
- The Apostle John stressed group fellowship. (I John 1:7) The Greek word John used for fellowship, "koinonia," means much more than a kind of social interaction occurring in many fellowship halls or at church potluck suppers. It is a very intimate, life-sharing type of association. Koinonia is the sort of in-depth camaraderie Jesus shared with his disciples.

Second, Scholars recommend small groups as extremely beneficial:

For most of history, group life was a given. But in today's fast-paced global society, this culture is very different. Community scholars concur in describing contemporary society as alienated, rootless, lonely, and lacking a sense of belonging. This is heightened because most of us will never get back to the extended family, the parish, and the village of earlier life. That's why there is such a proliferation of support groups in our country for all kinds of causes – a positive development that speaks of the human need to be in community. Sociological studies and scholarly opinions support this. Let me cite just one. Pastoral psychologist Robert Leslie says:

God is not found in objective law, in sterile formulas, in impersonal rules. God is found in participation, in involvement, in celebration. God is found in relationships, in encounters, in the joys and sorrows of human experience, in the give and take of dialogue. In the miracle of relatedness we discover that we are no longer strangers, but members together in a household, bound together in our common loyalty to God.

What happens in small groups? In many church small groups the participants share their ideas and experiences about their efforts in trying to understand and live the Word of God They experience an openness to talk about the more important things in their lives - to listen and care, to provide support and strength. Group members experience sufficient freedom to be themselves, without judgment from others. • From such openness and acceptance, including prayer for one another, they experience a powerful kind of bonding or warmth that brings growth and change – a feeling of being rejuvenated.

THE FIRST COMMUNION & CONFIRMATION RETREATS ARE RESCHEDULED FOR



March 23rd, 2025

St. John XXIII Room

COMMUNION RETREAT:

11am to 1pm 1 Parent & Child Attend

CONFIRMATION RETREAT:

2pm to 5pm 1 Parent or Sponsor & Candidate Attend



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We're Looking for New Members

Pastoral Council Seeks New Members

The Parish Pastoral Council is currently seeking new members. The Council advises the Pastor on all matters concerning the good health of the parish. Terms are for 3 years. If you are interested, or if you have any questions, please email **Stephen Busono** at sbusono@gmail.com or **Bill Isele** at t33sm@aol.com

Finance Council Seeks New Members

The Parish Finance Council is seeking additional members to join. The main role of the Finance Council is to advise and consult with the Pastor in matters of financial administration. For this reason, we are looking for parishioners who have had experience in the areas of business, finance and accounting. If you are interested in being considered for this ministry, please contact **Kester Hector** at <u>FinanceCouncil@stmatthias.net</u>



THE 2025 THEME FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH IS APTLY DEDICATED TO "AFRICAN AMERICANS AND LABOR."

[Adapted from the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH)].

The 2025 Black History Month theme, African Americans and Labor, focuses on the various and profound ways that work and working of all kinds – free and unfree, skilled, and unskilled, vocational and voluntary – intersect with the collective experiences of Black people. Be it the agricultural labor of enslaved Africans that fed Low Country colonies, the importance of vocational training by Black educators, self-help strategies and entrepreneurship, or organized labor's role in fighting both economic and social injustice, Black people's work has been transformational throughout the U.S., Africa, and the Diaspora. This year's theme celebrates the potent impact of this work.

A complete explanation of the theme can be found on the ALASH website - www.asalh.org/black-history-themes/
In addition to bringing you articles each week in the bulletin, the St. Martin de Porres Society of St. Matthias
erected a Black History Month display within St. Matthias School for the students there. The display features
several children's books purchased for the library by the Society on Black and Labor for use by school students.
The display will be brought to the church vestibule in the final weekend of February to coincide with the February
22nd parish-wide Mass in celebration of Black History Month at 5pm. A reception in the cafeteria will follow the
Mass. All are welcome to celebrate.

Connect



7th Annual Art & Restaurant Showcase
SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 2025
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
DOUBLETREE HOTEL, SOMERSET, NJ



Empty Bowls - Franklin is back, and our Parish, the Members of the St Vincent de Paul Society at St Matthias, and individual members of our Parish each have again signed up as sponsors of this worthy cause that serves so many people of the township. Come try delicious dishes from local chefs & restaurants, shop talented artists & potters, all while supporting Franklin Food Bank. The event will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel and Conference Center at 200 Atrium Drive in Somerset on March 9, from 1pm-4 pm. Tickets, sponsorships, and donations can be purchased online by visiting

https://franklinfoodbank.org/emptybowls/

All proceeds benefit the Franklin Food Bank. We hope to see you there!

Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025			Last Year's Total	
	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 31 - Feb. 2, 2025	\$11,179.50	\$9,145.50	\$20,325.00	\$23,533.25
Week 32 - Feb. 9, 2025	\$6,480.00	\$27,424.00	\$33,904.00	\$53,109.73
Week 33 - Feb. 16, 2025	\$8,000.00	\$13,992.50	\$21,992.50	\$20,568.93
Week 34 - Feb. 23, 2025				\$22,498.25
			Month-to-date Total	February Total Last Year
			\$76,221.50	\$119,710.16
			Current Year-to-date Total	Year-to-date as of February 29, 2024
			\$859,699.01	\$807,945.13

REMINDER!

When we contribute via check, the Chase Bank requires that the checks must be made out to "Church of St. Matthias."

No other variation of this designation will be acceptable due to greater security controls.

Stewardship Reflection February 23, 2025 7th Sunday of Ordinary Time

"But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend without expecting anything back..." - LUKE 6:35

Easier said than done, right? But, if we are to imitate Christ, most of us need to practice mercy and compassion more frequently. Start with the little daily annoyances that we experience, the unkind word or hateful glance we receive. Instead of plotting revenge on that person, try saying a quick prayer for that person. Praying for our enemies doesn't change them, it changes us. Mercy and compassion will keep us on the path to holiness.

Reflexiónese – 23 de febrero de 2025 Domingo 7° del Tiempo Ordinario

"Antes bien, amen a sus enemigos, y háganles bien, y presten sin esperar nada a cambio..." - LUCAS 6:35

Eso es más fácil decirlo que hacerlo, ¿verdad? Sin embargo, si queremos imitar a Cristo, la mayoría de nosotros necesita practicar la misericordia y la compasión más frecuentemente. Comience con las pequeñas dificultades que experimentamos diariamente, las palabras poco amables o las miradas de odio que recibimos. En lugar de preparar venganza, trate de decir una rápida oración por esa persona. Rezar por nuestros enemigos no los cambia a ellos, nos cambia a nosotros. La misericordia y la compasión nos mantienen en el camino de la santidad.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL 2025-2026 TUITION ASSISTANCE ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS OPENED January 1st



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, 2025. A signed Parish Verification Form is also required by the Diocese, and should be signed by your Pastor, and submitted to the school or schools your children attend. Eligibility requirements, instructions and forms can be found at:

Families that need assistance completing the online application or need access to a computer to apply should contact their school.

www.diometuchen.org/tuition-assistance. Applications are available in English and Spanish.

Connecting to Our Local Community



FREE TAX PREPARATION

There are AARP Foundation Tax-Aide volunteers providing free tax returns to Somerset County residents.

These volunteers go through

intensive training and testing to prepare to be IRScertified tax preparers. Several of our parishioners have had their taxes prepared by them.

If anyone wishes to make use of their assistance, know that their phone lines open **after February 1**st. It is completely free.

For an appointment, call 908-541-5710





The Lenten Journey... Reconciliation to Resurrection

Presenter: Mūmbi Kīgūtha CPPS

March 8, 2025 • 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Our Lenten Retreat Day will focus on the movement and invitation to reconciling love with self, others and God. Mumbi Kigutha CPPS, will facilitate the day weaving prayer, input, contemplative time and sharing.

Mūmbi was born and raised in Kenya but currently resides in Silver Spring, MD. She has worked with diverse vulnerable populations in various parts of the world, including assignments with various U.N. agencies. She is a dynamic writer, speaker, facilitator and retreat leader. Currently, Mūmbi ministers full-time as President of Friends in Solidarity and offers retreats and days of reflection.

Ways to Register and Participate:

- In-person for the Day Donation—\$35 (includes lunch)
- Virtual via Zoom: Suggested Offering: \$15-\$20
- Overnight Friday and attending the Retreat Saturday— Donation: \$85
- Register now via email S. Joannie Cassidy at: jcassidy@ssjphila.org



METUCHEN CURSILLO MOVEMENT

Annual Lenten Encounter with Christ

Saturday, April 5, 2025 - 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Mary, Mother of God Church, 157 S. Triangle Road Hillsborough, NJ

The Mission will continue...

Very Rev. Timothy Christy (St. Francis Cathedral, Metuchen) Dcn. Sal Bonfiglio, OFS (Mary, Mother of God Church, Hillsborough)

Share In: Mass, Stations of the Cross, Keynote Speakers, Adoration Benediction, Confession

Please Register:

https://annual-lenten-encounter-with-christ.cheddarup.com

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Kester Hector, Chair
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@stmatthias.net

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Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Ex-Officio

METUCHEN

CURSILLO

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

Page 10 www.stmatthias.net February 23, 2025





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