



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, 10 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,
 7:45 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, JANUARY 7, 2024
The Epiphany of the Lord



**Your Assistance
 is Needed.**

**Please consider
 helping us take
 down the
 Christmas Trees
 on
 January 13, 2024**

Details on page 8



*Please join us **today** after the **Noon Mass**
 as the **Franklin High School Madrigals**
 serenade us in a half hour performance
 of **Christmas music**. A beautiful way to
 end our **Christmas season** together.*



*The **Madrigals** are an inspiring group of
 young musicians from **Franklin Township**
 who sing in **traditional medieval** costumes.*

ADORATION
 OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT



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

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, 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

Monday, Jan 8, 2024 Baptism of the Lord

8:00AM	Mass, Miraculous Medal	Church
6:00PM	Eucharistic Adoration	Church

Tuesday, Jan 9, 2024

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:30PM	GIFT	Clrms & John XXIII Rm
7:30PM	SVDP Mtg.	de Porres Rm

Wednesday, Jan 10, 2024 St. William of Bourges, Cistercian Bishop

8:00AM	Mass, St. Joseph Novena	Church
9:30AM	Prayer Group 1 Holy Spirit	de Porres Rm
7:30PM	Confirmation Prep #1 Gr. 7	John XXIII Rm
7:30PM	Folk Group Rehearsal	Church

Thursday, Jan 11, 2024 St. Theodosius of Cenobiarch, Abbot & Founder

8:00AM	Mass	Church
3:30PM	Children's Choir Gr. 3 & 4	Church
4:00PM	Children's Choir Gr. 5-8	Church
7:30PM	Sunday 10AM Choir Rehearsal	Church

Friday, Jan 12, 2024 St. Bernard of Corleone, Religious

8:00AM	Mass	Church
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Saturday, Jan 13, 2024 St. Hilary of Poitiers, Bishop & Doctor

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

Sunday, Jan 14, 2024

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass w/Sign Language Interpreter	Church
12:00PM	Mass	Church

Bulletin Article Requests:

If you would like to send information to be included in our bulletin, please email it to bulletin@stmatthias.net 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,

Today we celebrate the Feast of Epiphany. Our noon Mass has often been a bi-lingual Mass. Three Kings will join our entrance procession. Immediately following Mass, the Franklin High School Madrigals will perform a 1/2-hour program of Christmas music for our enjoyment. The Madrigals are an inspiring group of young musicians from Franklin Township who sing in traditional medieval costumes.

In its Greek origin, *Epiphany* refers to God's revelation to humans. Today we focus on the wise men or magi whom later legends have named as Melchior, Casper, and Balthazar. They may have been of noble birth, educated, wealthy, and influential. Whether we agree or not with the non-biblical descriptions of them, one thing is certain: they had studied the Hebrew Scriptures, in particular, the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. Their study of the Scriptures led them to the Messiah and they adored him.

Reading and praying the Scriptures is the surest way to know the Messiah. The decision to do it daily is an excellent resolution for the New Year. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the famous German Lutheran theologian and anti-Nazi dissident, described Jesus as "the man for others." He wrote: "The church is the church only when it exists for others...The church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving." We are aware that this holiday season of Christmas, New Year, and Epiphany is a very difficult time for many people due to grieving the loss of a dear one, struggling with personal problems, and suffering from loneliness, depression, and other issues. Are we conscious of their plight?

I emailed a parishioner who was grieving the loss of her husband and assured her of my prayers and thoughts this Christmas. Her reply truly edified me: "Well, we made it through the first Christmas. Years ago, we started the practice of making sure others were not alone for the holidays. Mom had friends who had no family or family who lived far away. My husband and I would take our celebration on the road to them or pick them up with Mom to join us. This year, I invited my cousin to join us. He was divorced a couple of years ago and was not the one who wanted the divorce. He's been very sad and lonely and sometimes angry. He misses his wife and 2 children very much. After Mass, I went home and cooked dinner to bring to Mom at the Rehab. He joined us. Mom said grace. We joked about how Dad would always tease her that it was too long. We all came together each with our own sense of loss, but laughed, told stories, and had great family time. My cousin smiled. He told us the story of how he rescued an abandoned dog on the highway (he's a truck driver). God gave us the support we needed through each other."

What a wonderful testimony of a grieving and lonely person reaching out to others who are lonely! Jesus expects us to be men and women for others. He wants us to be his hands and feet, to reach out to others in understanding, love, and care.

I will be leaving this evening for India to visit my family. I will return in three weeks.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal

Readings for the Week

Monday, January 8, 2024 Is 42:1-4, 6-7 or Is 55:1-11 or Acts 10:34-38 or 1Jn 5:1-9
Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 or Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6
Mk 1:7-11

Tuesday, January 9, 2024 1 Sm 1:9-20 1
Sam 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd Mk 1:21-28

Wednesday, January 10, 2024 1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20
Ps 40:2 and 5, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10 Mk 1:29-39

Thursday, January 11, 2024 1 Sm 4:1-11
Ps 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25 Mk 1:40-45

Friday, January 12, 2024 1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a
Ps 89:16-17, 18-19 Mk 2:1-12

Saturday, January 13, 2024 1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19;
10:1 Ps 21:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 Mk 2:13-17

Sunday, January 14, 2024 1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19
Ps 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10 1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20
Jn 1:35-42

Mass Intentions for the Week

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
Monday, Jan 8	8:00AM	Mary Ann Selenko, by Robert & Connie Brancato
Tuesday, Jan 9	8:00AM	Julian, Cenon & The DeGuzman Family, by Alma
Wednesday, Jan 10	8:00AM	Birthday Blessings for Brian C.J King, by Mom, Eileen
Thursday, Jan 11	8:00AM	Bert Maglio, by Mom, Dad, Pete & Sue
Friday, Jan 12	8:00AM	Oliva Encalada, by The Gavilanes Family
Saturday, Jan 13	5:00PM	Marty Shaw, by Peter Horvath
Sunday, Jan 14	8:00AM	Intention of Parishioners
	10:00AM	Ernesia Macri, by Julia Barbiero & Family
	12:00PM	95th Birthday Blessings for Nancy Checchio, by Family

Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office or **email Kelly Counts** at kcunts@stmatthias.net 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 Mary Agnello	Claudia Gemgnani Emma Gergely	Bill Kelleher Betsy Kondrat	Jessica Marie Merrick Gail Miranda	Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF Sr. Bernadine Marie Stemnock
Olga Marie Bando Carolyn Banghart Samantha Bellouny Mary Bostrom	Gerry & Jack Gernert Claude Godet Marie Godet Shelly Greene	Kathy Langenbacher Armando D. Liban Mary Lou Litrakis John Litrakis	Danny Ongchango Robert Pellegrino Robert Pietrowiak Randolff Pinard	Luzviminda Talag Jacqueline Taylor Anita Vance Eileen Weber
Tara Capatosto Elizabeth Card Kyle Davidson Lisa DeFeo Zenon DeGuzman Marlene DiMaggio Vivian Dong Hattie Evans Heinley Gaspard	Linda Hartong Jeff Hentz Sloopy & PJ Hoffman Marilyn Horvath Amanda Isele Baby Elaine Isele Nick Isele Bill Johnson Renée Jolly	Denis Loboda Aries Magali Kenneth & Kelly Magat Al Maglio Susan, King & Tosh Manansala Alexandra Marquez Christine Matthews Ann McElwee	Valerie Polci Kim Price Denise Pultro Doris Regan Gabriel Rivera Arina Robinson Bob Rotz Maria Schwenzer Amy Shepp	Nancy Whelan Ginette Zamor 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

Mal Shanley

Reflect



Smile with Your Family



Teaching a parrot to behave: There is this parrot who repeated a bunch of swear words and the owner says, "If you don't stop swearing I'm going to put you in the freezer." But the parrot swears again and the guy puts him in the freezer. The parrot continues cussing up a storm but after a few minutes the parrot suddenly stops. The guy says "Will you stop swearing now?" and the parrot says "I'll stop, but first I want to know what the chicken did." 😊

Science joke: Do not trust atoms, for they make up everything! 😊

My friend is such a big fan of the Royal Family, each of his four sons are named after a king: Henry, George, Charles, and Burger 😊

The king asks a commoner... "Give me your daughter's hand in marriage, and I'll give you her weight in gold." "I will need a couple of weeks first." - Replies the commoner. "To think it over?" asks his majesty. "No-to fatten her up." 😊

I was chatting to a graphic designer about the font to be used for invitations for the baby's christening. "How about comic sans?" I said "Oh no" she scoffed, "for this occasion we're gonna need a baptismal font" 😊

Q: Why did God test Abraham with sacrificing his only son, Isaac, when Isaac was a young boy?

A: Because if Isaac had been a teenager, Abraham would probably have gone through with it. 😊



Parenting Tune-Up

January 7 is the feast of the Epiphany when Christians celebrate the 3 wise men's (foreigners) search for God. Legend has it that they followed a star. Gazing at stars can be a mystical experience. Look up at the sky with your child tonight. Hopefully you will see stars. Ponder the universe together.

Marriage Tune-Up

Ways to Turn Your Beloved Off!! - Let Lists Rule Your Life. It's the season of New Year's Resolutions. This can be good, but it can also turn your focus away from your beloved to self-improvement. Today, make 1 specific Resolution to deepen your love.



"ALL THE LIGHT WE CANNOT SEE"



[The magi] were overjoyed at seeing the star and on entering the house; they saw the child and his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Matthew 2: 1-12

Netflix is currently airing a four-part adaptation of Anthony Doerr's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel **All the Light We Cannot See**.

The hero is 16-year-old Marie-Laure, the blind daughter of the widowed master locksmith at the Museum of Natural History in Paris. Marie-Laure loses her sight at the age of six due to congenital cataracts. Her father is determined that his beloved daughter will not live a life of self-pity, so he teaches her Braille and designs intricate puzzle boxes for her to solve. Under his guidance, Marie-Laure learns to negotiate her way with her cane from their apartment to the museum and then home again. Despite her natural shyness, Marie-Laure develops a sharp, inquisitive intelligence and a steely resilience as World War II begins.

When Paris falls to the Nazis, Marie-Laure and her father flee to the town of Saint-Malo in Brittany where they take refuge with relatives. There her father constructs a detailed wooden model of the town. By touching each door, each tree, each streetlight in the model, Marie-Laure memorizes every street and landmark until she can confidently make her way around the coastal town. She counts the steps and

manhole covers; she learns the sounds and smells unique to every street and place; she follows railings, cables, and hedges. The shy, blind little girl grows into a courageous and resourceful young woman. Marie-Laure's intelligence, resourcefulness and courage make her an unexpectedly effective operative for the French Resistance. She is able to see "the light" that the "seeing" world around her cannot perceive. She embraces the simple wisdom and faith of her aunt in Saint-Malo: "If God wants us to see something, we'll see it."

Epiphany celebrates the dawning of Christ, the light of God that shatters the darkness of sin and hopelessness, the light that illuminates our hearts to realize the love of God in our midst. But to "see" that love in our lives, as Marie-Laure learns, requires us to pay attention for the signs of that love: realities we do not readily perceive or understand or appreciate — or would rather ignore altogether. Too often we retreat into the safe isolation of convention or we find comfort in cold rationalizations rather than "seeing" the brokenness of our brothers and sisters or hearing the cries of the poor and needy in our midst. Like Marie-Laure's persistence in learning to "see" with the eye of her intellect and understanding, we have to look with more than just our senses but with our hearts and souls to "see" our world through God's prism of hope and possibility.

PAYING HOMAGE IN BETHLEHEM

The ancient texts they studied pointed them in the direction of the country of the Jews.

They searched the heavens as the sages indicated. Then, gathering precious gifts, they set out to find this king that God had raised up. The journey naturally took them to Jerusalem, the sophisticated capital city of Judaism — but the king they encountered there was the antithesis of the king they were searching for. They were redirected to Bethlehem, a small village a few miles — and another world — away. There they found the place they were looking for: a tired young mom and her little boy playing peacefully.

In their hearts, they knew they had found who they were looking for. The prophecies were fulfilled. They had followed the right star. These men — the wisest of the wise of their time — shook the dust off their boots and robes and entered the small dwelling. Humbly, they presented their gifts to the child — offerings that foretold the life that lay before this boy.

What was missing in the courts of the powerful in the city they found in a hovel in that village: humility, compassion, peace — and hope. God had entered human history as a vulnerable, happy child. Moreover, they were wise enough to realize the divine in their midst. And they did him homage.

We, too, seek God — but, more often than not, we find him in unexpected places. We insist on looking in great cathedrals when God is present in a hospital room; we are swept up in great displays of power but fail to see God's hand at work with the farmer bringing his vegetables to harvest; we are moved to tears by a magnificent oratorio but are deaf to God's joy in a giggling child. In the year ahead, may we seek God in the Bethlehems we travel and work to bring our Bethlehems' simple peace, uncomplicated justice and blessed compassion to our Jerusalems and centers of power. Let us bow in gratitude before the gift of bread on our tables; before babies; before ocean waves, sunrises and sunsets; before the poor, the vulnerable and marginalized; before all that is good and holy. For there is God, among us, in our Bethlehems.

ALWAYS GOOD TO BE REMINDED OF ARTABAN THE FOURTH WISE MAN

In 1895, Henry van Dyke wrote the "Story of the Other Wise Man," a fourth wise man called Artaban. Our hero is not mentioned in the Gospel because he missed the caravan. He got to Bethlehem too late to see the baby Jesus. But Artaban did make it in time to save one of the Holy Innocents by bribing a soldier. For 33 years Artaban searched for Jesus. He did not find him. But all the while the

Fourth wise man fed the hungry, helped the poor. Then one day in Jerusalem Artaban saw the "King of the Jews" being crucified. He started to offer a pearl as ransom. But then he saw a girl being sold into slavery to pay family debts. Artaban gave his pearl to buy freedom for the girl. Suddenly the earth quaked as Jesus died on the cross and a stone struck Artaban. Dying, he heard a voice saying: "When you helped the least of my children, you helped me. Meet me in heaven!" Artaban, the fourth Wise Man, had been making God present in his community for years by helping others. God asks each of us on the feast of Epiphany to be a fourth Wise Man by becoming God's epiphanies, making His love present in the world around us by our acts of love and kindness.

THE MAGI, THE STAR AND THE THREE GIFTS

The *Magi* were not Kings, but a caste of Persian priests who served Kings using their skills in interpreting dreams and watching movements of stars. The sixth century Italian tradition that there were three Magi, Casper, Balthazar, and Melchior, is based on the fact that three gifts are mentioned in Matthew's Gospel: gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Magi may actually have been Persian priests, Babylonian astronomers, or Nabataean spice-traders. Eventually, however, they were pictured as representatives of different peoples and races. The Orthodox Church holds that the Magi consisted of twelve Kings, corresponding in number to the twelve tribes of Israel. Commentary on the Torah by Jewish rabbis suggested that a star appeared in the sky at the births of Abraham, Isaac and Moses.

Likewise, in the Book of Numbers, the prophet Balaam speaks of "a star that shall come out of Jacob." Stars were believed to be signs from God, announcing important events. Thus, the brightness of the Light to which kings were drawn was made visible in the star they followed.



The gifts: Gold, frankincense and myrrh may be thought of as prophesying Jesus' future. Gold was a gift for Kings; frankincense (an ancient air purifier and perfume), was offered to God in Temple worship (Ex. 30:37); and myrrh (an oriental remedy for intestinal worms in infants), was used by the High Priest as an anointing oil (Ex. 30:23), and to prepare bodies for burial. These gifts were not only expensive but also portable. Perhaps Joseph sold the gifts to finance the Holy Family's trip to Egypt. The gifts might have been God's way of providing for the journey that lay ahead.



WHY IS THE BAPTISM OF JESUS ON A WEEKDAY?

"When the Solemnity of the Epiphany is transferred to Sunday, if this Sunday occurs on January 7 or 8, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the following Monday" (Third Roman Missal).

Hence, this year, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord is tomorrow, January 8.

This feast brings to an end the season of Christmas. The Church recalls Our Lord's second manifestation or epiphany which occurred on the occasion of His baptism in the Jordan. Jesus descended into the River to sanctify its waters and to give them the power to beget sons of God. The event takes on the importance of a second creation in which the entire Trinity intervenes.

In the Eastern Church this feast is called *Theophany* because at the baptism of Christ in the River Jordan God appeared in three persons. The baptism of John was a sort of sacramental preparatory for the Baptism of Christ. It moved men to sentiments of repentance and induced them to confess their sins. Christ did not need the baptism of John. Although He appeared in the "substance of our flesh" and was recognized "outwardly like unto ourselves", He was absolutely sinless and impeccable. He conferred upon the water the power of the true Baptism which would remove all the sins of the world: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who takes away the sin of the world".

Many of the incidents which accompanied Christ's baptism are symbolical of what happened at our Baptism. At Christ's baptism the Holy Spirit descended upon Him; at our Baptism the Trinity took its abode in our soul. At His baptism Christ was proclaimed the "Beloved Son" of the Father; at our Baptism we become the adopted sons of God. At Christ's baptism the heavens were opened; at our Baptism heaven was opened to us. At His baptism Jesus prayed; after our Baptism we must pray to avoid actual sin.

—Excerpted from Msgr. Rudolph G. Bandas



WASH OFF THE STUFF OF THE DAY!

One of the most successful and personable people on television is Oprah Winfrey. Movies, book clubs, she does it all- huge business operations. While all the other talk shows on television are tearing people apart and putting all their illnesses out for public humiliation, Oprah is helping put people and families back together again. . . In a *Newsweek* magazine interview the interviewer asked her, "How do you separate yourself from work?" Answer, "I take a hot bath. . . My bath is my sanctuary. (Listen to this) It's the place where I can wash off all the stuff of the day" ((Jan 8, 2001, p. 45). Baptism is a huge symbol – it's the water of creation. . . we are born anew. . . life in the Spirit . . . all the "stuff" of the day is washed off. All of that is true. But at its basic level, Baptism is the death of the old self. Before anything new can be born, the old has to pass away.



And just as [Jesus] was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. Mark 1: 4-11

TWO SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

Among the millions of Jews imprisoned by the Nazis in the death camps of the '30's & '40's was Victor Frankl. In spite of the horrors and the odds, he survived. Around him, next to him, each day of his ordeal, dozens, hundreds, thousands of fellow-Jews and others died. Most of them died in the ovens, of course, but there were others who died simply because they gave up hope and lost heart, overwhelmed by horror and fear and hopelessness. Frankl survived, he said, because two forces sustained him: one was the certainty of his wife's love. The other was an inner drive to rewrite the manuscript of a book he had completed after years of labor – which the Nazis had destroyed. Frankl's imprisonment was lightened by daily imaginary conversations with his wife and by scrawling notes for his book on all the bits and scraps of paper, he could find. Now Frankl has written eloquently of these two insights to cope with life: first, the discovery and certainty of being loved, and, second, having a clear and controlling purpose in life. [Nate Castens, Chanhassen, Minnesota, via Ecunet, Gospel Notes for Next Sunday, #2815]

Both are the messages we receive in Christian Baptism. By Baptism we become the adoptive sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus, members of his Church, heirs of Heaven and temples of the Holy Spirit. We become incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ, and made sharers in the priesthood of Christ [CCC 5613].

Connect & Serve



Giving Tree Generosity

Due to the generosity of our parishioners, many children and adults in the area who are in need, will have a gift to unwrap this Christmas morning. However, we would like to acknowledge the "unsung heroines and heroes" who spent hours sorting and delivering the packages. Many thanks to our Chairperson Joanne Diana (photo right) who purchased and tagged our new Giving Tree, contacted organizations, and oversaw the sorting and delivery of all the gifts. Kara Wong (left) is one of our volunteers who helped carry and sort gifts.

The photo below was taken on the last day during the heavy rainstorm and flooding. In spite of the inclement weather, volunteers Sharon & Anthony Yorlano (left) and Dominick & Rommy DelVecchio (right) braved the weather, and delivered many of the gifts to their destination.

Thank you to all parishioners who donated and assisted with the Giving Tree Gifts and for helping to bring joy to the hearts of many.



Pray



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.

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 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.

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

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

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.

Connect & Serve



**Volunteers
Needed**

HELP WANTED!

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2024 at 9:00 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



Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023				Last Year's Total
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 23 - Dec. 3, 2023	\$11,088.00	\$16,600.50	\$27,688.50	\$31,740.25
Week 24 - Dec. 10, 2023	\$9,084.00	\$24,533.75	\$33,617.75	\$38,685.75
Week 25 - Dec. 17, 2023	\$9,502.10	\$12,750.25	\$22,252.35	\$22,959.25
Week 26 - Dec. 24, 2023		\$11,882.05	\$11,882.05	\$64,137.25
Week 27 - Dec. 31, 2023				
* Christmas and Sunday			Month-to-date Total	Month-to-date Total
			\$95,440.65	\$157,522.50
Christmas (In-pew/			Current Year-to-date	Current Year-to-date
(Parish Giving):			\$2,009,877.40	\$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 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 January 7, 2024 Epiphany of the Lord

"They fell down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." - Matthew 2:11

Notice the order of events in the Magi's visit. First, they knelt before Jesus and prayed to Him. Then they presented Him with their gifts. We, too, must take time to pray before we present our gifts to the Lord. We never know what God may be asking us to share!

Reflexiónese 7 de enero de 2024 Epifanía del Señor

"Y postrándose lo adoraron; y abriendo sus tesoros le presentaron obsequios de oro, incienso y mirra". - Mateo 2:11

Observe el orden de los eventos en la visita de los Reyes Magos. Primero, se arrodillaron ante Jesús y lo adoraron. Luego le presentaron sus obsequios. Nosotros también debemos tomar tiempo para orar antes de presentarle nuestros obsequios al Señor. ¡No sabemos lo que Dios nos puede pedir que compartamos!



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.

Connect



ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP MEETS VIRTUALLY ON 1/10 AT 2 PM

The Alzheimer's Association and Saint Matthias Catholic Church are co-hosting a monthly Support Group for individuals living with Alzheimer's or Dementia, their care partners, and others dealing with the disease. Our next meeting will be **Wednesday, January 10th, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM** on Zoom. Registration is required in order to get the Zoom link. To register, call 800-272-3900 and mention the St. Matthias group.

The Group provides a safe and supportive environment and offers dementia-related education, emotional support, and connections with resources so that the group members may enhance their lives in the midst of the journey. For more information, visit alz.org/NJ.

Connecting to Our Local Community

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 Avenue, 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.

Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council: Co-Chairs: Frank Rees Frees814@gmail.com Marilyn Wegg mcw-wam@comcast.net	Co-Secretaries: Stephen Busono sbusono@gmail.com Bill Isele t33sm@aol.com Al Drabnis Didi Molano	Sheila Tartaglia Fr. Lancelot McGrath, 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 Orlovski	Audrey Francis Joan Pritchard Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Ex-Officio Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio
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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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