



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,
7:45 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 28, 2024
4th Sunday in Ordinary Time



**Catholic
Schools Week
Begins Today!**

Join us at the
10:00 AM Mass,
followed by an
**Open House at
the School.**



SAVE THE DATE!
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST
TO BENEFIT
TUITION ANGELS

The St. Matthias Council, Knights of Columbus will hold its annual Pancake Breakfast in honor of Past Grand Knight **Robert Norland** on **Sunday, February 11th** from **8:00 am - 12:00 noon** in the **school cafeteria**.

Proceeds from the breakfast will benefit **St. Matthias School Tuition Angels**. The cost is \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for ages 11-17 and children under 11 are free.



PLEASE COME JOIN THE MANY WHO SPEND
SOME QUIET TIME WITH THE
EUCCHARISTIC LORD.
OUR NEXT ADORATION WILL BE
MONDAY EVENING, JANUARY 29, 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 28, 2024

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass– Sign Lang. Interpreter	Church
	Catholic Schools Week begins @ Mass	
10:00AM	First Eucharist Prep #1 Class	Church
11:00AM	CSW SMS Open House	School & Cafeteria
11:00AM	1st Eucharist Prep #1 Class	John XXIII Rm
12:00PM	Mass	Church
3:30PM	SMYLE Youth Group	Cafeteria

Monday, Jan 29, 2024 St. Constantius of Perugia, Patron of Perugia

8:00AM	Mass– Miraculous Medal	Church
6:00PM	Eucharist Adoration	Church

Tuesday, Jan 30, 2024 St. Martina of Rome, Martyr

8:00AM	Mass	Church
7:30PM	Handbell Choir Rehearsal	Church

Wednesday, Jan 31, 2024 St. John Bosco, Priest

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

Thursday, Feb 1, 2024 St. Henry Morse, 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	Sunday 10AM Choir Rehearsal	Church

Friday, Feb 2, 2024 Presentation of the Lord SMS CSW Athletic Bowl

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:30AM	First Friday Holy Hour	Church
10:30AM	Mass at Spring Hills Facility	Off Site

Saturday, Feb 3, 2024 St. Blaise, Bishop & Martyr Live Lent Registration Begins online

3:30PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Vigil Mass	Church
5:30PM	Night of Winners (SMS)	Cafeteria

Sunday, Feb 4, 2024

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	
11:00AM	Rosary Altar Society Mtg.	John XXIII Rm
12:00PM	Mass	Church
2:00PM	GIFT	Church, Clsrms, John XXIII Rm



Bulletin Article Requests:

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



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Brothers,

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord is celebrated this year on Friday, February 2, and that means we are also getting close to the annual *World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life*.

Primarily, of course, we commemorate Simeon's proclamation of Our Lord as the light to the nations and the glory of Israel. But this Feast is also when we take some time in our parishes and schools to call attention to the men and women in consecrated life who consistently make their light shine in our diocese through their vowed commitment of making Jesus Christ the center of their lives.

It would be appreciated if you would recognize the consecrated persons serving in your parish, school, or nearby institutions, either sometime around February 2 or in your parish at the weekend Masses of February 3/4. Does your parish have any native sons or daughters in Religious Life? Consider honoring them. Does your parish have a history with a particular religious community who served in the past? Perhaps remember them or invite them to a Mass. Resources to help you promote this special day are available on the USCCB website <https://www.usccb.org/events/2024/world-day-prayer-consecrated-life>. As always, you may also contact Sister Anna Nguyen, SCC, our diocesan Delegate for Religious, at anguyen@diometuchen.org for additional resources.

While I am grateful for all you do for our people, know in particular of my appreciation and prayers for all your efforts in fostering vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated Life. Following our presbyteral convocation and meeting with our parish vocation teams, we are already seeing fruits. Certainly, it is an honor and sign of a healthy parish when a young man and woman hears God's call with the help of their parish and responds with a generous "yes". We need them too!

With renewed best wishes, I remain

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend James. F. Checchio, JCD, MBA
Bishop of Metuchen

Readings for the Week

Monday, January 29, 2024 2 Sm 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13 Ps 3:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 Mk 5:1-20

Tuesday, January 30, 2024 2 Sm 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30-19:3 Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 Mk 5:21-43

Wednesday, January 31, 2024 2 Sm 24:2, 9-17 Ps 32:1-2, 5, 6, 7 Mk 6:1-6

Thursday, February 1, 2024 1 Kgs 2:1-4, 10-12 1 Chr 29:10, 11ab, 11d-12a, 12bcd Mk 6:7-13

Friday, February 2, 2024 Mal 3:1-4 Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10 Heb 2:14-18 Lk 2:22-40 or Lk 2:22-32

Saturday, February 3, 2024 1 Kgs 3:4-13 Ps 119:9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 Mk 6:30-34

Sunday, February 4, 2024 Jb 7:1-4, 6-7 Ps 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23 Mk 1:29-39

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, Jan 27	5:00PM	Intention of Parishioners
Sunday, Jan 28	8:00AM	Joan & Terry Seamon, by Sr. Marie Therese
	10:00AM	Dennis Stuewe
	12:00PM	Lou Carcich, by The Carcich Family
Monday, Jan 29	8:00AM	Blessings on your 40th Anniversary, Fr. Abraham, by Sr. Marie Therese & Sr. Maria
		Health & Blessings for Chibuikem & Christopher Nwanonyiri, by Kate Nwanonyiri
Tuesday, Jan 30	8:00AM	Lorriane Zaborowski, by Mary Duca
Wednesday, Jan 31	8:00AM	Tom Devlin, by Ann & Children
Thursday, Feb 1	8:00AM	Denise Fili, by Rose Marlin
Friday, Feb 2	8:00AM	Mary Ann Vetter, by The Folk Group
Saturday, Jan Feb 3	5:00PM	Intention of Parishioners
	8:00AM	Richard Curtis, by The Curtis Family
	10:00AM	Blessings for Karen Di Lella, by Nancy Inzano

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	Claudia Gemgnani	Betsy Kondrat	Menchie Molano-Sotelo	Sr. Bernadine Marie Stemnock
Mary Agnello	Emma Gergely	Kathy Langenbacher	Danny Ongchango	Luzviminda Talag
Kristin Baio	Claude Godet	Armando D. Liban	Robert Pellegrino	Jacqueline Taylor
Olga Marie Bando	Marie Godet	Mary Lou Litrakis	Robert Pietrowiak	Anita Vance
Carolyn Banghart	Shelly Greene	John Litrakis	Valerie Polci	Eileen Weber
Samantha Bellouny	Linda Hartong	Denis Loboda	Kim Price	Nancy Whelan
Carmen Bender	Jeff Hentz	Aries Magali	Denise Pultro	Theresa Sau-Ling Yung
Mary Bostrom	Sloopy & PJ Hoffman	Kenneth & Kelly Magat	Doris Regan	Ginette Zamor
Tara Capatosto	Gene Horan	Al Maglio	Gabriel Rivera	Anne Zando
Elizabeth Card	Marilyn Horvath	Susan, King & Tosh Manansala	Arina Robinson	
Kyle Davidson	Jerry & Donna Hucul	Alexandra Marquez	Bob Rotz	And for all who are ill, homebound, elderly, in nursing care, or living with chronic illness, we pray.
Lisa DeFeo	Amanda Isele	Christine Matthews	Maria Schwenzer	
Zenon DeGuzman	Baby Elaine Isele	Ann McElwee	Amy Shepp	
Vivian Dong	Nick Isele	Jessica Marie Merrick	Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF	
Hattie Evans	Renée Jolly	Gail Miranda		
Heinley Gaspard	Bill Kelleher			

Pray for those who have died...

— “His mercy endures forever.” Chronicles

Reflect



Smile with Your Family



The new nurse asked the psychiatric doctor "Is that man really sick?" "He surely is," answered the doctor gravely. "I don't know of a more serious set of complications. For forty years he has suffered agonies from imaginitis, scarecoma, apprehendicitis, and general fearosis of living!" 😊

A newly ordained Minister, in the first days of his first call, was attempting to console the widow of an eccentric man who had just died. Standing before the open casket, the nervous young pastor said, "I realize this must be a very hard blow for you, Mrs. Svenson. Just try to remember that what we see before us is only the husk, the shell of your dear husband—the nut has gone to heaven." 😊

Last night I dreamed I was the author of The Lord of the Rings. I've been Tolkien in my sleep. 😊

A Bar opened opposite a Church. The Church Prayed Daily against the bar business. Days later the bar was struck by lightning & caught fire, which destroyed it. Bar Owner Sued the Church Authorities for the cause of its destruction, as it was an action because of their Prayer. The Church Denied all Responsibility!!! So, the judge commented, "It's Difficult to Decide the Case because here we have a Bar Owner Who Believes in the Power of Prayer & an Entire Church that Doesn't Believe in it" 😊

Have you heard about the first baseball game in the Bible? In the big inning. Eve stole first, Adam stole second. Cain struck out Abel. The Giants and the Angels were rained out. 😊



Parenting Tune-Up

"You are not your children! Your success as a parent does not depend on their success. Resist the urge to take credit for your child's successes, lest you also take the blame for their mistakes."

Marriage Tune-Up

Want to know another way to Turn Your Beloved Off? - Let obsessions distract you from being present to your beloved. How clean does the house really need to be? Hobbies are fun but can steal together time. Perfectionism can rob you of laughing together at your mistakes.



WHEN A DOORBELL'S RING MEANS HOPE

The people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and said, "Quiet! Come out of him!" The unclean spirit convulsed him and with a loud cry came out of him. All were amazed and asked one another, "What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him." Mark 1: 21-28

On a beautiful clear blue October day, Charlotte Maya and her two children returned home from a hike to find a policeman, a policewoman and a priest waiting for them in their driveway, there to deliver the news that her husband, Sam, had taken his life. Charlotte knew her husband had been stressed about work, but she hadn't seen this coming. Suddenly she was a widow and the single parent of two young children.

In her memoir **Sushi Tuesday: A Memoir of Love, Loss and Family Resilience**, Charlotte recounts her struggle to guide her children forward while dealing with her own grief and hurt. The coming holidays were an especially painful time: how could Charlotte possibly make this season a magical time for her two boys?

Then, in mid-December, the mystery began. The doorbell rang sometime after dark, but when her six-year-old answered, nobody was at the door. Instead, he found a triangular box containing a do-it-yourself gingerbread house. The box was trimmed with a wide silver ribbon and a note that read *On the first day of Christmas . . .* The doorbell rang again the next night. Another package tied with the same silver ribbon. Inside that box: two snowman mugs with packets of hot chocolate mix tucked inside each. The note read *On the second day of Christmas . . .* Each successive evening, gifts appeared on their doorstep. All simple, always with the signature silver ribbon and a handwritten note: three candy canes, four Christmas tree ornaments, and so on. The boys began hiding inside the house each night hoping to see who the mystery giver was. Charlotte suspected her friend Caren was the secret Santa, but Caren insisted she had nothing to do with the nightly gifts. "Seriously," Caren said. "I wish it was me." After a few nights, Charlotte warmed to the idea of not knowing and started distracting the kids so that the anonymous giver would remain so.

continued

When a doorbell's ring means hope (continued)

And then came Christmas Eve. Charlotte writes: "After 11 days of offerings, we weren't sure what to expect when we approached home on that 12th night. I trusted there would be something, but after all the nights building up to that moment, would my kids be disappointed? Would I? They wondered aloud what might await us at home. Chocolates? A dozen cookies? "[We] found 12 exquisitely wrapped packages — four for [each of the children] and four for me. All different kinds of paper, every possible color of ribbon, several styles of handwriting. Toys, games, goodies and a Bruin baseball cap in my favorite shade of powder blue. The white card read simply: Merry Christmas!

"It was a strange feeling, to be wrenched so hard by grief and darkness on the one hand and drawn so firmly toward light and hope on the other. To feel bereft and abandoned yet also held, grounded and supported. "In those dark days of intense grief, somebody was shining a light on our way with a simple but powerful message: *You are seen. You are loved.* "Even as it was happening, the not knowing quickly became my favorite part. That mysterious light pushing its way into our ineffable darkness. Not a miracle. Not magic. Just generous, selfless, human love."

[From **Sushi Tuesdays: A Memoir of Love, Loss, and Family Resilience** by Charlotte Maya (c) 2023 published by Post Hill Press, and "**Modern Love: 'Sometimes a Doorbell's Ring Can Mean Hope'**" by Charlotte Maya, *The New York Times*, December 24, 2022.]

Charlotte Maya's "secret Santa" possesses the power that Jesus displays in today's Gospel: by his or her kindness, the mysterious gift giver brings a measure of light and hope to a struggling family by simple "generous, selfless, human love." In the spirit of Jesus' Gospel of compassionate reconciliation and humble justice, we can "cast out" anger, fear and hurt that isolate us and others, that mire us in fear, that blind us to the love of God in our midst. We can be the voice of Christ "driving out" the "unclean" spirits that "possess" us in fear and grief, "dispossessing" us of the things of God. By his grace, God enables us to cast out the "demons" that isolate us, that mire us in fear and selfishness, that blind us to the love of God in our midst.

Stewardship Quote:

**"Brothers and sisters: I should like you to be free of anxieties."
- 1 Corinthians 7:32**

How much anxiety do we bring upon ourselves by constantly worrying about not having enough or attaining more things? God won't necessarily give you everything you want, but He will provide everything you need. Try this – use the word "pray" instead of the word "worry" in the future. (Archbishop Carlson)

It is a Sad Story

We see good people addicted to alcohol, addicted to drugs, addicted to all kinds of inappropriate, often destructive behavior, and with good reason we ask, "What got into them? Surely they knew better. Why did they let this happen?" In Jesus' time they might have answered it this way, "They were possessed by a demon." How many of you sports fans remember the name Mickey Mantle? When Mickey Mantle played for the New York Yankees, many fans and sports writers predicted that he would be the best ever to play the game of baseball. He demonstrated spectacular talent and athleticism from a young age. He was voted the Most Valuable Player of the American League three times, and set numerous records that still stand today. But even Mantle will admit that he never lived up to his potential. Mantle became addicted to alcohol during his second season in the big leagues. He did such a good job of hiding his problem that his coaches and teammates never suspected anything. Mantle continued to battle his addiction until he turned sixty-three, when he finally went public with his secret. He went into treatment and gave up booze. Sadly, years of alcohol abuse had destroyed Mickey Mantle's body. He died a few months later of liver cancer. His friends remember him for the dignity and Faith he demonstrated in his last days.

Jesus came to make people free. He can free us from the evil spirits that keep us from praying and prevent us from loving and sharing our blessings with others. He also frees us from all the "evil spirits" of fear, compulsions, selfishness, anger, resentment and hostility. "I have come that they may have life, life in abundance" (Jn 10:10). So Jesus should be a source of liberation for us. May he free us from all those spirits which make us deaf, dumb, blind, lame and paralyzed, physically and spiritually. Through Word and Sacrament, he brings that power to us and says to the demons in our life, "Be gone!" He says it as often as we need to hear it, over and over again, until by his power we are free from them all. Christ has power over any demon, whether that demon be an addiction, a heartache, a secret sin--whatever our need may be--Christ can set us free.

24 Things Becoming Extinct in America!

There's a book written for us list lovers called *The Incredible Book of Wacky Lists* by Patrick M. Reynolds (6445), where he has lists of "Plants That Eat Animals" (there are 4 of them: Venus's flytrap, Butterwort, Sundew, Pitcher plant), "Seas Named After a Color" (Black, Red, White, Yellow Seas), 3 Tallest US Presidents (Abe Lincoln, 6'4", LBJ, 6'3", Thomas Jefferson, 6'2½", now 4, with Barack Obama, 6'2"), "7 Birds That Can't Fly" (emu, kiwi, penguin, ostrich, cassowary, rhea, Galapagos cormorant), "10 Animals with Pockets" (kangaroo, koala, opossum, sea horse, Tasmanian devil, wombat, wallaroo, bandicoot, cuscus, echidna).

Among the 24 predicted extinctions are the imminent demise (some already became extinct!) of the Yellow Pages, movie rental stores, phone landlines, VCRs, Ham radio, incandescent light bulbs, cameras that use film, and the milkman. In fact, some extinctions are good. When things are no longer useful, when things do not function in a helpful way, or just aren't sensible anymore, they should become extinct. In today's Gospel text Jesus acted as an agent of extinction. **When Jesus entered into the local synagogue in Capernaum it was time for the unclean spirit inhabiting that place to go extinct. The presence of Jesus, whom the unclean spirit declared to be "the Holy One of God," left no room for the unholy attitude and actions of that demon. Go exorcize some demons this week. Make a list of things you want to go extinct in your life, and then stop feeding them: greed, jealousy, anger, hypocrisy, selfishness. . . . Change the climate in your home and in your heart. Make the climate in which you live inhospitable to hatred, a wasteland for bigotry, a desert for envy.**

Be a Good Teacher- Like Jesus!

We need to use our God-given authority to build up lives. So many people with authority have made a lasting impression on our lives for either good or bad. Perhaps it was a grandparent, an uncle, or a parent, who loved us and cared for us. Perhaps a Sunday school teacher encouraged us in our Faith and exerted a positive impact on our lives. Perhaps we remember the kindness as well as the firm discipline that a schoolteacher gave us. Teachers are powerful because they change and mold lives. Hence, let us all become good teachers like Jesus and use our authority to mold young lives in the right way.



Why Join a Small Faith Group?

The first century Christianity spread in and through small groups called 'house churches.' The same holds true today. The communal worship on Sunday is important. But there is something powerfully unique about an intimate gathering that forces us to think differently than when we are in the bigger space of our Church for worship. **That has been the experience of some 200 of our parishioners in these past years.**

Small groups, in fact, are where much of the Bible and theology taught in our pulpits begins to be fleshed out in conversation and action. Our parishioners have benefited so much for this method of sharing God's Word in small groups. **They have found it very fruitful and spiritually enriching. That in turn has made our parish come all the more alive! Why not try it for yourself? Do please sign up!**

Demon of Multiple Suicides!

About a year ago the city of Plano, Texas, experienced the kind of tragedy this demon can cause to happen. Plano lived through the nightmare of multiple suicides. Six young people, aged 14 to 18, took their lives, leaving that community wondering what in the world was going on. A boy and a girl, both 17, killed themselves because their parents said they couldn't see each other so often. One boy was killed in a car race; his friend, who had started the car race, committed suicide out of grief and guilt. Another boy killed himself out of grief over the suicide of his friend. How could it happen, in a place that has everything, where the average home costs \$180,000, and where the high school football team always wins? Some of the people living there believe they know what the problem is. They explained that the only thing that counts in their community is being the best: the best at tennis, at bridge, at making money, in school. You have to have the fastest car, the biggest house, all that kind of thing. If you are not the best, you just don't count. And if you don't count, perhaps you commit suicide. Pride and envy, the demon of greatness, has ruined many lives.

Jesus came to make people free. He frees us from all the "evil spirits" of fear, impulses, selfishness, anger, resentment and hostility. "I have come that they may have life, life in abundance" (Jn 10:10). So Jesus should be a source of liberation for us. May he free us from all those spirits which make us deaf, dumb, blind, lame and paralyzed, physically and spiritually. Through Word and Sacrament, he brings that power to us and says to the demons in our life, "Be gone!"

From Our Pastoral Staff

SAVE THE DATE – MENTAL HEALTH SELF-CARE FAIR – MARCH 9TH-10TH, 2024

Thanks to everyone who has completed the Mental Health Self-Care Survey! The survey says that among all generations mental health is a hot topic! We're blessed to have a planning team of enthusiastic youth and their dedicated mentors from St. Matthias and St. Joseph in Bound Brook. They have been recruiting organizations and licensed professionals to offer opportunities of connection in support of the well-being of our community.

On behalf of the team, I am excited to officially invite you to our event. We'll have topics of interest for people of ALL ages presented by notable organizations and agencies throughout New Jersey! This is an intergenerational event geared towards adults and kids from 10 years and up..

The National Institute of Mental Health states on their home web page: ***“Mental health is more than the absence of a mental illness - it's essential to your overall health and quality of life. Self-care can play a role in maintaining your mental health and help support your treatment and recovery if you have a mental illness.”***

In today's Gospel, Jesus rebukes the unclean spirit within a man saying ***“Quiet! Come out of him!”***

Even in 2024 some people maintain a belief in the possibility of demonic involvement in the experience of mental illnesses. Their belief hinges on misinterpretations of this and other scriptural references which can maintain harmful stigmas regarding mental health. People suffering from mental illness are ill – not evil. The Catholic based Sanctuary course material states:

“It is helpful to envision these beliefs existing on a spectrum. At one end of the spectrum, some Christians would argue that all mental illnesses are the direct result of demonic activity, while at the other end of the spectrum, some Christians would claim that mental illnesses are purely biological and do not involve any spiritual activity. However,

in the middle of the spectrum you will find a perspective that takes the whole person into consideration. Human beings are integrated by nature: our thoughts and emotions can impact our physical health, our physical health can be related to our spiritual health, and so on. For this reason, mental illnesses can rarely be attributed to a single cause or factor. It is possible for an individual to experience depression due to genetic vulnerabilities, and to have that experience intensified due to emotional wounds and the onset of spiritual oppression. A combination of medication, therapy, and prayer may be required in order for this individual to begin to heal.”

Whether you're just beginning your mental health journey or have been engaging in this practice for years, you'll benefit from this event. Our Mental Health Self-Care Fair is just one small step to educating everyone on a very important health issue that's become a crisis spanning all demographics. Our youth have been empowered to collaborate with professionals to promote a healthy and safe environment supporting our mission that All Are Welcomed into our community of faith. We all have to maintain our health, and mental health IS health.

We're also looking for licensed professionals working in the areas of Healthy Eating and Sleeping. If you're available that weekend, please contact me at deaconjohn@stmatthias.net. In a few weeks we'll start registration and publish what will be offered – Stay Tuned!

Prayers for peace of mind!

Deacon John

#smylewithbraces

St. Matthias Youth Living Evangelization -
Bringing & Raising Awareness to Combat Existing Stigmas.



Connect



ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP MEETS VIRTUALLY ON 2/14 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, February 14th, 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.

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/3A6FWUG09Y32T?ref=wl_share



JOURNEYING WITH WOMEN MYSTICS: MECHTHILD OF MAGDEBURG

February 3, 2024 • 10:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Presenter: Joannie Cassidy SSJ

Giving voice to the sacred journey and drawn ever more fully into union with the Holy One, women mystics invite us to trust our experience of God, and to unite contemplation with daily action. We will listen, reflect, and pray with the writings of Mechthild of Magdeburg. There will be time for input, quiet reflection, and sharing throughout the day.

Ways to Register and Participate:

- **In-person for the day - Donation: \$30 (includes lunch)**
- Overnight Friday and attending the Retreat Saturday - Donation: \$85
- **Virtual Participation - Donation: \$20**
- To register for the Journeying With Women Mystics: Mechthild of Magdeburg Retreat please email: S. Joannie Cassidy at jlc.cassidy@gmail.com or call (732) 898-9981.



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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.

Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024				Last Year's Total
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 27 - Jan. 7, 2024	\$16,480.90	\$22,968.75	\$39,449.65	\$23,916.25
Week 28 - Jan. 14, 2024	\$10,063.00	\$17,300.25	\$27,363.25	\$38,289.75
Week 29 - Jan. 21, 2024	\$8,810.00	\$12,721.25	\$21,531.25	\$23,456.25
Week 30 - Jan. 28, 2024			\$0.00	\$23,378.25
			Month-to-date Total	January Total Last Year
Foundation for			\$88,344.15	\$113,283.45
Catholic Education Collection:	\$1,754.00		Current Year-to-date Total	Year-to-date as of January
			\$88,344.15	\$113,283.45



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 21, 2024 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." - Mark 1:17

Jesus' call to "follow me" is a call to all Christians! The call is in the here and now, in our present circumstances, not when we think we are "ready" or have everything in order. Good stewardship of our God-given gifts means that things aren't always going to go according to our schedule, but that God has a much better plan in store for each of us.

Reflexiónese 21 de enero de 2024 3^{er} Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario

*"Siganme, y Yo haré que ustedes sean pescadores de hombres".
-Marcos 1:17*

¡El llamado de Jesús a "Seguirlo" es un llamado para todos los cristianos! El llamado es aquí y ahora, en nuestras circunstancias actuales, no cuando pensemos que estamos "listos" o que tenemos todo en orden. La buena administración de los dones que Dios nos ha dado significa que las cosas no siempre van de acuerdo con nuestro cronograma, sino que Dios tiene reservado un plan mucho mejor para cada uno de nosotros.



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.

Pray

2024 Lenten Obligations

- * The days of both fast and abstinence are Ash Wednesday (February 14) and Good Friday (March 29).
- * The other Fridays of Lent (Feb. 16 and 23, Mar. 1, 8, 15, and 22) are days of abstinence.
- * Fasting in the Roman Catholic tradition means to limit oneself to one full meal with two smaller meals which together do not equal the size of your full meal.
- * The obligation of fasting applies only to Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59.
- * Abstinence in the Roman Catholic tradition means to abstain from eating meat (beef, chicken, pork, turkey, etc.). The obligation of abstinence applies to all Catholics who have reached the age of 14.

Note: This year, be aware that **Ash Wednesday** falls on **February 14th** (also Valentine's Day). The obligation to fast does remain in effect, so it is suggested that those who are planning a special dinner make that their one main meal of the day.

Connecting to Our Local Community



STRESS IN YOUR MARRIAGE?

Do you feel lost, alone or bored in your marriage? · Are you frustrated, hurt or angry with your spouse? · Have you thought about separation or divorce? · Does talking about it only make it worse? **RETROUVAILLE** is a Lifeline to Help Couples Heal and Renew their Marriages sponsored by the Office of Family Life, Diocese of Metuchen, NJ. RETROUVAILLE consists of a weekend experience for married couples (no group discussions) with four follow-up sessions. **The upcoming weekend is February 2 – 4, 2024.** All inquiries are confidential. For further information, please contact Rich Colasuonno 732-236-0671 or Annette Colasuonno 732-672-0748 or email 3024@helpourmarriage.org.

THE GIFT OF LECTIO AND VISIO DIVINA

Growing in relationship with God is a process like any other relationship. Lectio and Visio Divina are two traditional ways that help us to cultivate deep intimacy and friendship with God. These forms of prayer will be explored as means to encounter God and lead us into contemplative rest in & with God. (\$20-\$30 as you are able)



Presenter: Sr. Eileen Smith, RSM

Tuesday, February 6th, 7-8:30 pm Hybrid

Call us at 908-753-2091 or email us at msmhope@msmhope.org.

Registration for all offerings is required **10 days in advance** to avoid the program being cancelled.

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	<i>Sheila Tartaglia</i> Fr. Lancelot McGrath, Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio Trustees: Pearl Scott Marge Richards	Parish Finance Council: Kester Hector, Chair FinanceCouncil @stmatthias.net Carmen Driz-Mellini 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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