



#### St. Matthias Parish Office:

Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm,  
168 JFK Boulevard, Somerset, NJ 08873  
732-828-1400, fax: 732-828-0866  
[www.stmatthias.net](http://www.stmatthias.net)

#### Mass Schedule (in person):

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

#### St. Matthias School (SMS):

170 JFK Blvd., Somerset, NJ 08873  
[www.stmatthias.info](http://www.stmatthias.info) 732-828-1402  
School Office Hours, Monday - Friday,  
7:45 AM - 3:30 PM

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

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

Deacon Ron Caimi, **Senior Deacon**  
Kelly Counts, **Receptionist**, **kcounts**  
Deacon Russell Demkovitz, **rdemkovitz**  
Nathalie Godet, **Website & Bulletin Coordinator**,  
**ngodet**

Leslie Guillen, **Bulletin Editor**, **lguillen**  
Amy Hanna, **Accountant/Databases**, **ahanna**  
Mike Lanyi, **Sacristan**  
Sue Lenczewski, **Youth Coordinator**, **SMYLE**  
Julio Montero, **Maintenance Supervisor**  
Dolores R. Nann, **Pastoral Associate for**  
**Faith Formation**, **dnann**  
Vinnie Natale, **Bookkeeper**, **vnatale**  
Silvia Nizama, **Housekeeper**  
Deacon John Radvanski, **deaconjohn**  
Joan Best Seamon, **Pastoral Associate for**  
**Music Ministry**, **jseamon**  
Sr. Marie Therese Sherwood, **OSF, Pastoral**  
**Assoc. for Social Concerns**, **msherwood**

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

## THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS

### SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2024

#### 3rd Sunday of Lent

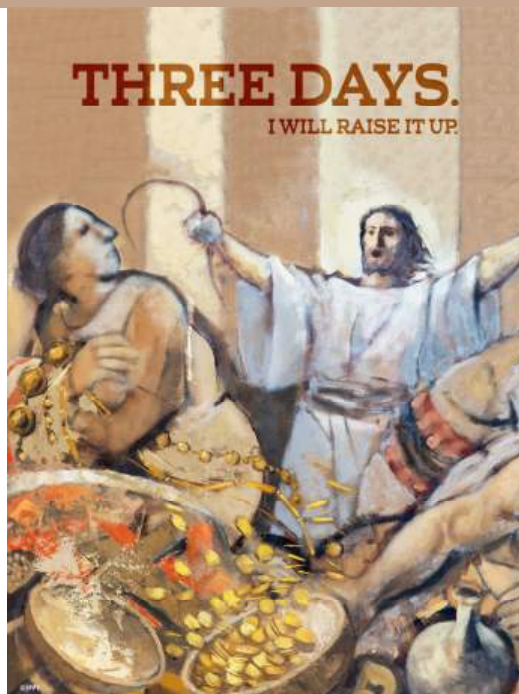


### MASS OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Our annual Mass of  
Anointing will take place

**NEXT Saturday,**  
**March 9, at 11:00 am.**

All parishioners desiring  
healing of body, mind, or  
spirit, are invited to attend.



**SPRING INTO MENTAL HEALTH**

**SELF-CARE FAIR WILL BE NEXT**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 10TH**

**HERE AT ST. MATTHIAS.**

More information about this event can be found on page 7



**FRIENDLY REMINDER THAT**  
**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS**  
**NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 2024**



**Please support**  
**Empty Bowls**  
**Franklin Township**  
on **March 10<sup>th</sup>**.

Details can be found by visiting  
[www.franklinfoodbank.org/emptybowls](http://www.franklinfoodbank.org/emptybowls)



**PLEASE COME JOIN THE MANY WHO SPEND SOME**  
**QUIET TIME WITH THE**  
**EUCCHARISTIC LORD.**  
**OUR NEXT ADORATION WILL BE**  
**MONDAY EVENING, MARCH 4, 2024**  
**FROM 6 PM TO 8 PM.**

## This Week @ St. Matthias

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

The **Church is open** for **individual prayer**

Mon-Fri: 7:30 am to dusk, Sat: 9 am to 6pm, and  
Sun: 7:30 am to 1 pm, unless another service is taking place.

### Sunday, Mar 3, 2024

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
11:00AM	Rosary Altar Society Mtg.	John XXIII Rm
12:00PM	Mass	Church
1:30PM	Confirmation Retreat	Cafeteria
2:00PM	GIFT Church, clsrms, John XXIII Rm	
4:00PM	Confirmation Retreat	Church

### Monday, Mar 4, 2024 St. Casimir, Patron Of Poland

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:00PM	Eucharist Adoration	Church

### Tuesday, Mar 5, 2024 St. John Joseph of the Cross, Priest

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:30PM	GIFT Church, clsrms, John XXIII Rm	
7:30PM	SVP Mtg.	de Porres Rm

### Wednesday, Mar 6, 2024 St. Colette of Corbie, Abbess

8:00AM	Mass, St. Joseph Novena	Church
7:30PM	Folk Group Rehearsal	Church

### Thursday, Mar 7, 2024 St. Perpetua & St. Felicity, Martyrs

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, Mar 8, 2024 St. John of God, Religious & Founder

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:00PM	HSA: SMS Father-Daughter Dance	Cafe
7:00PM	Stations of the Cross	Church

### Saturday, Mar 9, 2024 St. Frances of Rome, Religious

11:00AM	Anointing Mass	Church
3:30PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Vigil Mass	Church

### Sunday, Mar 10, 2024

**All Day Mental Health Fair 9 PM - 3PM Cafeteria**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass - Sign Language &	Church
10:00AM	Family Mass	Church
11:00AM	Children's Liturgy K-5	John XXIII Rm
11:00AM	1st Eucharist Prep #4	Classrooms
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](mailto:bulletin@stmatthias.net) by **9 AM, MONDAY, 5 business days before the needed bulletin date** (earlier for holiday weekends). Approved content is published on a space-available basis.

## A Message From Our Pastor

Dear Friends,

March 8 is International Women's Day, an annual celebration to honor the achievements and contributions of women, while challenging the discrimination and oppression they continue to face. Pope Francis said: *"On International Women's Day, I think of all women: I thank them for their commitment to building a more humane society, through their ability to grasp reality with a creative eye and a tender heart."* We salute all the women for their invaluable contributions to enrich our families and communities, and pray for them in a special way.

This Sunday during the 10 am Mass, we have a Rite called 'Scrutiny' for the 'Catechumen' doing the RCIA. Are these strange terms for us? I think we will all remember that RCIA stands for the "Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults," though a couple of years ago, the US Bishops decided that RCIA should be more appropriately named OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults). 'Catechumen' is the term used for an unbaptized person who is attending this preparation in RCIA, and 'Candidate' is the term used for a baptized person who did not receive Eucharist or Confirmation. This year we are privileged to have a number of people in the RCIA, preparing to receive one or more of the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation) at the Easter Vigil. They are: Jason Olmedo-Hernandez, Phyllis Carbone, Gigi Fortuna-Clase, Beverly Gilliam, Norvin Gilliam, Maxwell Lumax, Claudia Roque, Chelsea Lopez, Amanda Fortuna Clase, Josh Lumax and Alexis Lumax.

So, what is this rite called 'scrutiny'? The official Book of the RCIA explains: *"It is meant to uncover, and then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. For the scrutinies are celebrated in order to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life."* (no.141) Essentially, it is composed of prayers of intercession and the laying on of hands so that the Holy Spirit may be invoked that they are freed from the spirit of evil. Doing the first scrutiny at Mass gives the whole congregation an opportunity to pray for and support those preparing for the Easter sacraments and to make the point that conversion is not only a personal matter but a communal commitment.

More importantly, this Rite of Scrutiny is also an opportunity for the rest of us, to self-examine and see the need for healing in our weakness, detect the sinful habits in our lives and to nourish the good within us so that we can bear good fruits for Christ. Lent is the time to learn from our mistakes of overindulgence in food, drink, drugs, gambling, promiscuity, or any other addiction that may keep us from coming to the *living waters* of a right relationship with God. We all have our short list, don't we? And we all know, honest to God, what it is we need to leave behind before we come to the *Living Water* and the Bread of Heaven – as the Samaritan woman shows us in the gospel of John.

Let's continue to live a happy and holy Lent!

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal



## Readings for the Week

**Monday** 2 Kgs 5:1-15ab Ps 42:2, 3; 43:3, 4  
Lk 4:24-30

**Tuesday** Dn 3:25, 34-43 Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and  
7bc, 8-9 Mt 18:21-35

**Wednesday** Dt 4:1, 5-9 Ps 147:12-13, 15-16,  
19-20 Mt 5:17-19

**Thursday** Jer 7:23-28 Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9  
Lk 11:14-23

**Friday** Hos 14:2-10 Ps 81:6c-8a, 8bc-9,  
10-11ab, 14 and 17 Mk 12:28-34

**Saturday** Hos 6:1-6 Ps 51:3-4, 18-19, 20-  
21ab Lk 18:9-14

**Sunday** 2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23 Ps 137:1-2, 3,  
4-5, 6 Eph 2:4-10 Jn 3:14-21



## Mass Intentions for the Week

<b>Saturday, Mar 2</b>	5:00PM	Christopher St. Amand, by Nina Ripley
<b>Sunday, Mar 3</b>	8:00AM	Intention of Parishioners
	10:00AM	Mary Ann Selenko. by Ellen & Rich Hering
	12:00PM	Nancy Collins, by Marty
<b>Monday, Mar 4</b>	8:00AM	Pat Hagerty, by Esola Family
<b>Tuesday, Mar 5</b>	8:00AM	Frances Natale, by Vinnie
<b>Wednesday, Mar 6</b>	8:00AM	Joyce Viccione, by John Kurzeo
<b>Thursday, Mar 7</b>	8:00AM	Pastor Diaz, by The Gamboa Family
<b>Friday, Mar 8</b>	8:00AM	Richard Dodd, by Elizabeth Brinkofski
<b>Saturday, Mar 9</b>	5:00PM	Joseph Moran, by The Family
<b>Sunday, Mar 10</b>	8:00AM	Health & Blessings for Menchie Molano-Sotelo, by Didi & Cory
	10:00AM	Deacon Peter J. O'Neill, by Alice Richards
	12:00PM	Intention of Parishioners

## Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office or **email Kelly Counts** at [kcunts@stmatthias.net](mailto:kcunts@stmatthias.net) to add the name to this list. Names will be listed in the bulletin for **6 weeks**. Please let us know if this time period needs to be extended. We want to know how you are doing and want to offer you the support of our prayers.

*New people on our prayer list are noted in blue.*

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

## Pray for those who have died...

— "His mercy endures forever." *Chronicles*

Bill Kelleher



## Reflect



### Smile with Your Family



How to pray: A businessman needed a million dollars to close an important business transaction. He went to church to pray for the money. He knelt and started praying next to a man who was praying for a hundred dollars he needed to pay an urgent debt. The businessman took out his wallet and pressed the hundred dollars into the other man's hand. Overjoyed, the man got up and left the church. The businessman then closed his eyes and prayed, "And now, Lord, that I have your undivided attention...." 😊

A little girl was taken to the Church for the first time. As she was leaving with her parents, the pastor asked how she had liked the Mass. "I liked the music," she replied, "but the commercial was too long." 😊

A little boy in church for the first time watched as the ushers passed around the offering plates. When they came near his pew, the boy said loudly, "Don't pay for me, Daddy, I'm under five." 😊

Have you seen that clever bumper sticker? "Tithe if you love Jesus. Any fool can honk." 😊

"My home church welcomes all denominations," began the cynical Christian, adding with a smirk, "but mainly they prefer tens and twenties." 😊

A minister in Florida lamented that his congregation was not interested in his preaching. "It's so beautiful here in the winter," he said, "that heaven doesn't interest them." "And it's so hot here in the summer that hell doesn't scare them." 😊



### Parenting Tune-Up

Initiated by women of the US & Canada two centuries ago, World Day of Prayer is observed on the First Friday of March. Not late to ponder: How do you and your children pray? Is it memorized, spontaneous, short, frequent, irregular? Talk together about your favorite style of prayer. Do it! Family quiz: Do you know where Surinam is and what it has to do with prayer. <https://worlddayofprayer.net/about.html>

### Marriage Tune-Up



How is your Lenten resolution coming? Is it bringing you closer to your beloved? Consider that both God and your spouse are your beloved. Sacrificing for one can give you a window into how to become closer to the other. Contemplate sacrificial love today.

### The Ten Commandments Indicator!

On February 3, 1959, 10,000 meters above the Atlantic, Captain Lynch took a last look at the flight panel of the Boeing 707. The co-pilot was studying a map. Captain Lynch decided to stretch his legs, thinking that the worst was over. Shortly after leaving Paris they had run into a 120-kph headwind. However, by now they had climbed above the storm. The captain made his way down the aisle. Just then the Captain felt the right-wing tip and he was thrown against the seats on the right hand side. At the same moment all the lights in the plane went out. Next, he found himself lying on the floor. Then he realized it was the ceiling he was on. The Boeing was on its back. He began to make his way back to the cockpit. He decided to try to hold the plane at 2,000 meters. The co-pilot had been knocked unconscious. He came to again and he and the captain managed to bring the Boeing to the horizontal. A few more seconds and the plane would have crashed. The whole incident lasted four minutes. What caused it? While the co-pilot was studying the map, he did not notice the blue light on the indicator panel warning that the automatic pilot had stopped working. God has given us an indicator panel to guide us through life. That indicator panel is the Commandments. The Commandments are a gift from God to help us enjoy life by not getting lost along the way.



### What was special about the movie 'E.T.'?

E.T. is one of the most successful movies of all time. It is about an extra-terrestrial creature who heals cuts with the touch of his finger, raises dead flowers to life, and who himself is raised from the dead before he departs from the earth, his spaceship leaving a rainbow in the sky. I would guess that millions of people who had never entered the door of a Church flocked to *E.T.* and were moved by it. They were searching for a source of hope. They were looking for a model of themselves as people who are loved by a Power that will not let them go even in their darkness.

***Today's Gospel tells us about a Samaritan woman who was looking for God to quench her thirst. After many disappointing encounters with men, she found Jesus who gave her 'living waters' and her thirst was quenched, and she was able to inspire others by sharing her story.***

## "UNLEAVENING"

It's the custom in Jewish households just before Passover to remove all the *chametz*, the leaven, from their homes. It means getting rid of any food made of grain and water that is allowed to ferment and rise: bread, cereal, cake, cookies, pasta, beer. *Chametz* is the opposite of *matzo*, the unleavened flat bread eaten by the Israelites the night before their escape from Egypt.

On the last days before Passover, Jewish families thoroughly clean their homes - especially the kitchen - of every bit of *chametz*. Because *chametz* is such a big part of our diets, getting rid of *chametz* is not a simple task. Every carpet is vacuumed and every floor is swept. Every surface is scrubbed clean with boiling water. Some parents hide pieces of bread throughout the house and, the night before Passover, send their children to find them, to make them part of the ritual of Passover house cleaning. Whatever food with *chametz* is found is either given away or burned. A separate set of pots, dishes and cutlery are brought out for Passover.

The point of the Passover "unleavening" is to experience again the "newness" of what God has done: freeing his

people from slavery and bringing them into a new land of promise and hope. This act of preparing for Passover invites Jews to remove the "spiritual" leaven from their lives as well as the physical stuff. If leaven is the agent for making bread rise, think of *chametz* as the puffy, overextended, inflated parts of our ego. Passover calls us to clean away those distractions and let go of our illusions about ourselves and embrace, instead, the spirit of the humble *matzo*.

**As we prepare this Lent to celebrate Christ's "passing over" from the cross to resurrection, may we embrace the spiritual practice of "unleavening" of our Jewish brothers and sisters: to sweep away the *chametz* of business-as-usual that distracts us and takes our time and energy away from realizing the love of God that is at the center of Christ's death and resurrection; to set aside the time to enter fully and prayerfully the Easter mysteries to understand anew the meaning of Jesus' passion in our own lives. Over this second half of Lent, may we "sweep our houses" of the necessary and distracting *chametz* in our lives and embrace the humility and joy of the *matzo* in order to fully experience Easter re-creation in our hearts and homes.**

## IS THERE MORE THAN ONE WAY TO HEAVEN?

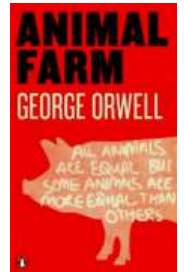
Around the world of religion today, there are about 2 billion Christians, 1 billion Muslims, 750 million Hindus, 334 million Buddhists, 18 million Jews, and a growing number of people who declare no religious allegiance at all. Once upon a time, religious tolerance consisted of Baptists having a worship service with Methodists or a Protestant marrying a Roman Catholic. Now a Hindu may be your next door neighbor or a Baha'i may be dating your daughter. All of us down in our hearts are trying to decide whether we love or hate Muslims. The religious marketplace has become complex. At the crossroads of Faith, we Christians must now consider our relationships with people of other religions. Tibetan leader, His Holiness Dalai Lama says, "All religions are essentially the same in their goal of developing a good human heart that we may become better human beings.

**"As the conversation between Jesus and the woman at the well described in today's Gospel becomes intimate, the woman creates distance by introducing a religious debate: "Is there more than one way to Heaven?" Jesus clarifies that He who she is talking to is the Messiah. Later in the same gospel Jesus reaffirmed that He is the way, truth and life (John 14:6)**



## REMEMBER 'ANIMAL FARM'?

Many will be familiar with George Orwell's book *Animal Farm*. It's a bit like a fairy tale but it's really a comment about a certain political regime. It contains a story of how the animals on a farm oust Farmer Jones and his family and take over the farm. They want a better life and start with the grand vision that all animals are equal and that all property is shared. Soon the pigs take control and one of them, Napoleon, becomes the leader of all the animals. He is tyrant. Equality amongst the animals is out, and the pigs use and abuse the rest of the animals on the farm. The pigs use the other animals for their own purposes and discard them if they are no longer useful.



**Most of us know what it's like to feel used and abused by others. We have the best intentions and try our best to be helpful but all we have done is taken for granted and we are discarded like a used Kleenex. It is a well-known fact that when people feel they have been used and abused and their good nature exploited they become suspicious, bitter and cautious for fear of being hurt again. Barriers are erected, relationships shunned, because they never want to be used and abused again. Today's Gospel tells us how Jesus lifts such a barrier of prejudice to save a sinful woman. He broke the gender barrier, the social barrier and the racial barrier.**



## ANGER, NITROGLYCERINE AND SALAD BAR

Someone has compared anger to nitroglycerine. Nitroglycerine is an unstable liquid, which, in paste form, constitutes dynamite. However, nitroglycerine in very small amounts is what is given to heart patients to keep their hearts beating. The little molecule that dilates blood vessels wherever they are in the body is nitric oxide. It is the active ingredient in nitroglycerine, which is a widely used little pill for the treatment of heart pain (angina). When the heart arteries are constricted, the heart becomes starved for blood and a crushing chest pain results. Put a nitro pill under the tongue and “ah, relief” as the nitric oxide relaxes the arteries and allows the blood to flow again.

Anger, of itself, is not sinful. The sin is in getting angry over the wrong things. We get angry when someone cuts us off in traffic, or when someone takes credit for something we've done at the office. We get angry at the kids when they're too noisy and at our spouses when they don't meet our expectations. Sometimes we get angry when we're simply tired and cranky. We don't even need anything to set us off. The media reported sometime back on a fight that broke out in a nursing home.

**The Spring Haven Retirement Community in Florida found their peace disrupted over a nasty incident at the salad bar. Mealtime turned ugly when an 86-year-old man complained to another gentlemen about picking through the lettuce. Name-calling soon gave way to punching and the police was summoned. Those in the way paid a price. One resident was bitten in his attempt to stop the fight, another knocked down. While no one was seriously injured, one of the men was expelled from the home.**

([www.PalmBeachPost.com](http://www.PalmBeachPost.com)) You and I get angry over all kinds of things, some of them exceedingly silly. Sinful human beings exploit religion just as they exploit everything else and for the same reasons--wealth, power, prestige. Jesus got angry when he saw people exploiting religion for their own gain. That's a little different from getting miffed over a salad bar.

## ONE-MAN ARMY

Two men stood in front of a taxicab arguing about who had the right to the cab. While they argued, the wife of one of the men stood and watched. After they had argued for a few of minutes, one man became calm, opened the door for his opponent, and returned to his wife. Curious, his wife asked him why he'd suddenly allowed the other man to take the cab. He explained, "You see dear, he needed the cab more than we did; he was late for his martial arts class. He's the teacher!"

*Today's Gospel tells us that Jesus had no such fear in confronting the animal merchants, the money-changers and the Temple police in the Temple of Jerusalem in his cleansing of the Temple operation with prophetic courage. What enraged him? The merchants selling animals and the money changers had converted the Court of the Gentiles into a noisy market making it impossible for the Gentiles to worship Yahweh. The merchants sold the animals and birds for sacrifice at unjust and exorbitant prices (18 to 20 times the regular price outside the Temple). The animal-inspectors, bribed by the merchants, disqualified even the healthy animals brought by poor shepherds and farmers for sacrifice. This was an unjust extortion at the expense of poor and humble pilgrims, who were practically blackmailed into buying animals and birds from the Temple booths. Jesus considered this a glaring social injustice aggravated by the fact that it was perpetrated in the name of religion. No wonder he was angry!*

## Whip-lashing Jesus while filing your tax returns!

A man was having trouble sleeping because of frightening dreams of an angry Jesus chasing him with a whip in his hands. He knew in his heart it was his conscience that was keeping him awake. He'd been less than honest in filing his tax return, and it was getting to him. So he sent a check to the IRS with the following note: "Dear Sirs, in filing my 2014 tax return, I did not report all my income. Therefore, I am enclosing my check for \$100.00. P. S. If my conscience still troubles me with those dreams of whip-wielding Jesus, I'll send you the rest." Guess what happened next!

*Today's Gospel challenges us to examine ourselves to see if Jesus will have to take a whip when we forget that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul reminds us that we are God's temples because the Spirit of God dwells in us. Hence, we have no right to desecrate God's temple by impurity and injustice. We are expected to cleanse our hearts of pride, hatred, jealousy and all evil thoughts, desires and plans. Reminiscent of what Jesus did in cleansing the Temple, we, as 21st century disciples, must, with His grace, cleanse ourselves of attitudes and behaviors that prevent us from seeing and responding to hurt wherever we find it. Let us welcome Jesus into our hearts and lives during Lent by repentance and the renewal of our lives. We will drive out the wild animals that do not belong to the holy temple of our body by making a whip of cords out of our fasting, penance and almsgiving during Lent, and by going to Confession to receive God's loving forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.*



## From Our Pastoral Staff

As we approach the middle of Lent, I am happy to have this opportunity to update you, our St. Matthias Faith Community, on how our Music Ministry at St. Matthias is preparing for the beautiful seasons of Lent, Holy Week, the Triduum and Easter.

Our Handbell Choir continues to rehearse twice a month and is preparing to ring at the beginning of our Holy Thursday Mass and at the 12:00 Mass on Easter Sunday. Their Holy Thursday /Easter selections will include beautiful arrangements of **Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring, Joyous Proclamation, Morning Has Broken and Lift High the Cross**

Our Folk Group rehearses faithfully every Wednesday evening. Along with our assembly music, we are preparing **Turn Our Hearts Around, All That Is Hidden, O God You Search Me, By the Waters of Babylon, and Take Up Your Cross.**

Our Children's Choir will sing at the 5:00 and 10:00 Masses next weekend, 3/9-10, along with our Folk Group and Sunday Choir. At our rehearsals every Thursday afternoon, we are preparing a beautiful arrangement of **Pie Jesu.** For

our moving Outdoor Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, we will sing **A Lenten Love Song, Were You There, and We Carry the Saving Cross.** And on Easter Sunday, we'll enjoy a brand new Easter song by one of our favorite composers Ricky Manalo- **Springtime is Blossoming.**

Our Sunday choir rehearses every Thursday night. During Lent, along with all of our music for our assembly to sing, we are preparing **Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley, Locus Iste, God So Love the World, What Wondrous Love** and for St. Patrick's Day on the 5th Sunday of Lent - **Hymn of St. Patrick and Be Thou My Vision .**

Our Ensemble will sing at our Mass of Anointing on March 9 as well as the 5:00 Mass on March 16. They rehearse on Tuesdays and are preparing **"Cleansing Fountain", "Irish Blessing", and "Choral Blessing,** written by our composer-in-residence and Assistant Choir Director Chris Rath.

All of our choirs combine for our celebrations of the holiest days of our church year- the Triduum. Together, we attend extra rehearsals for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil

and Easter Sunday. We will sing our familiar Triduum repertoire including, **In Remembrance of Me, I Give to You a New Commandment, Alleluia Exsultate** by Mozart, **I will Carry Your Cross** by Chris Rath, **A Hymn of Resurrection , Out of Darkness and Resucito.**

Our Music Ministry is a labor of love and faith. We enjoy this musical Lenten journey that we take together every year. It brings us a deeper understanding of the Paschal Mystery, and we hope and pray that our music inspires you in the same way.

Although we sing in front of church we are NEVER performing - we are praying through the gift of song. We rehearse before Mass begins to warm up as all choirs must do- would that we had another accessible room to warm-up in. We are making an extra effort during Lent to be more mindful and prayerful before Mass .

May our hearts be changed, and "an Easter of unending joy we may attain at last"....

**Joan Best Seamon**

*Pastoral Associate for Liturgical Music*



## Connect



**SELF-CARE FAIR**  
**SPRING INTO MENTAL HEALTH**  
**MARCH 10th, 2024 at ST. MATTHIAS**  
**9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**



St. Matthias Youth ministry, in partnership with St. Augustine's Kendall Park, Sacred Heart in New Brunswick, and St. Joseph in Bound Brook, is organizing this very important event focusing on learning techniques to improve our mental and physical health leading to overall wellbeing.

### Learning Techniques to improve Your...

Mental Health  
Physical Health  
Overall Wellbeing

### A Better YOU Awaits!

Guest Speakers

• Giveaways/Raffles • Refreshments

### In Partnership With:

St. Augustine's Church, Kendall Park ; Holy Family Church, New Brunswick ; St. Joseph's Church, Bound Brook

**Questions:** Call the St. Matthias Parish Office 732-828-1400 or email [smyle@stmatthias.net](mailto:smyle@stmatthias.net)



### ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP MEETS VIRTUALLY ON March 13<sup>th</sup> 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, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 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](http://alz.org/NJ).

### A DAY OF SERVICE

The next Morning of Service will be held on **Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup>**. If you are interested in volunteering that morning, please email **John and Coleen Zdziarski** at [jzdzarski@comcast.net](mailto:jzdzarski@comcast.net). Please note that those under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult. The sites are:

1. Franklin Food Bank - 224 Churchill Avenue in Somerset - sorting canned goods, etc. Minimum age is 14. Limited to six people (8:15 - 12:00 noon).
2. Pregnancy Aid Center - 59 Thompson Street in Raritan - sorting children's clothing. Limited to eight people (9:30 - 12:00 noon).



### METUCHEN CURSILLO MOVEMENT

#### Annual Encounter with Christ

Saturday, March 9, 2024

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

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

#### Speakers:

Fr. Luke Fletcher, CFR (Blue Army Shrine, Asbury)

Dcn. Sal Bonfiglio, OFS (Mary, Mother of God Church, Hillsborough)

Light Refreshments, Mass, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Reconciliation, Stations of the Cross

**NOTE:** No admission fee, but there will be a free will offering

**To Register:** [www.metcursillo.org/events-encounter.htm](http://www.metcursillo.org/events-encounter.htm)

### FR. ABRAHAM IS CALLING ALL MEN OF OUR PARISH!

*"In today's world, Catholic men are attacked from all sides. The world entices them to live only for themselves. It tells them to abdicate their God-given call to be leaders of the Church and their families. Too many Catholic men have given in and become caught up in vice and addiction. They feel empty, alone, unworthy and even unlovable. They're hungering for more, but don't know where to turn."*

Hi gentlemen, do you find any truth in the above statement? If so, here's some good news: our Diocesan Office of Evangelization is organizing a "Leadership Summit for Men." It will be held in our neighborhood: at Mary, Mother of God parish in Hillsborough on Friday evening and Saturday morning, April 26-27. I wish to invite all the men of our parish to consider attending this event so you will be empowered to focus on the things that matter to you. For more info, please email me at [abraham@stmatthias.net](mailto:abraham@stmatthias.net)



### 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.



## Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024				Last Year's Total
	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
<b>Week 32 - February 4, 2024</b>	\$9,212.00	\$14,321.25	<b>\$23,533.25</b>	\$27,203.19
<b>Week 33 - February 11, 2024</b>	\$28,220.98	\$24,888.75	<b>\$53,109.73</b>	\$34,482.25
<b>Week 34 - February 18, 2024</b>	\$9,019.00	\$11,549.93	<b>\$20,568.93</b>	\$21,453.11
<b>Week 35 - February 25, 2024</b>	\$11,358.00	\$11,140.25	<b>\$22,498.25</b>	\$21,303.25
			<b>Month-to-date Total</b>	<b>Month-to-date Total</b>
<b>Catholic Press Month</b>			<b>\$119,710.16</b>	\$104,441.80
<b>Contribution-\$1,574.00</b>			<b>Current Year-to-date</b>	<b>Current Year-to-date Total</b>
			<b>\$2,270,885.21</b>	\$940,542.52

### Stewardship Reflection March 3, 2024 3rd Sunday of Lent

***“You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything...” - Exodus 20:4***

How many “gods” do you put before God? “Idols” do not always take the shape of physical things, things we can touch and feel. Those are easy to recognize. Many times they take the form of things we cannot touch and are much harder to spot like pride, power, ego, time, comfort or health. Pray for God’s help to prune our vices and to grow in virtue.

### Reflexiónese 3 de marzo de 2024 3<sup>er</sup> Domingo de Cuaresma

***“No te harás ídolos ni imágenes de nada...” - Éxodo 20:4***

¿Cuántos “dioses” pone por delante de Dios? Los “Ídolos” no siempre toman la forma de cosas físicas, cosas que podemos tocar y sentir. Esos son fáciles de reconocer. Muchas veces toman la forma de cosas que no podemos tocar y son mucho más difíciles de reconocer como el orgullo, el poder, el ego, la comodidad o la salud. Ore por la ayuda de Dios para eliminar nuestros vicios y para crecer en virtudes.



### 2024 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

**STAY WITH US, LORD: Renew our Hearts and Send Us on Mission**

***“But they urged Him, ‘Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.’ So He went in to stay with them.” (Luke 24:24)*** Jesus “stays with us” in an intimate way in the Eucharist. We want to share His love with those we meet along the way, accompanying them on the path of life, as Jesus did on the Road to Emmaus. One important way we can share our faith, encourage and assist our fellow travelers is by participating in the Bishop’s Annual Appeal. Through our shared support, we touch the lives of thousands

of people each year through the tangible services and programs we offer. Together we walk side by side with those who are suffering today, those who are ill or fearful, and those who are poor and vulnerable. Through our ministries, we bring them the reassuring presence of the Lord.

### FROM THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL (PPC)

Our regular PPC meeting was held on February 20, 2024. After praying and sharing the gospel passage, the shared wisdom reflection was read out. Here are the main points the Council wishes to share with the parish community:

- Retreat Opportunities: A full day “Life in the Spirit Seminar Retreat” will be held in our cafeteria on Saturday, March 2, 2024. It is presented by the Metuchen Chapter of the El Shaddai Charismatic movement. Another retreat, focusing on the Eucharist, is being arranged to be preached by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal – tentatively for the weekend of April 13-14, 2024.
- The Council followed up with the idea of setting up a suggestion box in the church so that parishioners who wish to give suggestions or ideas about the pastoral life of the parish can do so.
- The Media equipment update in the church is in its final stages to benefit those in the church and those joining via livestreaming.
- The Live Lent small groups are doing well with faith sharing. The six sessions are reflections on the Holy Eucharist.
- The Penance Service will be held on Monday, March 18 evening.
- Time has come for our annual invitation to the parishioners interested in joining PPC to come and observe our next meeting on March 19, 2024.

## Connecting to Our Local Community



### Free Tax Preparation Offered through United Way of Northern New Jersey

The United Way of Northern NJ & its partners are offering FREE tax preparation services for low and moderate income households. **At no cost to you**, IRS tax-law certified preparers will help you claim all the credits you are eligible for and get what you are owed. Tax Filing began on 2/1/2024.

Visit [uwnnj.org/freetaxprep](http://uwnnj.org/freetaxprep)

For information about scheduling appointments, access free self-filing software, and get answers to question.

For additional information, call 973-993-1160, ext. 5. Email– [UnitedWayTaxPrep@UnitedWayNNJ.org](mailto:UnitedWayTaxPrep@UnitedWayNNJ.org)



### Monday, March 11 WOMEN'S LENTEN AFTERNOON:

#### THE BOTTOMLESS WELL OF GOD'S GRACE: A JOURNEY WITH JESUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

Lent is a perfect time to go deeper into the well of our hearts ... and God's heart. During this program, we will break open the Samaritan woman's experience with Jesus at the well (John 4:5-42) and see how our own lives are reflected in hers. As we contemplate Jesus' initial words: "Give me a drink", and allow our own conversation with him to unfold, we will better know who we are and whose we are.

**Presenter: Mary Pollini, 1-3pm at the House of Prayer and on Zoom** \$20-\$30 as you are able.

Information and Registration for all Mount Saint Mary House of Prayer offerings can be found on our website:

[www.msmhope.org](http://www.msmhope.org).

Call us at 908-753-2091 or email us at [msmhope@msmhope.org](mailto:msmhope@msmhope.org). Registration for all offerings is required 10 days in advance to avoid the program being cancelled. You can register and pay for any program on our website.

### In God's Image Faith Sharing Group, March 13, 2024, 7:00PM, Sacred Heart Church, So. 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 **March 13<sup>th</sup>** and will be both in person and online.

Please email for more information.

The group is open to LGBTQ adults, 18 and over, and their families. All are welcome for faith sharing, prayer, conversation and support. For more information, contact Fr. John at 908-291-1194 or the group may be reached via email at [sacredheartigi@gmail.com](mailto:sacredheartigi@gmail.com).

### WOMEN OF FAITH

Spend a day of spiritual reflection and renewal with the Sisters and women on the journey.

**April 20, 2024, 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM**

With Rev. Msgr. George Hundt, Pastor, St. Gerard Majella, Paterson, New Jersey.

#### The day includes:

- Mass
- Conference
- Reconciliation
- Rosary and /or Stations of the Cross

**Eucharistic Adoration Registration Fee:** \$15.00

For more information, contact:

Sr. Alice Ivanyo, MPF [sralice@gmail.com](mailto:sralice@gmail.com) or 732-238-9222

## Parish Leadership

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

## About St. Matthias (please contact the staff members on the cover for up-to-date information)

**Parish Registration** — Welcome to St. Matthias! Please register on our website. [www.stmatthias.net/join-us](http://www.stmatthias.net/join-us), or visit the Parish Office.

**Marriage** — Registered parishioners should contact the parish office a year before the desired wedding date.

**Baptism** — Baptismal Preparation Sessions are held four times a year for registered parishioners. Please contact the parish office before the baby is born. The sacrament of Baptism is celebrated on the second and fourth Sunday of each month, except during Lent.

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)** - If you are interested in becoming a Catholic or completing the Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism/Confirmation/Eucharist, please call the Parish Office.



**St. Matthias School** is a PreK3 through 8<sup>th</sup> grade school rooted in faith, inspired by love, and dedicated to academic excellence. Before and After School Care Programs are available. Come visit! Contact 732-828-1402 to schedule a tour.

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