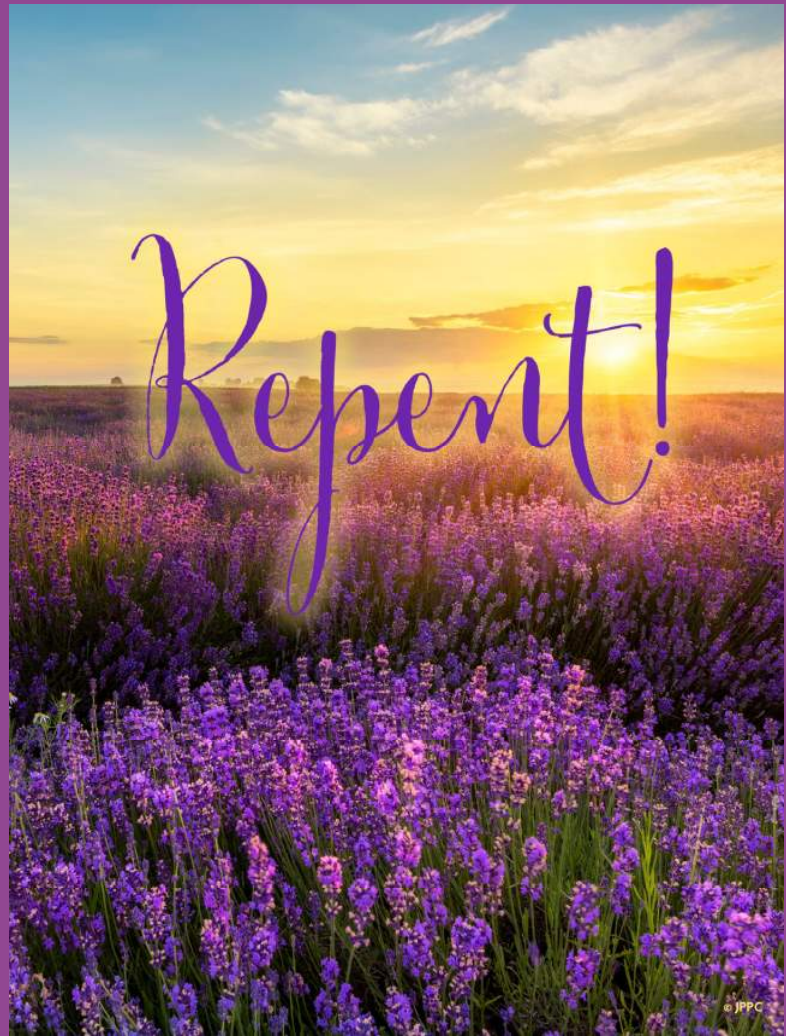




THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS  
 SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 2025  
 Third Sunday of Lent



**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 7:45AM to 3:30PM

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**

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

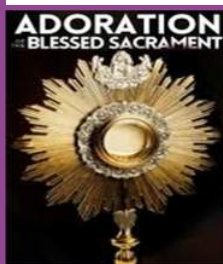
Amy Hanna, *Accountant/Databases*, **ahanna**  
 Mike Lanyi, *Sacristan*  
 Sue Lenczewski, *Youth Coordinator*, **SMYLE**  
 Julio Montero, *Maintenance Supervisor*  
 Debra Schurko, *Director of Religious Education*,  
**dschurko**

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

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

**All Are Welcome to Our  
 First 40 Hour Adoration  
 Beginning on March 30<sup>th</sup>**

More details on page 7



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

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

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

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, March 23, 2025** **3rd Sunday of Lent**  
**NO BAPTISMS - LENT**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass –Children’s Liturgy of the Word Signed Mass	Church
10:00AM	1st Scrutiny - OCIA (RCIA)	
11:00AM	First Communion Retreat	Cafeteria
11:00AM	OCIA (RCIA)	de Porres Room
12:00PM	Mass	Church
2:00 PM	Confirmation Retreat	Cafeteria

**Monday, March 24, 2025** **St. Catherine of Sweden**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:00PM	EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION	Church
7:00PM	Cub Scout Pack 195 Meeting	Cafeteria

**Tuesday, March 25, 2025** **The Annunciation of the Lord**

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

**Wednesday, March 26, 2025** **St. Ludger, Apostle of Saxony**

8:00AM	Mass St. Joseph Novena	Church
9:30 AM	Holy Spirit Prayer Ministry	de Porres Room
6:30 PM	Girl Scout Troop 63202 Mtg.	Pre-K Classrm
7:30PM	Folk Group Rehearsal	Church

**Thursday, March 27 2025** **St. John of Egypt, Hermit**

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

**Friday, March 28, 2025** **St. Sixtus III, Pope**  
**ALL DAY SCHOOL STAFF PD DAY**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:45PM	Boy Scout Troop 154	Cafeteria
7:00PM	Stations of the Cross	Church

**Saturday, March 29, 2025** **Jonas & Barachisius, Monks & Martyrs**

12:00PM	Reception-Fr. Leo’s Memorial Service	Cafeteria
1:00PM	Memorial Mass/Service for Father Leo Gariazzo	Church
3:30PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Sunday Virgil Mass	Church

**Sunday, March 30, 2025** **4th Sunday of Lent**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
11:00AM	RCIA	de Porres Rm
12:00PM	Mass	Church
1:00PM	40 Hour Adoration (Day 1/3)	Church



Dear Friends,

If you were present at the 10 am Mass on the first Sunday of Lent, you noticed the “Rite of Sending” four of our Catechumen to the Cathedral and acknowledging 13 Candidates – all preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation at Easter Vigil this year through our OCIA (RCIA) process. This Sunday at the 10 am Mass, we have “Scrutiny” for the Catechumen. Are all these terms strange for us? I think we will all remember that RCIA stood for the “Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults,” though few 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 OCIA, and ‘Candidate’ is the term used for a baptized person who did not receive Eucharist or Confirmation. This year we are privileged to have what is probably the largest class in our OCIA process.

So, what is the rite called ‘scrutiny’? *“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 scrutines 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 over-indulgence 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.

I had done a 10 part bulletin series on the Jubilee Year 2025. Now I wish to begin another series on our Homebound Ministry - a wonderful ministry that benefits our parishioners who are homebound or in nursing homes. This is a ministry that is not so visible to the rest of us. How lucky we are that we have a dedicated number of parishioners who do this ministry joyfully but quietly, away from the limelight. We are very grateful to those who did this ministry in the past and are no longer with us or had to stop due to reasons of health or mobility. But there are a good number of our parishioners who bring Jesus and His Word to the homebound. (see their names on page 4). Read their personal experiences and reflections from next Sunday onwards in our bulletin. If you are inspired by their stories, you are welcome to join this wonderful ministry. Please contact **Doreen Panick**, our Coordinator, at: [dsp999@aol.com](mailto:dsp999@aol.com)

Your brother in Christ,  
Fr. Abraham Orapankal

**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.

## Readings for the Week

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

**Tuesday** Is 7:10-14; 8:10 Ps 40:7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 11 Heb 10:4-10 Lk 1:26-38

**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** Jos 5:9a, 10-12 Ps 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7. 2 Cor 5:17-21 Lk 15:1-3, 11-32



## Mass Intentions for the Week

<b>Sat., March 22</b>	5:00 PM	Helen Bell by Shafranski Family
<b>Sun., March 23</b>	8:00 AM	Aloyzas Liaukus by Nijole Klimik
	10:00 AM	Leonarda Borysewicz by Granddaughter Irene
	12:00 PM	Intention of Parishioners
<b>Mon., March 24</b>	8:00 AM	George William Hodulik by Joe & Louise Porter
<b>Tues., March 25</b>	8:00 AM	Courtney Onwuz by Rosary & Holy Spirit Group
<b>Wed., March 26</b>	8:00 AM	James Isola by Will & Christine Isola
<b>Thurs., March 27</b>	8:00 AM	John Martinez by Isola Family
<b>Fri., March 28</b>	8:00 AM	Bob Piagentini by Jo-Ann Piagentini
<b>Sat., March 29</b>	5:00 PM	Intention for the Parishioners
<b>Sun., March 30</b>	8:00 AM	Birthday Blessings for Gondee Tibay by Alma Valdez
	10:00 AM	Na Hian Nie by Busono Family
	12:00 PM	Bill Frank by Frank Family

## Pray for those who are sick...

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

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

Connie Adams	Andrea Dubuisson	Marilyn Jensen	Joan Mazzacco	Patricia Shea
Beth, Jim & Jay Adams	Derowitsch Family	Jean Alix Jolly	Frank McCann	Amy Shepp
Suzanne Adams	Hattie Evans	Marie Claude Jolly	Ann McElwee	Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF
Sue Alese	Adam Figueriedo	Donna Kahora	Jessica Marie Merrick	Catherine Steele
Robert Baker	Margaret Ann Cichon	Patty Kerekes	Gail Miranda	Richard Sury
Edgar Banaag	Ford	Betsy Kondrat	Catalina Moran	Jacqueline Taylor
Carolyn Banghart	Sharon Gadomski	Kim Krikorian	Sarah Braun Morini	Anita Vance
Ghislaine Baron	Heinley Gaspard	Kathy Langenbacher	Dr. Jean Patrick	Minda Villarica
Samantha Bellouny	Gerard Giordano	Rose Larangeira	Robert Pellegrino	Eileen Weber
Carmen Bender	Claude Godet	Linda Leone	Robert Pierro	Nancy Whelan
Mary Bostrom	Marie Godet	Henrietta Lesiak	Robert Pietrowiak	Richard Zagurek
Robert Brisson	Fr. Ben Gomez OMI	John Litrakis	Randolff Pinard	Ginette Zamor
Patricia Burke	Shelly Greene	Mary Lou Litrakis	Valerie Polci	Anne Zando
Karin Cabezas	Joan Harris	Aries Magali	Kim Price	Celia M. Zelinski
Ben Campbell	Linda Hartong	Cynthia Magat	Frank Rispoli	<b>And for all who are ill, homebound, elderly, in nursing care, or living with chronic illness, we pray.</b>
Tara Capatosto	Jeff Hentz	Kenneth & Kelly Magat	Gabriel Rivera	
Rustico Castellano	Sloopy & JP Hoffman	Bobby Manansala	Don Roeske	
Pierre Celestin	Marilyn Horvath	Susan, King & Tosh	Bob Rotz	
Lisa DeFeo	Jerry & Donna Hucul	Manansala	Marisa Ruppel	
Patrick Dolphin	Nicole Cherill Hynes	Colleen Maniscalco	Gloria Santos	
Vivian Dong	Nick Isele	Alexandra Marquez	Maria Schwenzer	
Sanora Doyen	Rafael Jara	Christine Matthews	Felix Sebastian	

## Pray for those who have died...

— “His mercy endures forever.” Chronicles

Babbet Doyley

## Reflect



### Smile with Your Family



A young boy had just gotten his driving permit. He asked his father, who was a minister, if they could discuss the use of the car. His father took him to his study and said to him, "I'll make a deal with you. You bring your grades up, study your bible a little and get your hair cut and we'll talk about it." After about a month the boy came back and again asked his father if they could discuss use of the car. They again went to the father's study where his father aid, "Son, I've been real proud of you. You have brought your grades up, you've studied your bible diligently, but you didn't get your hair cut!" The young man waited a moment and replied, "You know Dad, I've been thinking about that. You know, Samson had long hair, Moses had long hair, Noah had long hair, and even Jesus had long hair..." To which his father replied..."Yes, and they WALKED everywhere they went!" 😊

A farmer confessed to his priest, "Father, I'm having trouble forgiving my neighbor." The priest asked, "Why is that?" The farmer replied, "Every time I forgive him, he borrows something else and never returns it!" 😊

A Sunday school teacher was asking her students some questions after a series of lessons on God's omnipotence. She asked, "Is there anything God can't do?" All were silent. Finally, one boy held up his hand. The teacher sighed and asked, "Well, what is it you think God can't do?" The boy replied, "He can't please everybody." 😊

If you're using public transport never give up your seat to another man... That's how I lost my job as a bus driver 😊

Never give up on your dreams... Stay in bed. 😊

"I'm not weird; I'm a limited edition." 😊



## Stations of the Cross Every Friday During Lent at 7:00 PM in the Church

### MERCY QUOTE FROM POPE FRANCIS:

"The mercy of God is His loving concern for each of us. He feels responsible; that is, He desires our well-being and He wants to see us happy, full of joy, and peaceful. This is the path which the merciful love of Christians must also travel. As the Father loves, so do His children. Just as He is merciful, so we are called to be merciful to each other."

—Pope Francis, (*Misericordia Vultus*, 9)



### ST. MATTHIAS HOMEBOUND MINISTRY

I wish to begin a new series on a wonderful ministry we have here at St. Matthias that benefits our parishioners who are homebound or in nursing homes. This is a ministry that is not so visible to the rest of us. How lucky we are that we have a dedicated number of our parishioners who do this ministry joyfully but quietly, away from the limelight. We are very grateful to those who did this ministry in the past and are either no longer with us or had to stop due to reasons of health or mobility. Here's a list of those currently visiting the homebound week after week:

*Doug & Allison Trovato, Christine Dzamba, Vicky Bartizal, Devin Busono, Jason Goldberg, Barbara Carcich, Lorraine Soltis, Pat Lawyer, Pat Jones, Doreen Panick, Mario Sciano, Kevin Enad, JoAnne Piagentini, Barbara DeLorenzo, Bill Bartlett, Peggy Joyce, Paul New, Joe Percoco, Gina So, Menchie Ventura, Fran Johnson, Jeff Hentz, Raymond Varela, Coleen McAuliffe, Pearl Scott, Patricia Flynn, Mercy Ekwere, Ellen Catalina, Rita DiNicola, William Isele, Donna Kahora, Jean Shafranski, Yvette Michel*

Look for their personal experiences and reflections from next Sunday onwards in our bulletin. If you are inspired by their stories, you are welcome to join this wonderful ministry.

Please contact **Doreen Panick**, our Coordinator, at: [dsp999@aol.com](mailto:dsp999@aol.com) if you are interested.

## THE GARDEN AT SANT'ANA

*The parable of the fig tree: "Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future." Luke 13: 1-9*

Margarida's downward spiral went from drinking to smoking crack to stealing to support her addiction. She lost everything, including her home and her family's small plot of land. Soon she found herself in the largest women's prison in Brazil, Sant'Ana in the city of Sao Paulo. There Margarida found salvation in dirt. Sant'Ana, a sprawling facility with over 2,500 inmates, has its own organic garden. The garden was devised by two students - a Brazilian and an American - as part of an urban agricultural development course they were taking. "The project was built on the idea that women prisoners needed a beautiful place of respite from the ugly walls of the prison," the students explain.

With 200 starter plants from the university and donations from family and friends in the United States, the two students approached the prison staff for permission to plant the garden. At first, the prison staff was reluctant to approve the garden, having seen too many well-intentioned projects get started only to end abruptly when the organizers lost interest or ran out of time and money. But the students convinced the staff they were committed to making a go of the garden.

Some 20 prisoners and classmates they recruited took part in the watering, planting and caring for seedlings. That first season they harvested zucchini, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, lemongrass and other herbs, as well as flowers and shrubs. The garden was not just a source of food but a hands-on learning experience about the environment. Working the earth has been therapeutic for many of the inmates who suffer from mental health issues; the garden also teaches *social and communications skills to the women, many of whom are illiterate. For Margarida, the garden has been a Godsend. "The garden was a clinic for me. Drugs were destroying my life. I believe that I will leave this place changed. I have faith in God and faith in my own willingness to change."* [Maryknoll, May/June 2015.]

***The prison garden at Sant'Ana is the Gospel fig tree. Both the prison garden and struggling fig tree mirror the hope of the Gospel: that we can always rework our plot of land, replant relationships that have not been nurtured, plant new seedlings where previous attempts to harvest something good and just have died on the vine. Like the gardener of the poor fig tree, we have the choice to work the soil and "feed" our ability to grow and move beyond ourselves and our hope for a just and compassionate world - or we can allow ourselves to be "cut down" in our sadness, disappointment and despair. In the parable of the fig tree, Jesus assures us that we always live in the hope and mercy of God enabling us to rise from the ashes of sin to rebuild and transform our lives, to work and rework our own small plots and realize its harvest of compassion and grace.***

## WHAT SHOULD I "DO" DURING ADORATION?

Today, in the United States, there are 644 chapels where Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is exposed twenty-four hours for the adoration of the faithful. There are another 6,605 chapels that have partial adoration hours. Each Adoration Chapel is like an oasis of peace in a busy, demanding world. All we need to do is walk in and be still. We will begin to feel Our Lord Himself there, personally present, All-Powerful and all good, waiting to listen to all we have to say. We come, often tired, burdened with problems, or even discouraged. Trusting in the words of Jesus, "Come to Me all you who are weary and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28), we come ready to be fed. We come to bathe in His Love, ready to be healed, allowing His Living Presence to minister to all our needs—those needs we know and those needs known by Him alone. We come to tell Him of our love for Him. We come to thank Him. We come to beg His mercy on someone's behalf. We come. We step out of the buzz of our active lives into the gentle silence in His Presence. We come.

### **BUT, THE QUESTION REMAINS: WHAT SHOULD I "DO" DURING ADORATION?**

Here's the best answer: St. John Vianney would notice a peasant come to his small church everyday and sit on the last bench. One day he went up to him and asked him, "My good fellow, what are you doing here? Are you praying? You seem to be doing nothing." And pointing to the Blessed Sacrament, he said in reply, "*I look at him - and he looks at me.*"

### **BUT GOD NEVER GAVE UP**

God has promised never to give up on us. All of the Scriptures Old and New Testaments together are a record of how God never, never, never, never, never gives up.

- Adam and Eve disobeyed the very First Rule. But God never gave up.
- Abraham wandered, and Sarah laughed. But God never gave up.
- Moses hid and shook with fear. But God never gave up.
- Saul went insane. But God never gave up.
- David plotted against Uriah. But God never gave up.
- Ahaz sold out to Assyria. But God never gave up.
- Israel fell into pieces. But God never gave up.
- The Jewish people became exiles. But God never gave up.
- John the Baptist was beheaded. But God never gave up.
- Peter denied he even knew Jesus. But God never gave up.
- The disciples all ran away. But God never gave up.

***During Lent, we, too, are given another chance to repent and return to our Heavenly Father's love. We are also expected to give others a second chance when they ask our forgiveness. God would like to use each one of us as the "gardener" in the parable to help Him cultivate our families and communities and enrich them with grace. Let us thank God for using others to help us bear fruit. Grace is everywhere. Let us always cooperate with grace, especially during Lent.***

## “I’M GUILTY, AND I DESERVE TO BE HERE!”

There is a story of how King Frederick II, an Eighteenth Century King of Prussia, was visiting a prison in Berlin. He was going from inmate to inmate, and every one of them was trying to prove how they had been unjustly imprisoned. They all proclaimed their innocence, except one. That one prisoner was sitting quietly in a corner, while all the rest protested their innocence. Seeing him sitting there oblivious to everything else that was going on, the King walked over to him and said, "Son, why are you in here?" He said, "Armed robbery, your Honor," The King said, "Are you guilty?" He said, "Sire, I am guilty, and I deserve to be here." The King then gave an order to the guard and said, "Release this guilty man, I do not want this man corrupting all these other innocent people."

*Today's Gospel is Jesus' call to repentance. We need to live lives of repentance, because (a) we never know when we will meet a tragedy of our own. Let us repent while we have the chance. Let us turn to Christ, acknowledge our faults and failings and receive from him mercy, forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. There is no better way to take these words of Jesus to heart than to go to sacramental confession, and there is no better time to go to confession than during Lent. We are unable to predict when a tragic accident may happen to us. Our end may come swiftly – without warning and without giving us an opportunity to repent. (b) Repentance helps us in life and in death. It helps us to live as forgiven people, and helps us to face death without fear. When we repent, we are saying: "I've been going in the wrong direction – I must turn my life around." Repentance begins with an admission of our sin and inadequacy. We cannot see Jesus in all his fullness unless we look at Him through the lens of repentance. Scripture says repentance results in forgiveness, renewal, and redirection. Repentance is a statement of regret for the inner condition of our souls, with a determination to have that condition changed*



## MARY BRENNER’S BURNING BUSH

In the 1980’s Mary Brenner was a divorced mother of seven children who owned a carbon paper manufacturing company in Beverly Hills. She was a friend of all the movie stars, went to their parties, and hobnobbed with celebrities. What turned her around, and made her see life differently? She came across a very touching photograph of the Holocaust. Among the people in the photograph there was a young boy facing a Nazi soldier who was pointing a rifle at him. The child’s eyes showed deep fear and bewilderment. Mary Brenner looked at that photograph and suddenly realized that life could never be the same for her. She felt an enormous compassion for all those who were victims of brutality, for those who were the most marginalized. She went to the Bishop of San Diego and said, “I’d like to belong to some kind of a religious order and dedicate myself to those people nobody else seems to care for.” She wound up being called Sister Antonio, and working with the women in the Tijuana Prison, a women’s prison in Mexico. These inmates of the prison were among the most abject, forlorn, and neglected segment of humanity. Sister Antonio became their friend, companion, sister, and mother all in one. That holocaust picture was Mary Brenner’s burning bush. Today’s first reading speaks of a similar conversion happened to Moses.

### SECOND CHANCERS!

History is full of individuals who had their first, second and many other chances before they succeeded. **Enrico Caruso** was told by one music teacher, "You can't sing. You have no voice at all." Yet he became one of the best-loved singers of his time. **Beethoven's** music teacher said about him, "As a composer he is hopeless." An editor told **Louisa May Alcott** that she was incapable of writing anything that would have popular appeal. That, of course, was before *Little Women*. **Walt Disney** was once fired by a newspaper editor because he was thought to have no "good ideas." Tell that to the millions of people thrilled by Walt's movies. When **F. W. Woolworth** was 21, he got a job in a store, but was not allowed to wait on customers because he "didn't have enough sense." Each of these famous people proved to have a certain genius," but was it innate or did it grow out of their dedication to developing what they had been given? **Somerset Maugham** said it best in his autobiography *Summing Up*, "I knew that I had no lyrical quality, a small vocabulary, little gift of metaphor. The original and striking simile never occurred to me. Poetic flights...were beyond my powers. On the other hand, I had an acute power of observation, and it seemed to me that I could see a great many things that other people missed. I could put down in clear terms what I saw...I knew that I should never write as well as I could wish, but I thought, with pains, that I could arrive at writing as well as my natural defects allowed." Somerset Maugham discovered the secret of genius. The point is that life does not ask us to become what we are not. The fig tree was only required to produce figs. No more. You and I are asked only to accomplish what our natural gifts allow. **BUT WE ARE ASKED TO ACCOMPLISH THAT.**



## COME PRAY THE ROSARY WITH US

The Rosary Altar Society meets every  
first Sunday of each month  
after the 10 am Mass to pray the rosary.

**ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN.**



### A SACRED PRIVILEGE (40 HOUR ADORATION)



During this final year of the Eucharistic Revival we at St. Matthias have a sacred opportunity to worship and adore the Blessed Sacrament during a 40 Hour Devotion this Lent. The 40 Hour devotion has been observed in the Catholic Church for many years, 40 is a number that is significantly connected with our Lord: the days He fasted, the hours he suffered, the hours He prayed, the days he wandered in the desert!

**We have planned our 40 Hour Adoration beginning next Sunday, March 30th and ending on Tuesday, April 1st in the main Church.**

#### **WILL YOU CONSIDER SPENDING ONE HOUR WITH JESUS AS AN Eucharistic Guardian ?**

We will have sign-up sheets in the back of the church, you can choose an hour that best suits your schedule, of course we will especially need people who are “night owls”. There will be two people scheduled for each hour, of course parishioners can visit the blessed sacrament also during the day.

This effort will be a special spiritual moment for our parish, we learned during this Eucharistic Revival that “Nothing is more important than Holy Mass and Eucharistic Adoration”

Please consider adding this effort for Jesus as part of your personal Lenten Journey,  
God Bless You!

### FROM THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL (PPC)

We held our regular PPC meeting on February 18. The opening prayer was Lectio Divina reflection on a gospel passage. Deacon John Radvanski joined us and gave this update about the Accompaniment Project of our Youth Ministry:

- ◆ We are one of 43 parishes accepted to the Accompaniment Project through the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry.
- ◆ The goal is to have more parish adults accompanying youth and sharing their interests and passions, such as robotics, sports, chess, music, etc., to meet at regular intervals at safe places such as Starbucks, church, home, etc. The hope is that these gatherings and fellowships will help them to express and own their faith better and they will come to Mass, or a youth Mass. This can be achieved through sacred listening in Small Groups with adult mentors present.
- ◆ A healthy young person needs to have 5-8 mentors in their lives, including parents. Obviously, adult parishioners are essential partners in this project. Hence the Accompaniment Project plans to train adults in Sacred Listening and Life Skills for helping in the formation of our teens in small groups. More of this update will be communicated to the parish community later.

After Deacon John’s update, we proceeded with the rest of the agenda and here are some salient points of that:

- ◆ Ash Wednesday services in the church and the logistics of the Drive-Thru Ash distribution
- ◆ Promoting the small groups or the Lenten groups of faith sharing. Resources are ready.
- ◆ Parish Lenten Retreat is on Saturday, March 15, led by Sr. Terry Rickard, 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. in SMS cafeteria. PPC members will help/volunteer with the breakfast arrangement and other needs on this retreat day.
- ◆ New PPC members are needed. Invitation is in the bulletin.
- ◆ Some parishioners had requested the Pastor about adding an Adoration Chapel. Exploration is on and if feasible, a plan will be presented to the diocese.

We concluded the meeting with a short prayer.

*submitted by Sheila Tartaglia, PPC Secretary*

## Learn



### ST. MATTHIAS SCHOOL DRAMA CLUB PRESENTS...

Help support the St. Matthias School Drama Students by purchasing items for the show, then come see them on stage!



**BUY TICKETS FOR THE SHOW!**  
April 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM  
at Immaculata High School,



**For detailed information visit:**  
[www.stmatthias.net/marypoppinsjr](http://www.stmatthias.net/marypoppinsjr)

### ST. MATTHIAS GOLF OUTING

Friday, May 2nd Rutgers Golf Course

Scan code to register or

[www.https://events.golfstatus.com/event/SMS2025](http://www.https://events.golfstatus.com/event/SMS2025)



Email  
[smsgolfclub@gmail.com](mailto:smsgolfclub@gmail.com)  
with any questions

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- Single Golfer \$250 Golf & After Party
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- After Party Only \$100

## Serve



### CALLED TO PRAY AND WORK TO HELP THOSE IN NEED?

The St Vincent de Paul ministry is intended to immerse its members in a Vincentian spirituality – seeing the face of Christ in those we serve, while being His to those we serve. We aim to help residents of Franklin Township in need, regardless of religious affiliation.

In 2024, we assisted 200 households with housing expenses and utilities. We also have contributed to the Los Angeles SVDP after the devastating wildfires, and we continued supporting a school in Haiti.

We accomplished this due to a parish culture of stewardship. We in the SVDP give of our:

- Time spent in prayer for our benefactors and clients. Time spent interviewing neighbors. Time researching resources to help.
- Talent shared– key to problem-solving and planning to assist our neighbors.
- Treasure –from special collections, regular donations from committed individuals, and the poor boxes.

The economy erased wage increases made over past years. Landlords are intolerant of even a day's delay in rent payments, resulting, in late and legal fees and beginning court-ordered evictions.

Our member numbers have decreased for a variety of reasons. The work is sometimes hard but is extremely rewarding. We ask that you discern whether you are called to pray and work with us in our ministry.

For further information, please visit our website: [SVDPatSM.org](http://SVDPatSM.org) and [www.stmatthias.net/svdp](http://www.stmatthias.net/svdp)

Bob Cherill, President

### WE'RE LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS

#### Pastoral Council Seeks New Members

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

#### Finance Council Seeks New Members

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



# Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025				Last Year's Total
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 35 - March 2, 2025	\$15,309.14	\$9,175.50	<b>\$24,484.64</b>	\$28,198.50
Week 36 - March 9, 2025	\$8,613.00	\$27,829.00	<b>\$36,442.00</b>	\$34,341.20
Week 37 - March 16, 2025	\$8,166.00	\$14,742.50	<b>\$22,908.50</b>	\$21,990.52
Week 38 - March 23, 2025				\$23,903.00
Week 39 - March 30, 2025				\$41,055.00
			<b>Month-to-date Total</b>	<b>March Total Last Year</b>
<b>Ash Wednesday - \$3,835.00</b>			<b>\$83,835.14</b>	\$149,488.22
			<b>Current Year-to-date Total</b>	<b>Year-to-date as of March 31, 2024</b>
			<b>\$963,796.05</b>	\$957,433.35

## REMINDER!

When we contribute via check, the Chase Bank requires that the checks must be made out to **“Church of St. Matthias.”**  
 No other variation of this designation will be acceptable due to greater security controls.

### Stewardship Reflection March 23, 2025 3rd Sunday of Lent

*“He said to the gardener, ‘For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none.’” - Luke 13:7*

We can all be like the barren fig tree at times. Do you cling to what you have, or do you generously share with others? How will you respond when God asks you what you have done with all the gifts He has given you? Remember, not only are we called to be generous; we are called to develop and nurture our gifts; and return them with increase. We are called to be generous with all of gifts; especially the one that means the most to you.

### Reflexiónese – 23 de marzo de 2025 Domingo 3º de Cuaresma

*“Y dijo al viñador: ‘Mira, hace tres años que vengo a buscar fruto en esta higuera, y no lo hallo.’”- Lucas 13:7*

Todos podemos ser algunas veces como el árbol estéril que no produce frutos. ¿Se aferra a lo que tiene, o comparte generosamente con otros? ¿Cómo responde cuando Dios le pregunta que ha hecho con los dones que Él le ha dado? Recuerde, no solo somos llamados a ser generosos, somos llamados a desarrollar y nutrir nuestros dones, y a devolverlos con creces. Somos llamados a ser generosos con todos los dones; especialmente con los que tienen un mayor significado para nosotros.

## CATHOLIC SCHOOL 2025-2026 TUITION ASSISTANCE ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS OPENED January 1<sup>st</sup>



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.factsmtg.com/aid>. Online applications must be completed (including all required documentation) **by no later than March 31, 2025**. A signed Parish Verification Form is also required by the Diocese, and should be signed by your Pastor, and submitted to the school or schools your children attend. Eligibility requirements, instructions and forms can be found at: [www.diometuchen.org/tuition-assistance](http://www.diometuchen.org/tuition-assistance). 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.

# Connecting to Our Local Community



## FREE TAX PREPARATION

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

These volunteers go through intensive training and testing to prepare to be IRS-certified tax preparers. Several of our parishioners have had their taxes prepared by them. If anyone wishes to make use of their assistance, know that their phone lines open **after February 1<sup>st</sup>**. It is completely free.

**For an appointment, call 908-541-5710**



## THE IMMACULATA HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME

**Thursday, April 10, 2025**

### TWO ST. MATTHIAS ALUMS WILL BE INDUCTED IN MEMORIAM



**6:00-7:00 pm Cocktail Hour  
7:00-10:00 pm Awards Dinner**

**The Palace at Somerset Park  
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Somerset, NJ 08873**

**For more details visit:  
[www.immaculatahighschool.org/advancement/hall\\_of\\_fame](http://www.immaculatahighschool.org/advancement/hall_of_fame)**



## METUCHEN CURSILLO MOVEMENT

**Annual Lenten Encounter with Christ  
Saturday, April 5, 2025 - 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

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

*The Mission will continue...*

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

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

**Please Register:**

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

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**Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ**



## Parish Leadership

<b>Parish Pastoral Council:</b> <b>Co-Chairs:</b> Stephen Busono <a href="mailto:sbusono@gmail.com">sbusono@gmail.com</a> Bill Isele <a href="mailto:t33sm@aol.com">t33sm@aol.com</a>	<b>Secretary:</b> Sheila Tartaglia <b>Members:</b> Teresa Yannotta Joe Percoco Miles London	Fr. Lancelot McGrath Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio <b>Trustees:</b> Pearl Scott Marge Richards	<b>Parish Finance Council:</b> Kester Hector, Chair <b>FinanceCouncil</b> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/stmatthias.net">@stmatthias.net</a> Carmen Driz-Melilli Barry Dusault 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](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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