



All are Welcome

St. Matthias Parish Office:

Open Mon-Thu: 8:30-5:00PM; Fri: 8:30-4PM
 168 JFK Boulevard, Somerset, NJ 08873
 732-828-1400, fax: 732-828-0866
www.stmatthias.net

Mass Schedule (in person):

Sat - 5PM, Sun - 8, 10 AM & 12 noon
 M/T/W/Th/F at 8:00AM

And 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

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

Pastor: Rev Abraham Orapankal, [abraham](mailto:abraham@stmatthias.net)
Senior Priest: Msgr. Seamus Brennan, [sbrennan](mailto:sbrennan@stmatthias.net)
 Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Business Administrator
[mpburke-grospin](mailto:mpburke-grospin@stmatthias.net)

Deacon Ron Caimi, *Senior Deacon*
 Kelly Counts, *Receptionist*, [kcounts](mailto:kcounts@stmatthias.net)
 Conroy Davis, *Custodian*
 Juan Diaz Flores, *Custodian*
 Leslie Guillen, *Bulletin Editor*, [lguillen](mailto:lguillen@stmatthias.net)
 Nathalie Godet, *Formation/Parish Support*
Secretary, [ngodet](mailto:ngodet@stmatthias.net)
 Amy Hanna, *Parish Support Secretary*, [ahanna](mailto:ahanna@stmatthias.net)
 Julio Montero, *Maintenance Supervisor*
 Deacon Russell Demkovitz, [rdemkovitz](mailto:rdemkovitz@stmatthias.net)
 Ana V Kelly, *Pastoral Associate for Marketing & Development*, [akelly](mailto:akelly@stmatthias.net)
 Mike Lanyi, *Sacristan*
 Sue Lenczweski, *Youth Coordinator*
 Dolores R. Nann, *Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation*, [dnann](mailto:dnann@stmatthias.net)
 Vinnie Natale, *Bookkeeper*, [vnatale](mailto:vnatale@stmatthias.net)
 Silvia Nizama, *Housekeeper*
 Deacon John Radvanski, [deaconjohn](mailto:deaconjohn@stmatthias.net)
 Joan Best Seamon, *Pastoral Associate for Music Ministry* [jseamon](mailto:jseamon@stmatthias.net)
 Sr Marie Therese Sherwood, *OSF, Pastoral Assoc. for Social Concerns*, [msherwood](mailto:msherwood@stmatthias.net)
 Phyllis Stone, *Pastoral Associate for Liturgy/RCIA & Admin. Assistant to the Pastor*, [pstone](mailto:pstone@stmatthias.net)
 Trish Stumper, *Par. Support Secretary*, [tstumper](mailto:tstumper@stmatthias.net)

St. Matthias School (add @stmatthiasnj.org)

Mary Lynch, Principal, [mlynch](mailto:mlynch@stmatthiasnj.org)
 Joseph Gidaro, Vice Principal, [jgidaro](mailto:jgidaro@stmatthiasnj.org)

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS
 SUNDAY, NOV 28 2021 – First Sunday of Advent



GivingTuesday 2021—Nov 30, 2021

After Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and Cyber Monday, we celebrate Giving Tuesday on November 30 — a chance to “give back” to the community. You have no doubt received emails and messages from many non-profits in the last few days.

Last year, our Giving Tuesday campaign at St. Matthias had 122 participants, and together with their employers who provided matching funds, we raised over \$31,000 to start the purchase of the Promethean boards. By the end of the year, we were able to complete the purchase of all of the boards, thanks to your generosity.

This year, St. Matthias will be sponsoring two Giving Tuesday campaigns:

- The **Spiritual Tech Connect** campaign, sponsored by the church, will raise funds to spiritually connect our community using much needed technology. Specifically, we hope to raise funds to purchase monitors and related equipment to be able to project text and videos within the church building so all can see the information clearly. This will be used at Mass, other services, and for other events such as GIFT, faith formation, sacramental preparation and education. In addition, we hope to raise funds to purchase and install livestreaming equipment to be able to continue broadcasting our Masses and other services to our homebound and other parishioners, family members and friends who are unable to a participate in-person. Many people do not realize that we use borrowed equipment every weekend thanks to the generosity and dedication of the Mancuso family. Visit www.stmatthias.net/GT2021
- The **Trading Spaces & Reading Places** campaign, sponsored by the school, will raise funds to modernize classrooms and enhance our reading/writing programs. We hope to raise funds to purchase new furniture concepts that will allow teachers to adapt more easily to new learning paradigms, accommodating individual, small group and large group instruction. In addition, we hope to raise funds to invest in materials and training to improve our English & Language Arts curriculum for all grades. Leveled books and materials are needed so every classroom has access to proper guided reading books and a robust library of authentic texts. Visit www.stmatthias.info/givingtuesday-2021

Join us on Giving Tuesday! **Let's see if we can have many more than 122 people participating this year!** (Please note that the websites are both active now, so you can watch the videos now and even donate early.)

#GIVINGTUESDAY



If you shop on Amazon, please help us by starting at:
www.stmatthias.net/Amazon

Masses are celebrated in-person and also livestreamed on our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ](https://www.youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ)

The Church is open for individual prayer

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

Sunday Nov 28, 2021 1st Sunday of Advent

8:00AM Mass Church
10:00AM Mass Church
10:30AM RCIA John XXIII Rm
12:00PM Mass Church

Monday, Nov 29, 2021, St. Francis Anthony Fasani

SMS classes resume

8:00AM Mass Church
8:30AM Miraculous Medal Novena Church

Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021 St. Andrew, Apostle

Giving Tuesday—Church & School

www.stmatthias.net/GT2021 (church)

www.stmatthias.info/givingtuesday-2021 (school)

8:00AM Daily Mass Church

Wednesday, Dec 1, 2021, St. Edmund Campion,

Priest & Martyr

8:00AM Mass Church
8:30AM St. Joseph Intercession Prayer Church
9:30AM Prayer Group-Holy Spirit de Porres Rm
7:00PM Bereavement Support Grp. Zoom
7:30PM Folk Group rehearsal Church

Thursday, Dec 2, 2021, St. Bibiana, Martyr

8:00AM Mass Church
3:30PM Children's Choir gr. 3&4 rehearsal Church
4:15PM Children's Choir gr. 5-8 rehearsal Church
7:30PM Sunday 10AM Choir rehearsal Church
8:00PM K of C Mtg. Cafeteria

Friday, Dec 3, 2021, St. Francis Xavier, Co-founder

of the Jesuit Order

SMS Dismissal 12:15PM

8:00AM Daily Mass Church
8:30AM First Friday Holy Hour Church

Saturday, Dec 4, 2021, St. John of Damascus,

Priest & Doctor

3:30PM Sacrament of Reconciliation Church
5:00PM Mass Church
6:00PM **Lighting of the Trees** Field next to Church

Sunday Dec 5, 2021 2nd Sunday of Advent

9:00AM **HSA Christmas Craft Fair** Cafeteria
8:00AM Mass Church
10:00AM Mass Church
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 12 Noon, **WEDNESDAY, 10 days before the intended issue** (earlier for holiday weekends). Approved content is published on a space-available basis.

Dear Friends,



Before even recovering from the Thanksgiving busy-ness, Advent season is upon us! Advent invites us to pay attention to the special music, prayers, reflections and church environment calling us to slow down and ponder this epoch-making event in history – the birth of Christ. Though a very special time for spiritual preparation for Christmas, Advent can pass us by as we get lost in the bright lights and hectic holiday rush. So, what should we do, not to lose the fruits of this important season?

One way to be living the spirit of Advent is to have some Advent devotion. A daily short reflection on an advent theme or Scripture will help us tremendously. Many resources are available online. A few years ago, I was pleasantly surprised to read that the LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention published Advent devotional books. According to Stan Norman, a Church historian and provost of Oklahoma Baptist University, Baptists have begun to see the usefulness of traditions once viewed as too liturgical or high church as these practices “seem to provide a bit of structure in a tradition that has maybe gone too far without structure.” This shift is also seen with other Christian Churches that have begun to offer tips about having Advent wreaths, candles and calendars for observing this holy season.

The popular and traditional practice of Advent wreath reminds us certain aspects of this sacred season. There are various explanations for each candle on the evergreen. Here’s how one tradition thinks of the four candles: The first purple candle is called ‘Prophecy Candle’ in remembrance of the prophets, primarily Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ (Isaiah 7:14). This first candle represents hope or expectation in anticipation of the coming Messiah. The second purple candle is the ‘Bethlehem Candle’ symbolizing the manger of Baby Jesus (Luke 2:12) representing love. The pink or rose-colored candle on the third Sunday is the ‘Shepherd’s Candle,’ symbolizing joy (Luke 2:8-11). The fourth candle, purple in color, is the ‘Angel’s Candle,’ representing peace (Luke 2:13-14). Here at St. Matthias, a family or an individual from our community will light these candles at each of our weekend Masses. Let us take to heart its meaning and symbolism and live them.

But there is another excellent practice that is often overlooked or taken lightly: the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Advent and Lent are traditional liturgical seasons when Catholics make an extra effort to cleanse their souls. A good confession can be one of the best ways to welcome the Lord Jesus into our hearts and thus enter into the joy of Christmas. Both of us priests plan to be available for confessions during the whole season of Advent: weekdays after the 8 am Mass, and Saturdays from 3:00 – 4:30 pm. If these times are not convenient, you can call any of us and make an appointment. I would encourage you to plan early to take advantage of this Sacrament that brings so much peace of heart.

Happy Advent.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal

Readings for the Week

Monday: Is 2:1-5; Ps 122:1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9; Mt 8:5-11

Tuesday: Rom 10:9-18; Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11; Mt 4:18-22

Wednesday: Is 25:6-10a; Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Mt 15:29-37

Thursday: Is 26:1-6; Ps 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Mt 7:21, 24-27

Friday: Is 29:17-24; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; Mt 9:27-31

Saturday: Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Ps 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Mt 9:35 — 10:1, 5a, 6-8

Sunday: Bar 5:1-9; Ps 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6; Phil 1:4-6, 8-11; Lk 3:1-6

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, Nov 27	5:00PM	In loving memory of Richard Curtis, by Frances & family
Sunday, Nov 28	8:00AM	Jose Jesus David Mateo, Sr., by Carla & Susan Tiongson
	10:00AM	Spiritual Intention for Ghislaine Stephen, by Yanick Andre
	12:00PM	Dorothy Gonzalez, by Anne Marie Francis
	(5:30PM)	Intention of Parishioners
Monday, Nov 29	8:00AM	Most Rev. James F. Checchio, by Sr. Marie Therese & Sr. Maria
Tuesday, Nov 30	8:00AM	Alfred Ponteras, by The Capuno Family
Wednesday, Dec 1	8:00AM	Elizabeth Mc Carroll, by The Madison Family
Thursday, Dec 2	8:00AM	Craig Slyman, by Mom & Dad
Friday, Dec 3	8:00AM	Mildred Kieta, by Anthony LaTorre & Family
Saturday, Dec 4	5:00PM	Romeo Jamilano Pagkatipunon, by The Salopek Family
Sunday, Dec 5	8:00AM	Jose Jesus David Mateo, Sr., by Carla & Susan Tiongson
	10:00AM	Angela Frigiola, by St. Matthias School
	12:00PM	Alfons Nowakowski, by daughter, Irene
	(5:30PM)	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 kcounts@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.*

Carolyn Banghart

Maria Barreiro

Virginia Briggs

Marie Brody

Thomas Burns

Tara Capatosto

Ellen Catalina

Barbara Coan

Tom Current

Joseph DeFrancesco

Cenon DeGuzman

Mary Ellen Delaney

Alaina Derecola

Surya & Juliany Dharma

Jim Dolan

Mary Dolan

William Dolphin

John Farkas

Claudia Gemgnani

Emma Gergely

Rose Gessner

Mary Gidaro

Marie Godet

Jill Gordon-Szabo

Sloopy Hoffman

Baby Isla-Rose Huffman

Kathleen Lagenbacher

Al & Rose Larangeira

Erlina Liem

The Litrakis Family

Al Maglio

Sue Maglio-Alese

Beatrice May

Margaret Menendez

Gail Miranda

Sabrina Moloney

Dave Moynihan

Baby Ezran Natural

Patricia Nese

Danny Ochangco

Jim Pettit

Christina Pietrowiak

Oscar Poisler

Baby Griffin Rademaker

Kevin Reavey

Chris Retz

Ann Ritchick

Jaxon Rivera

Angela Romanek

Rudy Schaar

Maria Schwenger

Sr. Mary Amata Shina, OSF

Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF

Catherine Sloomaker

Encarnacion (Gina) So

Alessandro Spagnolo

Dennis Stuewe

Jeff Tami

Fred & Carolyn Vanmiddlesworth

Eulalia Villanueva

Judi Wojna

Mark T. Worthington

Everyone who is ill with Covid-19
...and for all who are homebound,
elderly, in nursing care, or living with
chronic illness

Pray for those who have died...

— "His mercy endures forever." *Chronicles*

Aurea Mc Mullen

Wasit (Bucky) C. Lesik

Parish Finance Council Report



Finance Council Update to the Parish

November 2021

Good News

Our year ending June 30, 2021 shows a significant turnaround as you can see on the Financial Report on the reverse page. The prior year ended with a deficit of \$191,831, to a surplus this past year of \$144,846, a positive swing of \$336,677. Many factors helped. While revenue was down \$352,531 the major expense category of Salaries and Benefits was reduced by \$521,884. Our Pastor, Parish and School staffs have worked hard to maintain operations and ministries with reduced personnel.

Open Issues

After many requests to the Diocese for information regarding the resolution of Father Doug's investigation and prosecution we still don't know where we stand. We have asked for information on the insurance policy and claim, and for forgiveness of old Diocesan assessments not paid during Father Doug's tenure, and for the Diocesan audit and records. We refer you to the letter from Chancellor Kearns from the Diocese that was published last week. This provided more information and some clarification but is still not what we have been asking for. Current assessments are not being paid, but are expensed and booked as an account payable. Current Property and Liability Insurance is now being paid to the Diocese but three old years are also expensed and booked as an account payable.

Covid is also still an issue affecting our finances. Our School is running at a deficit (\$119,622 for 2020-21) but our leadership has done a good job with controlling expenses. Our Pastor is committed to our Church and School being considered one entity and helping the School as needed as it moves forward. Your support and promotion of our school is encouraged.

FYI

Our Parish has not done significant capital improvements in some time, but using some restricted donations we should be able to move forward on some improvements. (The parking lot, refinishing the pews and other areas are being considered). Solar panels and new roofs are being addressed at no capital outlay and with projected future savings in utility cost. Our federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan has been reviewed by the SBA, and has been approved to be converted to a grant (loan forgiveness).

Moving Forward Together

The strong core of parishioner support in our parish will insure a sound financial position. Putting these past years behind and looking forward we should be able to resume higher levels of ministries, faith formation, social concerns, and most importantly spending more time together at Mass and parish functions. Thanks to everyone for the continued stewardship of their Time, Talent, and Treasure. With prayer and hope and continued action by all we can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Sincerely,

Barry Dusault, Audrey Francis, Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Kester Hector, Fr. Abraham Orapankal, Gwen Orlowski, Joan Pritchard, Joe Porter

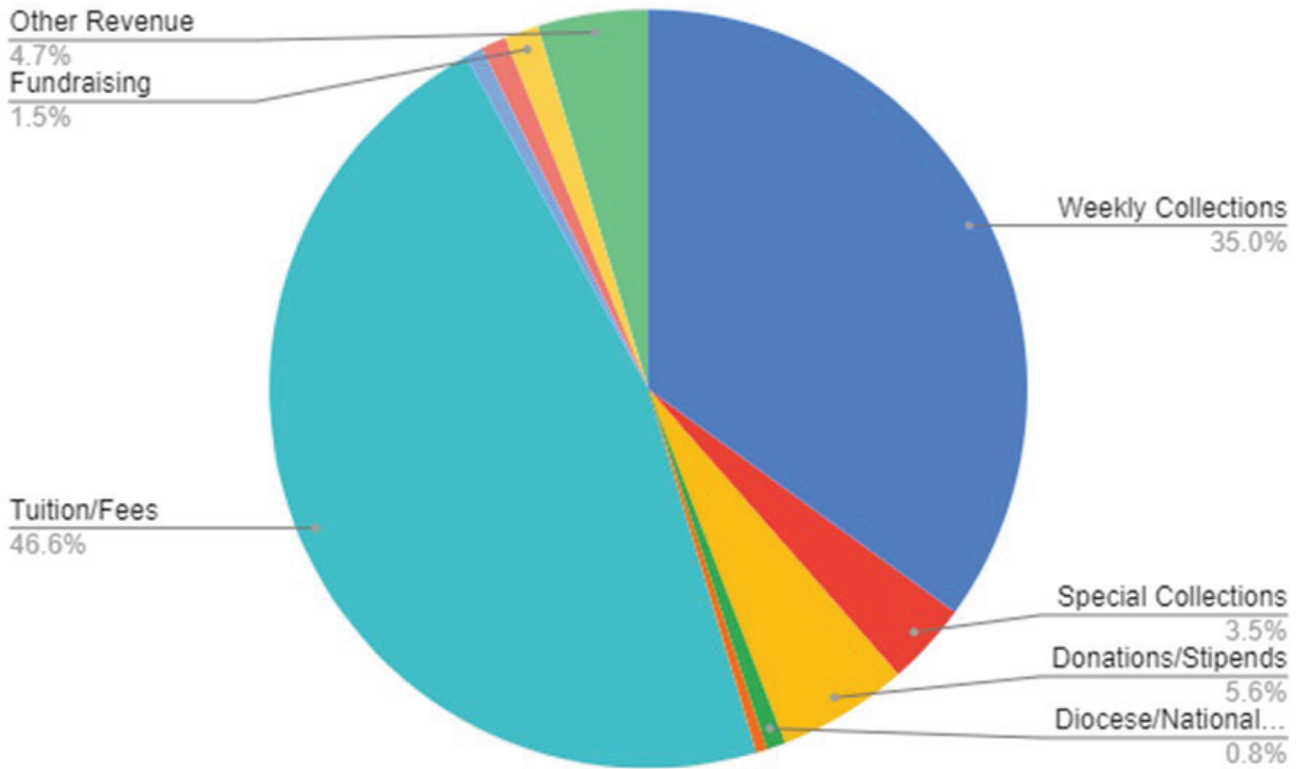
Parish Finance Council Report

Financial Report - July 2017-June 2021

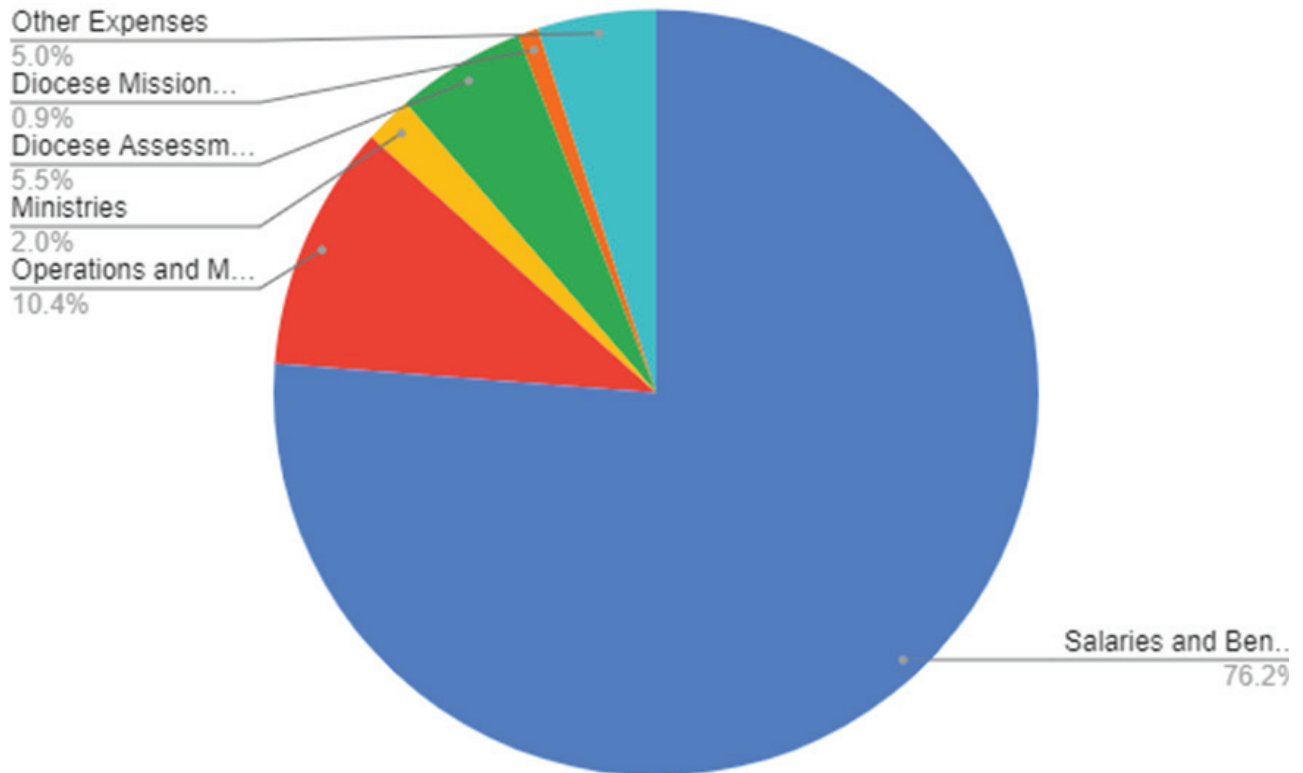
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Operating Revenue				
Weekly Collections	\$ 1,695,919	\$ 1,554,908	\$ 1,322,567	\$ 1,318,882
Special Collections	\$ 222,625	\$ 191,154	\$ 184,761	\$ 133,296
Donations/Stipends	\$ 159,719	\$ 220,766	\$ 270,535	\$ 210,483
Diocese/National Mission Collections	\$ 80,501	\$ 48,266	\$ 43,207	\$ 30,229
Faith Formation	\$ 37,759	\$ 32,953	\$ 30,722	\$ 17,367
Tuition/Fees	\$ 2,255,732	\$ 2,139,365	\$ 1,818,347	\$ 1,756,341
HSA Subsidy	\$ 172,301	\$ 152,750	\$ 176,027	\$ 28,292
After School/Lunch Programs	\$ 150,183	\$ 130,154	\$ 38,735	\$ 39,668
Fundraising	\$ 162,911	\$ 118,872	\$ 56,510	\$ 55,437
Other Revenue	\$ 244,006	\$ 196,327	\$ 178,827	\$ 177,712
Total Revenue	\$ 5,181,655	\$ 4,785,515	\$ 4,120,238	\$ 3,767,707
Operating Expenditures				
Salaries and Benefits	\$ 3,546,552	\$ 3,425,528	\$ 3,231,051	\$ 2,704,167
Operations and Maintenance	\$ 502,476	\$ 464,592	\$ 454,877	\$ 369,358
Ministries	\$ 436,902	\$ 284,614	\$ 157,406	\$ 71,413
Diocese Assessment	\$ 282,800	\$ 282,800	\$ 239,800	\$ 194,300
Diocese Mission Appeals	\$ 80,501	\$ 48,266	\$ 43,107	\$ 30,229
Other Expenses	\$ 303,529	\$ 260,669	\$ 135,033	\$ 178,428
Total Expenses	\$ 5,152,760	\$ 4,766,469	\$ 4,261,274	\$ 3,547,895
Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 28,895	\$ 19,046	\$ (141,037)	\$ 219,912
Capital Improvements	\$ 21,115	\$ 10,325	\$ 50,795	\$ 74,966
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 7,781	\$ 8,720	\$ (191,832)	\$ 144,846

Note: Pending Final Review.

Revenue (2020-2021)



Expenses (2020-2021)



Reflect



Smile with Your Family



Going the wrong way in the "Advent Rush": While a man had gone out driving to do some Christmas shopping, his wife had been watching TV when she heard the announcer say, "be very careful and watch driving on I5 today, there is a car driving the wrong way"! His wife got hold of him on the cell phone to warn him, and his reply was: "You tell me, there are hundreds of them in the wrong lane!"

Customer complaints:

A customer returned the lego pack. Reason for returning: "Didn't know legos came in pieces." 😊

A salesman says: "A man signed up for our advantage card and I asked for his email and he looked at me and says, "No... I have a gmail, but no email!" I was in awe for a moment and I just smiled and told him, "Sure that works!" 😊

A waiter: "A customer told me to remake his drink without even trying it because he said it looked too watery. My coworker took that drink, hid it away from window for 10 seconds and gave the same drink back, and he said, "That's better." 😊



Advent Grows in Popularity!

Advent is no more a practice restricted to the mainline Churches (Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican/Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian). Today, however, more and more Protestant and Evangelical Christians are recognizing the spiritual significance of Advent, and have begun to revive the spirit of the season through serious reflection, joyful expectation, and even through the observance of some of the traditional Advent customs.

First Sunday of Advent: *The Martian*

"But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand." Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36

'The Martian' was one of the compelling movies of the year of its release. Mark Watney is part of a six-person mission to Mars. During a raging windstorm, the astronauts have to evacuate the planet. In the chaos to get to the launcher, Watney is struck by a piece of debris and blown away. The crew can't find him and are forced to leave him behind. But Watney survives. And so begins an intense scramble on both Mars and Earth to bring Mark Watney home. As the story unfolds, we become caught up, first, with the preciousness - and limits - of time. Every single item Mark has on Mars is carefully measured: every drop of water, every potato he is able to grow, every bit of power - and every minute. Mark meticulously rations every necessity in terms of days and weeks and months in order to survive on the Martian surface.

On Earth, meanwhile, NASA engineers and scientists go to work to bring Mark home, constantly aware of time. Every moment of the 400 days needed to get a rescue mission together is critical - and there are only certain windows of time when such a rescue can be launched. Every day and

every detail of preparation take on an urgency.

And we also become aware of the power of hope. Mark is utterly alone on this cold, lifeless, red rock. But Mark never loses hope. He approaches every new crisis as an exercise in problem-solving. His challenge is to get his fear and despair under control long enough to think through each situation. Back on Mother Earth, NASA scientists and engineers work long hours and concoct crazily innovative solutions, taking huge risks in the process. And Mark's crew mates selflessly commit to another 533 days in space in order to "slingshot" their spacecraft around Earth to return to Mars and rescue Mark.

Everyone in the film is convinced that humankind survives because we possess the ability to work together to solve problems. As the director of NASA flight operations reminds the team cobbling the rescue mission together, one human life is priceless, well worth moving heaven and earth for.

The preciousness of time and of hope that never wavers is the call of this Advent season. These first four weeks of the liturgical year point to the reality that our lives, measured in a finite period of days, find their meaning and purpose in seeking the things of God: compassion, peace, reconciliation and justice. And Advent also calls us to embrace a spirit of hope: that, in imitating the selflessness of the Christ who comes at Christmas, we can realize the Kingdom of God in our own time and on our own "planet"; that the light of God's Messiah illuminates our vision enabling us to see our world and ourselves as God sees us: as a people formed and bound by the unimaginable and unconditional - but very real - love of God.

Reflect

Two Versions of the End Time Events

Today we move from the year of Mark (B) to the year of Luke (C). In fact, today's Gospel is Luke's version of the Gospel which we read two weeks ago from Mark. Luke seems to be the first evangelist who believed that everyone in his community would die a natural death before Jesus triumphantly returned in the Parousia. Still, many years after Mark's Gospel, Luke wrote about the Parousia. Comparing Mark 13: 24-32 which we read two Sundays ago with Luke 21: 25ff, which we read today, we note that Luke has reduced the scope of the spectacular celestial events of the Last Days and has omitted Mark's description of the Son of Man. The reason for these changes may lie in the events filling the years between Mark's Gospel (AD 69), and Luke's work (AD 80). Mark wrote his Gospel sometime before the

fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 when the Jewish Christians believed that the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple would coincide with the end of the world and the second coming of Jesus. But when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed, the world did not end. Perhaps taking this into account, Luke, completing his gospel in A.D. 80, dissociated the destruction of the Temple from Jesus' prediction of the end of the world. In today's gospel passage Jesus warns us to keep watch for his return in glory. He draws on Old Testament images of chaos and instability – turmoil in the heavens (see [Isaiah 13:11,13](#); [Ezekiel 32:7-8](#); [Joel 2:10](#)); roaring seas (see [Isaiah 5:30](#); [17:12](#)); distress among the nations (see [Isaiah 8:22/14:25](#)) and terrified people (see [Isaiah 13:6-11](#)).



Several years ago a bus driver in Oklahoma reached an unusual record. In 23 years he had driven a bus over 900,000 miles without a single accident. When asked how he had done it, he gave this simple answer: "Watch the road." In today's Gospel Jesus gives the same advice in several ways: "**Be vigilant at all times,**" "**Stand erect,**" "**Raise your heads,**" "**Beware that**

"Watch the road."

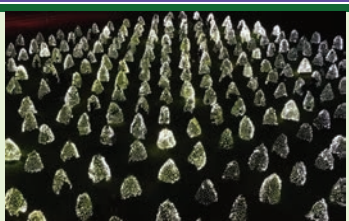
your hearts do not become drowsy." This is not only a good spiritual advice for the Advent season but also a safe rule for daily life. A good football player or basketball player should always concentrate his attention on the ball and the players. A good student must be alert, awake and attentive, watching the teacher and listening to his or her words. A good Catholic in the Church

must be physically and mentally alert, watching the altar and actively participating in the prayers and songs. Like the Roman god Janus, who had two faces, one looking at the past year and the other looking into future, Christians during the Advent season are to look at the past event of the first coming of Jesus into the world and expectantly look forward to his second coming in glory.

Pray

Christmas Tree Lighting Saturday, December 4, after the 5 pm Mass

Join us for this spectacular event as we light the Christmas trees!



ST. MATTHIAS LITURGY WANTS YOU TO BE A CHRISTMAS ANGEL

Decorate the church and cafeteria, be Greeters and Hospitality Ministers, Project the Mass in the Church, Operate live-streaming equipment in the Cafeteria. SEEKING ANGELS FOR ALL THE CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASSES. Email Phyllis Stone at pstone@stmatthias.net

St. Matthias Christmas Season Mass Schedule

**Nativity of the Lord,
Friday, December 24th,
(Christmas Eve)**
(in church w/overflow in cafeteria)

2:00 pm Mass
4:00pm Mass
6:30 pm Mass

**Nativity of the Lord
Saturday, December 25th
(Christmas Day)** (in church)

Midnight Mass
10:00 am Mass
12:00 pm Mass

**Solemnity of Mary Vigil
Friday, December 31st,
(New Year's Eve)** (in church)
5:00 pm Mass

**Solemnity of Mary
Saturday, January 1st
(New Year's Day)** (in church)
10:00 Mass

**Epiphany of the Lord -
Sunday, January 2nd**
8:00 Mass in church
10:00 Mass in church
12:00 Mass in church
**Franklin HS Madrigals
- 1:00 pm in church**

2022 Mass Book

The 2022 Mass Book is now open at the Parish Office. As in the past we ask that you limit your initial request to 4 masses, so others have a selection as well. Contact the Parish Office for additional information. 727-828-1400.

Novena for Saint Joseph

We will be praying a novena to St. Joseph on the **first Wednesday of the month** until the end of this year. Join us at the 8:00 AM Mass this Wed., **Dec 1, 2021.**



From the Pastoral Staff



Today, as we celebrate the first Sunday of Advent, we focus on HOPE. The advent wreath candles represent “the light of God coming into the world through the birth of Jesus Christ.” What are we hoping for this advent season?

A few weekends ago, my family and I took a trip into Philadelphia. We went in to see some of the sites, stopped by a few museums, and were able to spend some time together as a family. As we

walked around, we all noticed that there were so many homeless people on the streets. My daughter asked me why I continued to say a Hail Mary each time we passed by another homeless person. My answer to her was, I am asking God to give them hope.

We as parishioners of Saint Matthias have so much we are grateful for. As I just told my parents and staff at school, God has given all of us so much. We all have each other here at Saint Matthias to lean on for support, kind words, and

friendly smiles each and every day. How can we spread that kindness to others? How can we spread that hope for others who might feel so hopeless?

During this Advent season, let us all take the time out of our busy schedules to pray for hope. Pray for each other, and pray for ourselves that we may prepare for the coming of the Lord.

Mary Lynch

Principal of St. Matthias School



Learn

To celebrate our Youth at St. Matthias, we are publishing transcripts of statements made by some of our NeXt Level members describing their experiences in a passion project.

Hello my name is Michael Trovato. I was asked to partake in a weeklong service trip in Trenton, as a part of the NeXt Level Youth Leadership team of Saint Matthias. It was truly an eye opening experience, as I got to see the world around me, while simultaneously helping out at various service sites throughout the week. One particular experience that stuck with me came while I was visiting the TASK food kitchen in Trenton. Here you are able to both prepare the food and also help distribute the food to those who came. As I handed out salad at the salad bar, it was nice seeing the thankfulness in the faces of those I was serving, as I knew that what I was doing was truly making

a difference. It was also particularly powerful to see the collaboration among those who attended the kitchen - as many of these people had probably never met before yet they were sitting down and talking to each other as they enjoyed their meals. It made me think about the things in life that I take for granted, like simple human interaction.

Another powerful experience came at the CYO youth camp in Trenton. Right as I arrived at the place, this camper named Calvin immediately ran up to me and started playing. It was awesome to see how quickly it took to see his day get better due to my presence. Although his non-stop energy definitely tried my patience at various points dur-

ing the day, it reminded me of hope for the world and hope for the future.

While traveling to the various service sites I got to see much of the Trenton area. On the surface level it appears to be disheveled and uncared for, but what I saw was people trying to make the best out of what was given to them, and there is true beauty in that. The connections I made and experiences I had during that week will stick with me for the rest of my life as I can truly say that my perception of life is altered in a positive way. A week's worth of service was unable to fill my desire to give back to the world - as it has increased my inclination to partake in future service opportunities. Thank you

Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Reflection Nov 21, 2021
Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

“But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand.” (Luke 21:28)

We celebrate Advent each year in preparation for the birth of Jesus, His first coming, as we await His second coming. What will you do differently this Advent season to grow in friendship and love with Jesus? How will you inspire others to do the same? Start by sharing your God story with others, especially those closest to you. Invite and accompany them on their faith journey this Advent.

Reflexiónese — 21 de noviembre de 2021
1er. Domingo de Adviento

“Cuando estas señales empiecen a suceder, levántense y alcen la cabeza porque su redención está cerca” (Lucas 21:28)

Celebramos el Adviento cada año en preparación para el nacimiento de Jesús, Su primera venida, mientras esperamos Su segunda venida. ¿Qué hará en forma diferente esta temporada de Adviento para crecer en la amistad y el amor de Jesús? ¿Cómo inspirará a otros a hacer lo mismo? Comience por compartir su historia con Dios con los demás, especialmente aquellos más cercanos a usted. Invítelos y acompañelos en su viaje de fe este Adviento.

Give (and Receive!)

Collection information will be printed in a future bulletin, since this bulletin went to press early due to the holiday.

Connect



Join Us for the **St. Matthias School HSA Craft Fair**
Next **Sunday, December 5, 9 am to 2 pm, in the cafeteria**

Drop by after Mass to do your Christmas shopping!



Serve

Vocations Ministry - Called to Build God's Kingdom — Nov 28 2021

Pope Francis in "Gaudete et Exultate" on the call to holiness in today's world says:

Do not be afraid to set your sights higher, to allow yourself to be loved and liberated by God. Do not be afraid to let yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit. Holiness does not make you less human, since it is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God's grace. For in the words of León Bloy, when all is said and done, "the only great tragedy in life, is not to become a saint".

Sometimes the last adjective we want to use to describe

ourselves is "holy." It makes us sound rigid, not able to enjoy ourselves or enjoy life.

Nothing could be further from the truth! To be loved and liberated by God- what could be better than that? To be holy is to be completely connected to the grace of God and all that grace can offer us. We are called to holiness- through prayer and through action. As we begin this new season of Advent, may the coming of Christ inspire us. May our lives be holy just as Christ is Holy. That is our true vocation.



2021 GIVING TREE

Our 2021 Giving Tree has been placed in the Church as a visible reminder of our continuing support to those less fortunate. There are still COVID restrictions in place so **we are once again requesting that all gifts be shipped directly to the organizations by December 20, 2020. ABSOLUTELY NO GIFTS/PACKAGES ARE TO BE BROUGHT TO THE CHURCH OR PARISH OFFICE.** If you prefer to purchase gift cards and have them personally delivered, we are offering you the opportunity to **drop them in the collection baskets until the weekend of December 12, 2021.** Please clearly mark them for the Giving Tree with the name of the preferred charity.

Ornaments on the tree represent Great Expectations, Elijah's Promise, Ozanam Family Shelter, Ozanam Men's Shelter, PACT, Pregnancy Aid, YES Learning Center, Franklin Township Community Services and Miriam's Heart. For gift requests and details, go to: www.stmatthias.net/social-concerns/giving-tree Questions? Contact Joanne Diana at j-diana@comcast.net or (732) 873-8521. Thank you for your participation and generosity. Be well and please stay safe.

Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council:

Co-Chairs:

Claudine Langrin
ClaudMLangrin@gmail.com and
Mary Beth Vetter-Purcell
marybeth.vetter@gmail.com

Co-Secretaries:

Lorraine Farr and
Anne Marie Francis

Rose Peng
Frank Rees
Maria Tapia-Burch
John Taylor

Marilyn Wegg
Ana Kelly, Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

Trustees:

Isaac Peng
Marge Richards

Parish Finance Council:

Joe Porter, Chair
FinanceCouncil@stmatthias.net

Susan Klimcsak
Barry Dusault
Gwen Orłowski

Audrey Francis
Kester Hector
Joan Pritchard

Mary Pat Burke-Grospin,
Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

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

Parish Registration — Welcome to St. Matthias! Please register on our website. www.stmatthias.net/join-us, or visit the Parish Office.

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

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

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



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



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