



**St. Matthias Parish Office:**

Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm,  
 Friday, 8:30 am - 1:00 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, 10 AM & 12 noon  
 M/T/W/Th/F at 8:00AM  
 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 - Thursday  
 9AM - 1PM Friday By Appointment

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

**Pastor:** Rev Abraham Orapankal, **Abraham**  
 Fr. Lancelot McGrath, **Parochial Vicar Imcgrath**  
 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**  
 Mary Jo Loboda, **Parish Staff, Development,**  
**mjloboda**

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, SEPTEMBER 10, 2023**  
 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time



**JOIN US FOR OUR 9/11 MEMORIAL SERVICE**  
**ON MONDAY AT 6:30 PM.**



*Today's Peter's Pence collection is the annual collection to support the Holy Father who uses this money for the many different needs of the Universal Church and for the relief of those most in need.*

**There will be no ADORATION this coming**  
**Monday evening, September 11th.**

**Join us for Mass, Food, and Fun!**

**Sunday, September 17th**  
**at the Noon Mass**

**followed by food and fun**  
**in the school cafeteria!**

**All youth ages 6th grade**  
**through high school are welcome!**



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, Sep 10, 2023 National Grandparents Day

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

### Monday, Sep 11, 2023 St. John Gabriel Perboyre, Priest & Martyr

8:00AM Mass/Miraculous Medal Novena Church  
 6:30PM 9/11 Memorial Service Church

### Tuesday, Sep 12, 2023 Holy Name of Mary

8:00AM Mass Church  
 7:00PM Baptism Prep Class Zoom  
 7:30PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal Church

### Wednesday, Sep 13, 2023 St. John Chrysostom, Bishop & Doctor

8:00AM Mass—St. Joseph Novena Church  
 9:30AM Prayer Group 1 Holy Spirit de Porres Rm

### Thursday, Sep 14, 2023 The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

8:00AM Mass Church  
 6:00PM SMS, Back to School Night Church & School  
 7:30PM Sunday 10AM Choir Rehearsal Church

### Friday, Sep 15, 2023 Our Lady of Sorrows

8:00AM Mass Church

### Saturday, Sep 16, 2023 Sts. Cornelius & Cyprian, Martyrs

9:30AM Secular Franciscans de Porres Rm  
 10:00AM Caregivers Mtg. Ruiz Rm  
 3:30PM Reconciliation Church  
 5:00PM Vigil Mass Church

### Sunday, Sep 17, 2023 Building Repair & Replacement Fund Collection

8:00AM Mass Church  
 10:00AM Mass Church  
 12:00PM Mass Church

#### Bulletin Article Requests:

If you would like to send information to be included in our bulletin, please email it to [bulletin@stmatthias.net](mailto:bulletin@stmatthias.net) by 8 AM, MONDAY, 5 business days before the needed bulletin date (earlier for holiday weekends). Approved content is published on a space-available basis.



Dear Friends,

For most of us, Sept. 11 remains a lived experience. We have our stories of that fateful day that we might recall on this 22nd anniversary of 9/11. That is why we continue to keep up our annual tradition of the 9/11 Service that will be held tomorrow at 6:30 pm, here at St. Matthias. Thanks to the Fire Companies of Franklin Fire District # 1 who are hosting this service to honor the emergency service members who were killed on September 11, 2001, including our parishioner FDNY Firefighter John M. Collins, who graduated from St. Matthias School and Immaculata High School. Since this is held in our church at 6:30 pm, we will not have the weekly adoration tomorrow. I invite as many as possible to attend this memorial service as we have clear memories of this tragedy that left a deep wound and indelible mark on our nation's collective memory.

But there is a whole new generation, born after 9/11, for whom 9/11 holds no memories. It has become a history lesson that could become folklore with the passage of time. That is all the more reason for us to keep this anniversary as an opportunity to enlighten our younger generation about this historic tragedy that struck our nation. They need to be present at the anniversary ceremonies so that they can understand the pain and agony – physical and emotional – of those who suffered and continue to suffer. I am asking our parents, especially those with children in St. Matthias School, to come tomorrow with their children to this year's 9/11 Memorial Service at 6:30 pm. I am grateful to Bill Cullen, a former fire Chief and John Hauss, Director of the Fire Prevention Office of Franklin Township and others who are taking the lead in organizing this important event.

Today is also 'National Grandparents Day' - a time to honor grandparents and grand-friends for their contributions to our families, neighborhoods and communities. You may remember we had already celebrated this in June with "the World Day for grandparents and elderly" that Pope Francis had instituted. It was on the Sunday closest to the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus. The US bishops Conference had postponed it to coincide with our national celebration of grandparents today — the Sunday after Labor Day. Celebrating it again is simply another reminder for us all to show greater understanding and respect to grandparents and elderly who are often ignored by many. It is an opportunity to publicly affirm the identity and importance of grandparents who play a vital role in families.

We know that Pope Francis has been championing the cause of all the marginalized of the society. He has condemned the "throw away" culture that tend to push aside the grandparents and the elderly. He has invited the world to respect them and learn from their wisdom. His exhortation is worth listening to: *"From the elderly we received the gift of belonging to God's holy people. The Church, as well as society, needs them, for they entrust to the present the past that is needed to build the future. Let us honor them, neither depriving ourselves of their company nor depriving them of ours. May we never allow the elderly to be cast aside!"*

Your brother in Christ,  
 Fr. Abraham Orapankal

## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** Col 1:24-2:3 Ps 62:6-7, 9 Lk 6:6-11

**Tuesday:** Col 2:6-15 Ps 145:1b-2, 8-9, 10-11 Lk 6:12-19

**Wednesday:** Col 3:1-11 Ps 145:2-3, 10-11, 12-13ab Lk 6:20-26

**Thursday:** Nm 21:4b-9 Ps 78:1bc-2, 34-35, 36-37, 38 Phil 2:6-11 Jn 3:13-17

**Friday:** 1 Tm 1:1-2, 12-14 Ps 16:1b-2a and 5, 7-8, 11 Jn 19:25-27 or Lk 2:33-35

**Saturday:** 1 Tm 1:15-17 Ps 113:1b-2, 3-4, 5 and 6-7 Lk 6:43-49

**Sunday:** Sir 27:30-28:7 Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12 Rom 14:7-9 Mt 18:21-35

## Mass Intentions for the Week

<b>Saturday, Sep 9</b>	5:00PM	Intention Of Parishioners
<b>Sunday, Sep 10</b>	8:00AM	Memory of Edgardo Mallare, by Sister
	10:00AM	Regina Vidal, by Kathleen Referente & Family
	12:00PM	Patrick & Mary Geraghty, by Mary & Family
<b>Monday, Sep 11</b>	8:00AM	Firefighter John Collins, by Dad
<b>Tuesday, Sep 12</b>	8:00AM	Ed Gualbarto, by Purita Aligaen
<b>Wednesday, Sep 13</b>	8:00AM	Frances Natale, by Vinnie
<b>Thursday, Sep 14</b>	8:00AM	Jeffrey Burns, by Nina Ripley
<b>Friday, Sep 15</b>	8:00AM	Brigid Brennan, by Mary Pat Burke
<b>Saturday, Sep 16</b>	5:00PM	Marie DeFeo, by Daughter, Lisa
<b>Sunday, Sep 17</b>	8:00AM	Intention of Parishioners
	10:00AM	Alfons Nowakowski, by Daughter, Irene
	12:00PM	Bob & Grace Mc Laughlin, by the Mancuso Family

## Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office or **email Kelly Counts** at [kcunts@stmatthias.net](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.*

Carolyn Banghart	Gerry & Jack Gernert	Margaret Menendez	Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF
Mary Barrood	Linda Hartong	Carol Millemann	Sr. Bernadine Marie
Tammy Baskaran	Marilyn Horvath	Eleanor Nagy	Stemnock
Regina Berlowitz	Baby Elaine Isele	Joseph Nguyen	Jeff Sullivan
Bishop Paul Bootkowski	Amanda Isele	Danny Ongchango	Tom Szabo
Barbara Butler	Nancy Kane	Robert Pellegrino	<a href="#">Mary Ann Vetter</a>
Tara Capatosto	Robert Kashinsky	Jim Pettit	Mary Ann Vlaud
Elizabeth Card	<a href="#">Betsy Kondrat</a>	Randolff Pinard	<a href="#">Eileen Weber</a>
Ellen Catalina	Kathleen Langenbacher	Valerie Polci	Nancy Whelan
Kyle Davidson	Rose Larangeira	Kim Price	Carl Wyopen
Lisa DeFeo	Mary Lou Litrakis	Denise Pultro	Angie Yetyet
Zenon DeGuzman	John Litrakis	Doris Regan	<b>And for all who are ill, homebound, elderly, in nursing care, or living with chronic illness, we pray.</b>
Hattie Evans	Carol Ann Loftus	Gabriel Rivera	
Josephine Geenty	Joseph Lubrano	Arina Robinson	
Claudia Gemgnani	Aries Magali	Arthur Robinson	
Helen Geraghty	Al Maglio	Maria Schwenzer	
Emma Gergely	Anne McElwee	Amy Shepp	

## Pray for those who have died...

— “His mercy endures forever.” Chronicles



# Reflect



## Smile with Your Family



A woman was bitten by a rabid dog, and it looked as if she was going to die from rabies. The doctor told her to put her final affairs in order. So the woman took pen and paper, and began writing furiously. In fact, she wrote and wrote and wrote. Finally, the doctor said, "That sure is a long will you're making." She snorted, "Will, nothing! I'm making a list of all the people I'm going to bite!" 😊

One New Year's Eve at London's Garrick Club, British dramatist Frederick Lonsdale was asked by Seymour Hicks to reconcile with a fellow member. The two had quarreled in the past and never restored their friendship. "You must," Hicks said to Lonsdale. "It is very unkind to be unfriendly at such a time. Go over now and wish him a happy New Year." So Lonsdale crossed the room and spoke to his enemy. "I wish you a happy New Year," he said, "but only one." 😊 Why did grandpa always call grandma honey, love, or

darling even after 60 years of marriage? Because grandpa had forgotten grandma's name. 😊

Why are grandparents and grandchildren always close to each other? Because they both have a common enemy at home who makes a fuss about eating sweets. 😊

What are the two things your grandpa doesn't like about you as a little boy? One, you don't want to sleep in the afternoon. Two, you won't let him take a nap either. 😊

The best baby-sitters, of course, are the baby's grandparents. You feel completely comfortable entrusting your baby to them for long periods, which is why most grandparents flee to Florida 😊

My grandpa always used to say to me, "Fight fire with fire." It's no wonder he got sacked from the fire service. 😊



## Parenting Tune-Up

With all the violence in the news and perhaps in your neighborhood or your child's school, kids can feel afraid or pick up the fears of their parents. Help your child become a peacemaker.

Taking The Pledge of Nonviolence

(<https://www.ipj-ppj.org/about/pledge-of-non-violence>)

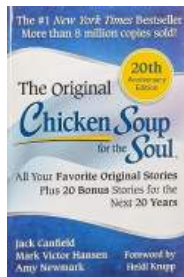
can be a practical start.

## Marriage Tune-Up



Which of the 10 commandments is hardest for you (or your spouse) to keep? Do you know your beloved well enough to predict their answer? Of course, there's always the Great Commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Your spouse is your closest neighbor.

## "Dad, I just came over to tell you that I Love You."



In one of the popular *Chicken Soup* volumes, Dennis E. Mannering tells about an assignment he once gave to a class he teaches for adults. He gave them the assignment, "Go to someone you love, and tell them that you love them." At the beginning of the next class, one of the students began by saying, "I was angry with

you last week when you gave us this assignment. I didn't feel I had anyone to say those words to. But as I began driving home my conscience started talking. Then I knew exactly who I needed to say 'I love you' to. Five years ago, my father and I had a vicious disagreement and never really resolved it. We avoided seeing each other unless we absolutely had to at family gatherings. We hardly spoke. So by the time I got home, I had convinced myself I was going to tell my father I loved him. Just making that decision seemed to lift a heavy load off my chest. At 5:30, I was at my parents' house ringing the doorbell, praying that Dad would answer the door. I was afraid if Mom answered, I would chicken out and tell her

instead. But as luck would have it, Dad did answer the door. I didn't waste any time. I took one step in the door and said, 'Dad, I just came over to tell you that I love you.' It was as if a transformation came over my dad. Before my eyes his face softened, the wrinkles seemed to disappear and he began to cry. He reached out. But that's not even my point. Two days after that visit, my dad had a heart attack So my message to all of you is this: Don't wait to do the things you know need to be done. What if I had waited to tell my dad? Take the time to do what you need to do and do it now!" ("Do It Now!" *Condensed Chicken Soup for Souls*, Copyright 1996 by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen & Patty Hansen.)

***That's the advice that Jesus would give us. People hurt us, sometimes intentionally, sometimes without meaning to. But sometimes who is in the right and who is in the wrong is not as important as finding a common ground where the relationship can be maintained. Sometimes that means that we have to take the first step, even though we know that the other person is in the wrong. And the best time to take that step is today!***

## An “Exceptional” Church!

*"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone . . . If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church . . . Matthew 18: 15-20*

She lived in the group home next to the church. She was painfully overweight; her clothing didn't fit. She hadn't bathed and wasn't able to breathe or move comfortably. Her medication made it difficult for her to follow the prayers and hymns. She fell asleep during sermons; her snoring, escalated by her breathing problems, echoed through the church. Once or twice she even forgot where she was and lit up a cigarette right there in the pew. She wouldn't speak or make eye contact with anyone.

Parishioners began to complain: *She doesn't belong here. She couldn't be getting anything out of it so heavily medicated. She shouldn't be allowed to ruin it for everyone.* The poor woman was the subject of more than one parish council meeting: Her presence was a serious distraction; she was a deterrent to visitors. And someone noted that she ate too many cookies at coffee hour. Finally, one council member had had enough of the complaining and lack of compassion. She was determined to make a friend out of their troubled visitor. The parishioner left her usual pew and began to sit next to her. When the snoring started, the parishioner gave her a gentle nudge; she helped her find her place in the hymnal; she quietly reminded her to put the cigarettes away and leave enough cookies and sweets for others during the coffee hour after church.

The parishioner's unheralded kindness was all the visitor needed. She began talking to people. She made eye contact and made a point of shaking hands with the pastor: "Bless you," she would say. A few months later, the pastor received a phone call from the woman's social worker. The social worker explained that the woman had never been accepted by any group or able to sustain a single positive relationship until she started coming to church. She was now making friends in her group home and had begun to bring them to her church. "Thank you for welcoming her," the social worker said to the pastor. "I've never been to your church, but I know that it is an exceptional place." After hanging up the phone, the pastor sat for a moment, pondering that word: *Exceptional.*

**In this difficult situation, one parishioner manages to embrace the spirit of Jesus' instructions in today's Gospel: that to follow Jesus means to take on the hard work of building community by welcoming the stranger, the disrupter, the estranged. In today's Gospel (which sounds more like a set of regulations devised by a church rules committee than a teaching of Jesus), Jesus calls us to take**

**on his work of reconciliation: work that is grounded in love for the other, work that begins with respect and love for every human being, work that seeks God's justice and peace above all. Gospel-centered reconciliation confronts those misunderstandings and issues that divide us, grieve us and embitter us, not out of anger or a need to "even the score," but out of a commitment to imitate the great love and mercy of God.**

## “Let's Have Harmony!”

More than thirty years ago, a brief story appeared in *Reader's Digest* about a town in Minnesota that got its name in a strange way. When the community was first settled, it had no name. People began to move to the area, and soon the townspeople called a meeting to choose a name for their town. Many suggestions were made, but they couldn't agree on the name. The discussion soon became heated and quarrelsome. One man in attendance that night became so disgusted by the way things were going that he jumped up, pounded on the table with his fist, and shouted, "Let us have harmony!" Someone present suddenly seized the idea and shouted back, "Yes! Let's have harmony!" And the town got its name: Harmony, Minnesota.

Harmony is a wonderful thing to have in a community, a family or a church. If harmony is going to take place, someone has to heed Jesus' advice for reconciliation as given in today's Gospel.

## Happy Grand Parent's Day!

Today is national Grandparents Day - the Sunday after Labor Day. The official song of National Grandparents Day is "A Song for Grandma And Grandpa" by Johnny Prill. The official flower for the day is the "forget-me-not" flower. Most people would admit that family is one of the most important things in life and grandparents are VIPs in the life of their grandchildren. Anthropologist Margaret Mead once even stated that connections between the generations are *essential for the mental health and stability of a nation.*"

***Did you know that Jesus also had grandparents? They were St. Joachim and St. Anne. How do we know, as this is not mentioned in the Bible? Joachim and Anne's names are known to us from an ancient Christian document called the Protoevangelium of James. This non-canonical writing, dating from the second Century AD, mentions the names of Joachim and Anne as the grandparents of Jesus. Father, we thank you for the gift of grandparents and grand parenting. May they help spread your love in our families from generation to generation. Amen.***

## Cherish your Grandparents!



**Deuteronomy 32:7** “Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you.”

While a lot of our culture is pushing for old age to be eliminated, and for the aged to be put away and forgotten – the Bible teaches quite the opposite. We are to incorporate our grandparents in our life for they are a vital aspect of God’s family plan. They provide a legacy that no one else can. They provide teaching and prayers and lessons that no one else can. Being a grandparent is such a tremendous blessing. What an honor it is to have godly grandparents!

**Pope Francis has always encouraged us to love and honor grandparents and the elderly: “Grandparents are the ring linking generations, to transmit to young people the experience of life and faith.”** “God wants young people to bring joy to the hearts of the elderly and to learn from their experiences. Yet, above all, the Lord wants us not to abandon the elderly or to push them to the margins of life, as tragically happens all too often in our time.”

## Bible Verses about Grandparents

**Isaiah 46:4-5** Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

**Proverbs 17:6** Children’s children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.

**2 Timothy 1:5** I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

**Proverbs 16:31** Gray hair is a crown of splendor; it is attained in the way of righteousness.

**Psalms 103:17** But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children.

**Psalms 37:25** “I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread.”

## Granny & Gramps: Living a Christian Vocation

This weekend we celebrate Grandparents Day, an appropriate time to reflect on our Grandparents and to consider our own Christian vocation as Grandparents.

When I was growing up in the ‘60s, we would visit with my paternal Grandparents almost on a weekly basis. I remember “Granny” as being very motherly – always greeting us kids with big hugs and kisses and an exuberant love, always ready to listen to whatever we had to share, always ready to care for us if we were sick, and quick to extend kindness and compassion if we were troubled (I should also say that Granny was a great cook who prepared a delicious Italian gravy and meatballs – my favorite meal to this day!). My Grandfather, like many men back then, was not as free with his

feelings. Instead of showering us with love and affection, “Gramps” would greet us with a handshake and a pat on the head and then stuff a couple/few dollar bills in our pockets. I always knew that Gramps loved me (even though my older brothers always got an extra dollar or two!). I especially appreciated Gramps’ love as I ran down to the candy store and used my newfound dollars to buy comic books, baseball cards, and a chocolate shake.

Both Granny and Gramps made themselves present to share our joys and celebrate life’s milestones. Maybe, most importantly, both Granny and Gramps were church-going faith-filled Catholics who, along with my parents, helped me come to see the importance of having God in my life and my calling as a disciple of Christ.

I have only fond memories of Granny

and Gramps. As I am coming closer to the day when I myself might become a Grandfather (God willing), I look to follow in my Grandparents footsteps – to shower my grandkids with love and affection, to share their joys and accomplishments, to support them in their needs, to guide and counsel them, to love them and to help them come to know Jesus and how much God loves them. For me, this is a Grandparent’s vocation, one that I hope to share in.

For more on the **Saint Matthias Vocations Ministry** please contact: Joe Percoco at [percoco@rutgers.edu](mailto:percoco@rutgers.edu)  
**“Where the needs of the world and your talents cross, there lies your vocation.”**



**The Society of St Vincent de Paul at Matthias** has had a very busy Summer. Over the past months, we and our neighboring SVDP Conferences have experienced the end-of-pandemic flood of people in need now that government benefits have dried up and the effects of inflation have hit. Our fiscal year ends on September 30, 2023, and to-date our St Matthias Conference has assisted 62 households with housing grants totaling more than \$100,000.00! This has been made possible in part by the generosity of our parish family, for which we are very grateful. The need continues to grow, and we ask that you pray for us in our ministry to our neighbors in need and consider committing to a regular contribution to the Society.

For more information, please see our website at [www.SVDPATSM.ORG/TO-DONATE](http://www.SVDPATSM.ORG/TO-DONATE)



## MY EXPERIENCE OF THE WORLD YOUTH DAY

World Youth Day and my adventures throughout Portugal were unlike anything I had ever experienced through my faith. Going into this experience, I didn't know what my expectations were. I figured I could compare it to NCYC or the youth rallies I used to attend at neighboring high schools. However, in the best way possible, nothing could have prepared me for what I was going to experience.

The day that we landed in Portugal, we hopped on a bus and headed to Santarem, the home of a Eucharistic miracle. I had never seen a Eucharistic miracle before, so I didn't really have any expectations. However, the moment I knelt before the piece of crystal that held Jesus' blood, everything changed. My whole thought process going into this experience changed. I had realized that I was going to be surrounded by my faith and all that I had studied and believed not only spiritually, but physically.

After Santarem, we spent three days in Fatima. We got to visit everywhere that we had read about in school, including the houses the children had lived in, where Mary had appeared to them, and even where they were buried. Being in the physical presence of two saints was mind blowing, as that wasn't something I had expected doing. Every night, we would gather outside of the chapel with candles, and we would pray the rosary, each half of a decade being in a different language. The lights and the flags and the music was something I thought would be intimidating, but it was incredible. Seeing how many people came from around the world for the same reason I did provided this sense of community, regardless of the number of people. However, the most memorable moment in Fatima, believe it or not, had to do with donuts. I know it may seem silly, but that is when I felt that I had my first one-on-one moment with the Blessed Mother. I remember while we were in the town of Fatima,

we were talking about how badly we wanted to have these donuts that were close to the hotel. We anticipated so much to get back in time to get them before the store had closed. However, as time went on, we realized that we weren't going to get back in time to have the donuts. Everyone was really bummed out about it, and I realized how much these donuts meant to all of my friends that I had just met. So, we arrived at a new church in Fatima that had a huge mural of the Blessed Mother on the ceiling. I knelt down in the church, looked up at the mural, and whispered, "Blesses Mother, it is okay if this doesn't happen, however if it is at all possible, it would be really cool if we could somehow get those donuts. I know it seems silly, but I saw how much they meant to my group, and I feel like it would really make the rest of their day." After this prayer, I didn't think much more of it. However, when we got back the hotel, our group leader called us downstairs, and on the table of the lobby was a box of donuts from the owner of the shop with a note that said "Pay it Forward." In that moment, I realized, she really is here. The Blessed Mother is with us. And that set my mood and mindset for the rest of the trip.

Once we arrived in Lisbon for the actual event, every day was packed with spirituality, prayer, and eye-opening experiences. Every time we would walk to an event, thousands of youth would be on the streets of Lisbon, waving their country flags proudly. I got to meet so many people from so many places, and I learned so much (including the fact that Australians didn't have big yellow school buses and consider them to be very American.) I got to have so many great conversations with priests, bishops, and seminarians that I still carry with me to this day. I remember speaking to a bishop from Australia during an English catechesis about the importance of forgiveness, and that

though we assume that progress needs to be made in order to forgive, it is actually quite the opposite. Forgiveness is actually the first step to progress, and we need to forgive each other just as Jesus would forgive us for our sins. That conversation changed my whole perspective, and I couldn't be more thankful. While some of my conversations were as deep and insightful as that, others reminded me that priests and religious officials are also normal people. I took a walk back from the Stations of the Cross, and I had a conversation with a priest and a seminarian about the interests of 5 year olds, the plots to the Cars movies, and the best places to get gelato (and yes, we did get gelato on our way back.) It was those conversations that made me feel even closer with my faith, because I learned that you don't need to be formal, serious, or professional in order to be a good Catholic. All you need to have is a love for God, a love for Jesus, and the constant will and determination to be a better person.

Not only did I get to meet so many new people, but I got to bind so closely with the youth that I went with. We had all of these moments that really made the trip, whether we were greeting each other in Polish, singing Drake and Party in the USA on every walk, playing card games in the hallway, doing "theater walks" and singing Hercules songs back to the hotel, going to Burger King at 11 o'clock at night, riding the elevator to all 18 floors of the hotel, or somehow convincing ourselves that we were going to go to the gym for leg exercise after a 16 mile pilgrimage. It was through my community that I also grew so much closer to God, because we were all such different people that came here for the same reason, and because of that, we all got to grow not only as Catholics, but as people.

Throughout the whole trip, God made his presence and love evident to me. He would appear in the wind that

## MY EXPERIENCE OF THE WORLD YOUTH DAY (continued)

would cool and comfort us during hot summer days and nights. He would appear in the smiles of the people we met and the laughs that we shared. He would appear as Scripture taking part in our lives. He would appear in every word that the Pope said. He would appear in the birds that sang songs in the morning and the frogs that would chirp at night. Everywhere I looked, God was there. I'm sure he was there all along, but my experience in Portugal for World Youth Day taught me to stop waiting for him to appear but to look for him. This experience taught me to seek Jesus in

all aspects of my life, not just where his presence may seem the most obvious.

The excitement of Portugal, the people I got to travel with, and the memories I made both within the religious setting and outside of it made those 10 days so special and unforgettable. In all honesty, World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon gave me a taste of what heaven is going to be like, and it was beautiful.

*Emily Chavez*

## Learn



Chuck E. Cheese donates up to 20% of the sales generated from this event to your child's school.

Friends and family members are encouraged to help support this event

### EVENT INFORMATION

LOCATION: **CHUCK E. CHEESE.**

TIME: 3:00 PM-9:00 PM

SCHOOL: St. Matthias School

EVENT DATE: Friday, September 15th

EVENT ADDRESS: 600 Promenade Blvd.  
Bridgewater, New Jersey 08807

To find out more, check out  
[chuckecheese.com](http://chuckecheese.com)



## A Teaching Mass is coming to St. Matthias: Sunday, October 1 at 12 Noon Mass!

At Sunday, August 27th Angelus greeting from Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square, he spoke about the Gospel reading from that day in which, "Jesus asks the disciples the decisive question: "But who do you – you! – say that I am?" (v. 15). Who am I for you, now?

Jesus does not want to be a key figure from past history; He wants to be an important person for you today, for me today; not a distant prophet: Jesus wants to be the God who is close to us!

Can we experience the God who is close to us? What better way than to participate in the celebration of the Sunday Mass with our parish community of St. Matthias!

The Eucharistic Revival sponsored by the U.S. Bishops and our parish gives us a fresh opportunity to help us better understand the Mass so we can participate more fully and better appreciate what we do when we gather to pray together in this way.

**We encourage that many of you try to attend our "Family Focused" Teaching Mass on October 1st, coordinated by our parish GIFT leadership team with Fr. Abraham!**

In addition, starting on Sunday, November 12 at the 10AM Mass, we will celebrate "Family Mass with Children's Liturgy of the Word", which will continue monthly. Please let Fr. Abraham or Dee Nann, [dnann@stmatthias.net](mailto:dnann@stmatthias.net), know if you might be willing to learn how to be a facilitator for the

**Liturgy of the Word with Children!**

## Registration for all Faith Formation is now OPEN!

2023-2024 **GIFT** for

K-8 Religious Formation

[www.stmatthias.net/faith-formation/](http://www.stmatthias.net/faith-formation/)

First Eucharist Preparation 2023-2024

[www.stmatthias.net/first-eucharist-first-reconciliation/](http://www.stmatthias.net/first-eucharist-first-reconciliation/)

Confirmation Preparation 2023-2024

[www.stmatthias.net/confirmation/](http://www.stmatthias.net/confirmation/)



## Connect



### “Our Christmas Tree Campaign is Under Way”

Our annual Christmas Tree “Spread the Light” campaign is upon us! By donating \$200 you can sponsor a tree to honor a loved one, celebrate a special event, or perhaps, express thanks for God’s many gifts, all while helping to light up our church grounds to bring holiday joy to our congregation and our neighbors. Flyers will be available in church and forms can also be found on our website. The Deadline to Order Your Tree is **October 13<sup>th</sup>**.

Join in this wonderfully moving tradition that helps support our church and brings joy to so many.

For more information contact: **Mary Jo Loboda**, [mjloboda@stmatthias.net](mailto:mjloboda@stmatthias.net)

[www.stmatthias.net/tree](http://www.stmatthias.net/tree)

### Alzheimer’s Support Group Virtual Group Meeting, 9/13

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, September 13th, from 2 pm-3:30 pm on Zoom**. Registration is required.

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).

## Serve

### BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

If you are experiencing the recent loss of a loved one, you are invited to a 7-week session, where you will find support, comfort, and healing. The group meets on Wednesdays, Oct 18 & 25 Nov. 1, 8, 15, Tuesdays, Nov. 2, Dec 6 from 7:00-8:30 PM at the Parish Office, de Porres Meeting Room  
(Please park around the back of the office to enter de Porres room door).

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023** Contact: Sr. Marie Therese, [msherwood@stmatthias.net](mailto:msherwood@stmatthias.net)



### Caregivers/Care Support Group Meeting

All who are caring for sick and elderly loved ones or are experiencing ongoing health issues, are invited to join us for prayer, sharing, and supportive listening.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 from 10:00-11:30 AM** in the PARISH OFFICE - **RUIZ ROOM\*\***

**\*\*PLEASE PARK BEHIND THE PARISH OFFICE TO ENTER THE RUIZ ROOM DOOR**

For more information, please contact: Sister Marie Therese, [msherwood@stmatthias.net](mailto:msherwood@stmatthias.net)

### SENIOR MINISTRY MEETING

All Seniors are invited to gather in the cafeteria-Saturday, October 7, at 10:00 AM

A light breakfast will be available, followed by prayer: **“A Reflection on Autumn Days”**, **reading and discussion of Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister’s: Blessings of Aging, and future events.**

**Also, please sign up for the bus trip to Lancaster to see “Sight and Sound, Daniel, Live on Stage” as soon as possible... see bulletin or website for details...**

**If you plan to attend our Senior Meeting, please contact:** Sr. Marie Therese, [msherwood@stmatthias.net](mailto:msherwood@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
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 10 - September 3, 2023	\$10,492.00	\$13,772.25	\$24,264.25	\$25,148.37
Week 11 - September 10, 2023			\$0.00	\$41,228.22
Week 12 - September 17, 2023			\$0.00	\$21,587.45
Week 13 - September 24, 2023			\$0.00	\$19,659.25
			<b>Month-to-date Total</b>	<b>September Total Last Year</b>
			\$24,264.25	\$107,623.29
			<b>Current Year-to-date Total</b>	<b>Year-to-date as of Sep 30, 2022</b>
			\$1,626,487.58	\$1,652,703.23

**Stewardship Reflection September 10, 2023  
 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*“You, son of man, I have appointed watchman for the house of Israel...” -Ezekiel 33:7*

Many of us are generous with our gifts. However, many of us are not generous in proportion to the gifts we have been given. How often do we give at the minimum level required? Remember, the Lord calls us to nurture and develop our gifts and to give back with increase. He calls us to be generous with all the gifts, especially the one that means the most to us.

**Reflexiónese 10 de septiembre de 2023  
 Domingo 23º del Tiempo Ordinario**

*“Pues a ti, hijo del hombre, yo te he puesto como centinela del pueblo de Israel. Tú deberás recibir mis mensajes y comunicarles mis advertencias...” - Ezequiel 33:7*

Muchos de nosotros somos generosos con nuestros dones. Sin embargo, muchos de nosotros no somos generosos en proporción a los dones que hemos recibido. ¿Qué tan a menudo damos el mínimo nivel requerido? Recuerda, el Señor nos llama a cuidar y desarrollar nuestros dones y a devolverlos con ganancia. Él nos llama a ser generosos con todos los dones que hemos recibido, especialmente con el que es más importante para nosotros

**Parish Leadership**

<b>Parish Pastoral Council:</b> <b>Co-Chairs:</b> Frank Rees <a href="mailto:Frees814@gmail.com">Frees814@gmail.com</a> Marilyn Wegg <a href="mailto:mcw-wam@comcast.net">mcw-wam@comcast.net</a>	<b>Co-Secretaries:</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> Al Drabnis Didi Molano	Sheila Tartaglia Fr. Lancelot McGrath, Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio  <b>Trustees:</b> Pearl Scott Marge Richards	<b>Parish Finance Council:</b> Kester Hector, Chair <b>Finance Council</b> <a href="mailto:@stmatthias.net">@stmatthias.net</a> Carmen Driz-Melilli Barry Dusault Gwen Orlovski	Audrey Francis Joan Pritchard  Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Ex-Officio Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio
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**About St. Matthias (please contact the staff members on the cover for up-to-date information)**

**Parish Registration** — Welcome to St. Matthias! Please register on our website. [www.stmatthias.net/join-us](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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**November 2022**

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Tuesday, 11/08

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