Stations of the Cross—Friday, Mar 20, 7:00PM in church. See page 6.


Day of Service—Sat., Mar 21. See pg. 9

Mass of Anointing—Sat., Mar 21 at 11:00AM.

Fr. Abraham Appointed Pastor of St. Matthias

We are thrilled to announce that Bishop Checchio has appointed Fr. Abraham Orapankal as the Pastor of the Catholic Community of St. Matthias. For the past year and a half, Fr. Abraham has served in the role of Administrator of our Parish. We are blessed to have him here with us.

Bishop Checchio will install Fr. Abraham as Pastor on Sunday, 29 March. Even though the Bishop has another Mass at 12 noon in Laurence Harbor, he wishes to have some time to meet and greet our parishioners. Hence the 10 am Mass will begin at 9:30 am during which the installation will occur. Please join us!

Thank You to Eileen Brett

It is with deep gratitude and sadness that we announce that Eileen Brett will be completing her term as Principal of St. Matthias School at the end of this academic year, after three years of meritorious service to our community. When Eileen accepted this position, she expressed her willingness to serve for a three year timeframe. The time has passed too quickly, but we are very grateful for her vision and for the significant contribution she has made towards advancing our school in many ways. Please see page 7 for more information on “2020 Vision: Saint Matthias Parish School Moves Forward — Moving Into the Next Decade with ‘Eyes Wide Open!’”

For numerous reasons, we have begun the process to switch our online giving platform from “Faith Direct” to “Parish Giving”. If you have not yet signed up for online giving, we encourage you to do so now. See page 8 and the insert for details and more information.
### Sunday, Mar 15, 2020 Masses 8AM, 10AM, 12PM, 5:30PM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00AM</td>
<td>Children’s Liturgy of Word</td>
<td>John XXIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00AM</td>
<td>RCIA/First Scrutiny</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00AM</td>
<td>First Eucharist Family Prep #3 Cafeteria</td>
<td>John XXIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM</td>
<td>RCIA/RCIC Sessions</td>
<td>Parish Office dePorres &amp; Ruiz Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15AM</td>
<td>Monthly Praying of the Rosary</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30PM</td>
<td>Confirmation Prep 7, Grps 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>John XXIII</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Monday, Mar 16, 2020 Mass 8AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00AM</td>
<td>Monday AM Sm. Group Mtg. –Fung</td>
<td>de Porres Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00PM</td>
<td>Properly Management Mtg.</td>
<td>Neumann Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30PM</td>
<td>Live Lent Grp.– Dee Nann</td>
<td>de Porres Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00PM</td>
<td>C.S. Pack 195</td>
<td>Cafeteria &amp; Cslms 1A,1B,2A,2B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30PM</td>
<td>Welcome Ministry mtg.</td>
<td>Ruiz Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30PM</td>
<td>Revelation Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tuesday, Mar 17, 2020 Mass 8:00AM St. Patrick’s Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00PM</td>
<td>Youth &amp; Adult Handbell Rehearsal</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00PM</td>
<td>Empty Bowls mtg.</td>
<td>Neumann Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00PM</td>
<td>Spirituality in Spirits (Young Adults)</td>
<td>de Porres Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:15PM</td>
<td>Live Lent Grp.– Beck</td>
<td>Ruiz Rm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wednesday, Mar 18, 2020 Mass 8:00AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00AM</td>
<td>Holy Spirit Prayer Grp.</td>
<td>de Porres Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM</td>
<td>Holy Trinity Faith Sharing Grp</td>
<td>Ruiz Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30PM</td>
<td>AA Wednesday</td>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30PM</td>
<td>Folk Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30PM</td>
<td>Live Lent Grp.–Mancuso</td>
<td>de Porres Rm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Thursday, Mar 19, 2020 Mass 8:00AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:30PM</td>
<td>Children’s Choir (3&amp;4 gr.) Rehearsal</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15PM</td>
<td>Children’s Choir (5-8 gr.) Rehearsal</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30PM</td>
<td>K of C Officer’s Mtg.</td>
<td>Sm. Lib. Mtg. Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00PM</td>
<td>Prayer Shawl Ministry</td>
<td>Ruiz Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30PM</td>
<td>Adult Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30PM</td>
<td>Live Lent Grp.–Purnick</td>
<td>de Porres Rm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Friday, Mar 20, 2020 Mass 8:00AM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00PM</td>
<td>Live Lent Grp.–Anne Marie Francis</td>
<td>de Porres Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00PM</td>
<td>B.S. Troop 154</td>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00PM</td>
<td>Stations of the Cross</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00PM</td>
<td>AA Friday</td>
<td>Downstairs teachers Rm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Saturday, Mar 21, 2020 Mass 5:00PM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00AM</td>
<td>Day of Service</td>
<td>de Porres Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30AM</td>
<td>Secular Franciscans</td>
<td>de Porres Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00AM</td>
<td>Mass of Anointing</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Followed by reception in John XXIII Rm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00AM</td>
<td>Sacrament of Reconciliation</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sunday, Mar 22, 2020 Masses 8AM, 10AM, 12PM, 5:30PM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00AM</td>
<td>Children’s Liturgy of Word</td>
<td>John XXIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM</td>
<td>First Eucharist Family Prep #4 Kids Only</td>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM</td>
<td>RCIA/RCIC Sessions</td>
<td>Parish Office dePorres &amp; Ruiz Rm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00PM</td>
<td>Confirmation Prep 8, #3-Everyone Café &amp; John XXIII</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Bulletin Article Requests:**
Please email proposed bulletin articles to bulletin@stmatthias.net by 6 pm, Wednesday, 10 days before the intended issue (earlier for holiday weekends).

---

**From the Pastor & Pastoral Staff**

Dear Friends,

This week we have two important feasts. The first is the feast of St. Patrick, “when everyone is Irish!” We celebrate the saint who plucked a shamrock from the ground, and used it, with its three leaves in one plant, to explain the Mystery of the Trinity – three Persons in one God. Two days later, on March 19, we honor St. Joseph - a big Feast for Italians in particular, because in the Middle Ages, God, through St. Joseph’s intercessions, saved the Sicilians from a very serious drought. So in his honor, the custom has been for all to wear red, in the same way that green is worn on St. Patrick’s Day. After Mass in parishes with large Italian populations, a big altar (“la tavola di San Giuse” or “St. Joseph's Table”) is laden with food that people bring to be blessed by the priest and to have a big feast day meal. I myself have blessed baskets of food that Italian families bring in every parish I have served.

Devotion to different saints is a typical Catholic practice (though it is strongly prevalent among the Orthodox Christians too) that is often misunderstood by other Christian denominations who see it as a form of idolatry. So it begs the question how do we explain this practice to a non-Catholic? Explain “We adore God but we honor the saints.” Make clear the difference between worship (adoration) that is exclusively reserved for God and honor (veneration) that can be shown to humans.

Then, what is the honor or veneration we give to saints? Consider how we give honor to public officials. It is customary to address a judge as “Your Honor.” Letters to legislators are addressed to "The Honorable So-and-So." We teach our children to honor the Founding Fathers of our nation. We honor men and women of different walks of life: presidents, poets, musicians, artists, and a host of others whose memories and contributions to society we wish to keep alive. In the same way, we respect and show devotion to saints for what they have accomplished in their lives of faith. Their exemplary model of discipleship can help us a lot. Hence asking saints to intercede for us is not idol worship because they themselves are not the object of worship. We are asking for their help to make our case before God very much like we ask others to pray for us before we have a test, an interview, a surgery, a trip, etc.

In honoring the saints, we express what we profess in our Creed: “Communion of Saints” by which we recognize that we continue to be one family of God with all these holy men and women, many of whom are our own near and dear ones. Will these explanations convince the non-Catholics? Yes it will, if they have an open mind. But it may not be so with some non-Catholics who have been so schooled in hostility toward the Church that they appear unable or unwilling to recognize these explanations. They may continue to assert that Catholics “worship” Mary and the saints, and, in so doing, commit idolatry. Well, we have done our part of explaining why we believe in and honor the saints. We leave the rest to God. Happy St. Patrick’s Day! Happy Feast of St. Joseph!

Your brother in Christ,
Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Pray for Those Getting Married
Diana Quaranta & Michael Ewanishal, Mar 22, 2020

Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office to add the name to this list. Please let us know when 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.

Rosemarie Aulino
Eddie Banaag
Ronald Bianchini
Baby Genevieve Bonk
Timothy Brennan
Marie Brody
Baby Isla-Rose Callahan
Ellen Catalina
Frank Catalina
Darrie Christmas
Lisa & Marie DeFeo
Denise DeGeorge
Baby Ayonna Elizabeth DeGraffenreid
Mary Dolan
Bill Dolphin
Dorothy Domenici
Mary Eads
Jeanette Ettere
Ada Galdi
Marianne Gerace
Emma Gergely
Rose Gessner
Mary Gidar
John Gross
Fr. Doug Haefner
Paul Haucke
Sloopy Hoffman
Sandra Huseth
Merla Isabelo
Jack Kenefick
Michael Kirugi
The Litrakis Family
Kenneth Magat
Al Maglio
Susan Manansala
Christine Matthews
Elizabeth Miller
Lucy Mims
Eleanor Morehouse
Ursula Morgenberger
Dave Moynihan
Patricia Nese
Margaret O’Hare
Danny Onchangco
Mafalda Parafioriti
Bernadine Pasternak
Jim Pettit
Bill Plaskon
Brian Reyes
Maria Schwenzer
Sr. Mary Amata Shina, OSF
Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF
Michael Sitek
Dennis Stuewe
Christine Szczepanski
Fiorello Thomas
Jim Vance
Mona Wilson
Edward Yeager
...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 6:34

Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council:
Denise Brown
Anthony Ekhelar
Lorraine Farr
Gusam Felix
Anne Marie Francis
Jeanne Kallmer
Claudine Langrin
Deborah Lesky
Joe Percoco
Marybeth Purcell
Wina Reyes-Brue
Lisa Robinson
Ana Kelly, Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio
Susan Klimcsak
Barry Dusault
Gwen Orlowski
Audrey Francis
Kester Hector
Denise Sawicki, Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

Parish Finance Council:
Jae Porter, Chair
financecouncil@stmatthias.net

Mar 15, 2020
**Sunday Reflections**

**Smile with Your Family**

"Is your mother home?" the salesman asked the small boy. "Yeah, she's home," the boy said, scooting over to let him pass. The salesman rang the doorbell, got no response, knocked once, then again. Still no one came to the door. Turning to the boy, the fellow said, "I thought you said your mother was home!" The kid replied, "She is; but this isn't where I live."

The story of Adam and Eve was being carefully explained in the children’s Sunday school class. Following the story, the children were asked to draw some picture that would illustrate the story. Little Bobby was most interested and drew a picture of a car with three people in it. In the front seat, behind the wheel was a man and in the back seat, a man and a woman. The teacher was at a loss to understand how this illustrated the lesson of Adam and Eve. But little Bobby was prompt with his explanation. "Oh... this is God driving Adam and Eve out of the garden!"

**Water is Life!**

Gandhi, India’s great Champion, proved to the whole world that a person can go without food for a long, long time - for weeks - but water is something else. I don’t know how long someone can live without water, but it isn’t very long. A baby who can’t keep down fluids will dehydrate and die in just a few days. Adults last only slightly longer. The only life-sustaining substance that we need more frequently than water is air. Water, then, is essential to life. In one sense, water is life. Where there is no water, there is no life. Cactuses and camels and gnarled trees and grasses of the desert can adapt to conditions of low water, but there isn’t any living thing on this earth that can adapt to no water. "Water is life." Lack of water is death. To be thirsty is to stare death in the eye. It’s no wonder that Jesus turned water and thirst into spiritual teachings as he sat there by Jacob’s well, that ancient and sacred place for quenching thirst. If thirst of the body is the very taste of death, then thirst of the soul is the very picture of spiritual despair.

Why the Hostility Between Jews and Samaritans?

Today’s Gospel hints at the enmity between Jews and Samaritans: “The Samaritan woman said to Jesus, “How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?” This mutual hostility had begun centuries earlier when the Assyrians carried the northern tribes of Israel into captivity. The Jewish slaves betrayed their heritage by intermarrying with the Assyrians, thus diluting their bloodline and creating a “mongrel race” called the Samaritans. The Assyrian men who were relocated to Israel married Jewish women, thus producing a mixed race in Israel as well. Hence, southern Jews considered all Samaritan bloodlines and their heritage impure. By the time the Samaritan Jews returned to their homeland, their views of God had been greatly contaminated. By contrast, when the southern Hebrew tribes were carried off into captivity, they stubbornly resisted the Babylonian culture. They returned from Babylon to Jerusalem, proud that they had compromised neither their religious convictions nor their culture. So when the Samaritans offered to help to rebuild the Jerusalem Temple, the southern Jews who had re-turned from exile vehemently rejected Samaritan assistance. Consequently, the rejected and ostracized Samaritans built their own temple on Mount Gerizim. But in 129 B.C. a Jewish general destroyed it, a slap to Samaritan dignity that stung for centuries, deepening the mutual scorn and hostility between Samaritans and Jews.

**Parenting Tune-Up**

"The people grumbled against Moses" (Ex 17: 3) It’s normal in any family to grumble occasionally. Parents grumble about their kids and vice versa. But what happens after the grumbling? Model apologizing for your child. "I’m sorry. I’ll try to do better." (Susan Vogt)

**Marriage Tune-Up**

If you don’t do regular maintenance on your car, it may start sputtering and clanking. If your spouse is making noises (complaining, nagging etc.), maybe it’s time to look under the hood. You may find that neglect is the culprit. Perhaps you haven’t listened closely to what your beloved needs. Maybe work or the kids have become a priority. Ask.

**Ready to Leave Behind our “Husbands”?**

Jesus helped the Samaritan woman to have a normal conversation that enabled her to unburden herself, bringing into the open her “private” life, and she was totally changed into a new and liberated person. Jesus does the same to us, not to embarrass us, not to judge or condemn us, but to free us, to change us and to offer us what we really need: the living water of the Holy Spirit. We need to leave the “husbands” behind during Lent as the Samaritan woman did. Today’s Gospel message challenges us to get rid of our unholy attachments and the evil habits that keep us enslaved and idolatrous. Lent is the time to learn from our mistakes of overindulgence in food, drink, drugs, gambling, promiscuity, or any other addiction that may keep us from coming to the living waters of a right relationship with God. We all have our short list, don’t we? And we all know, honest to God, what it is we need to leave behind before we come to the Living Water and the Bread of Heaven. Let us make an earnest attempt to do so during this Lenten season.
Sunday Reflections

“No Drinkin’ and No Dancin’ Area”

A couple of Catholic young men from the North were visiting a dusty little town in the back country of West Texas. It was a hard-shell town in the Bible belt of the South where there was to be “No drinkin’ and no dancin’!” But these two men were strangers; so they asked a cowboy where they might get a drink. “In this town,” said the cowboy, “we use whiskey only for snakebite; to wash the wound as first aid.” Then he added slyly, “If you guys are so thirsty for whiskey, there’s only one poisonous snake in this town and that is in the zoo. So you better get a ticket to the zoo, go to the snake park, get hold of a cobra through the iron bar of its cage and give it a big hug! The zoo keeper will appear immediately with whisky.”

The woman at the well had a mighty thirst, a thirst like that of these young guys for whiskey, a thirst so big that it led her through five husbands and who knows what else. And still she was thirsty — a thirst caused by the absence of God in her life. A meeting with Jesus gave her the living waters of friendship with Jesus and the anointing of the Spirit of God which restored her dignity and changed her life.

“I Want to be That Finger!”

The highly esteemed theologian Karl Barth had a painting of the crucifixion on the wall of his study that was painted by the artist Matthias Grunewald. In the painting there is an image of John the Baptist. The artist portrayed John the Baptist pointing his finger to the cross of Jesus in the center of the painting. It’s said that when Barth would talk with a visitor about his work, he would direct them to John the Baptist in the painting, and he would say, “I want to be that finger.” Barth wanted to point people to Christ.

Pointing people to Christ is our most important task as His people. This is properly referred to as evangelism, sharing with others the love of Jesus Christ. Today’s message is about one of the most effective evangelists who ever lived. But this evangelist had a shady past. But then who doesn’t? We need to turn to Jesus who loves us with non-evaluative, non-judgmental, unconditional love; We all face moments when guilt plagues us and we are upset for failing for the same temptations again and again; when we make choices that turn out to be all wrong; when our relationships with others fall in a heap; when we feel lonely, sick and tired of the way people are treating us; when we are depressed and upset and can’t see anything good in ourselves; when our faith is at rock bottom and we feel as if the Church and religion aren’t doing anything for us; when we beat ourselves up for lack of enthusiasm to be true disciples of Jesus ready to do anything for him, and for days that go by without a word of prayer; when all we feel is failure and defeat. During such moments it is great to read a story about Jesus and his love and acceptance of the woman at the well. Let us rest assured that Jesus is there to accept us warmly and help us to see that he will give us the strength and the power we need to overcome whatever it is that is grieving us.

“Here Comes my Friend, Douglass!”

Carl Sandberg describes the firm stand that Abraham Lincoln took against racial prejudice. One particularly stirring drama unfolded on the night of Lincoln’s second Inaugural Ball. He had just delivered the blazing address in which he made famous the words, “With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work that we are in.” That evening in a White House reception room, Lincoln stood shaking hands with a long line of well-wishers. Someone informed him that Frederick Douglass was at the door, but security wouldn’t let him in because he was black. Lincoln broke off from high-level protocol and instructed security to bring Douglass to him, at once. The crowd of guests hushed as the great black leader appeared at the door. In a booming voice that filled the silence, Lincoln unashamedly announced, “Here comes my friend, Douglass!” And then turning to Douglass, Lincoln said, “I am glad to see you. I saw you in the crowd today, listening to my address. There is no man in the country whose opinion I value more than yours. I want to know what you think of it.”

Those who see and respect the rich human qualities in those individuals whom others reject, blaze pioneer trails through thick jungles of bigotry. The next generation can walk on the paths made by such giants as Lincoln who drew inspiration from Jesus’ example and teaching! Today’s Gospel shows us Jesus’ encounter with a Samaritan woman and a social outcast and gives us a model to follow in this world.

Donated Eye Transformed a Child’s Life!

Their daughter sees today because of a cornea transplant. Their joy is tempered by the realization that the cornea belonged to another nine-year-old killed in an auto accident. The deceased child’s family finds some peace in knowing that a part of their daughter will live on — and the recipient family is transformed by what they have received. Not only a physical piece but the deceased child’s generosity and selflessness live on, as well, in the recipient’s family’s new dedication to advocacy work on behalf of organ donation.

For the evangelist John, today’s Gospel is not just about a sinful woman reconciled to God by Jesus but a woman who is so transformed by the encounter that she becomes a witness of his reconciling presence in the midst of her people. We have all experienced such grace, such generosity, such compassion that changes our perspective and approach to life — we embrace the goodness that has embraced us; we become vehicles of the compassion and grace that has blessed our lives.
Celebrating Our Faith—Liturgy

Please pray for our RCIA Elect (Orchid Santana, Manishika Mishra, Vivian Nguyen, Briana Farrell and Jiselle Zelaya), our RCIA Candidates (Carol Afriyie, Christopher Reyes, Brian Reyes, Kate-lynn Tejada and Joseph Blay) and our Adults Candidates Being Confirmed (Lilliana Romero, Katherine Romero, Alexandre Dias, Olivia Lopez, Victoria Lopez, Justin Rivera, Raymond Rivera, Ivan Solares, Christian Barnard, Andrew Lavali, Robert Zagata, and Juelz Peralta) as they intensify their sacramental preparation leading up to the Great Easter Vigil. This weekend the Elect will undergo the 1st Scrutiny at the 10:00 Mass. The Scrutinies (3 of them) complete the conversion of the Elect and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ and to carry out their decision to love God above all.

The Way of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross will be prayed on each Friday of Lent at 7:00 p.m. in the church. Please join us each week.

The Lector Ministry will lead Praying the Stations with Faith and Courage on Friday, March 20th.

The Altar Servers will lead Praying the Stations for Children on Friday, March 27th.

The Altar Rosary Society will lead Praying The Stations Through Mary’s Way of the Cross on Friday, April 3rd. We hope you’ll join in.

20 Seconds to Wash and Pray!

If you say an “Our Father” in a normal prayer cadence it takes about 20 seconds.

That’s how long the experts tell us we need to wash our hands to help protect us and others against COVID-19.

Why not try this good advice! Good for the soul and the body!

Mass of Anointing of the Sick

Next Saturday, March 21 at 11:00AM, we will celebrate our annual Mass of the Anointing of the Sick. We invite ALL families AND individuals, homebound or not, to come and receive the sacrament. Also families are invited to bring homebound relatives or friends to receive this sacrament.

If you have flu-like symptoms, we ask that you follow Diocesan Guidelines. We will keep everyone in our prayers. A reception will follow in the St. John XXIII room.

Diocesan Guidelines — Liturgy and the Coronavirus

The Most Rev. James F. Checchio, Bishop of Metuchen, has issued the following directives on liturgical practices to be observed in all parishes, institutions and organizations within the Diocese of Metuchen, effective immediately until otherwise notified:

As is practiced in so many of our parishes already, priests, deacons, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are urged to practice good hygiene, washing their hands and using anti-bacterial hand sanitizer before and after distributing Holy Communion.

Any individual who is sick or has flu-like symptoms should not attend Mass or other Church gatherings. Mass is broadcast on several television channels and also livestreamed on the Cathedral’s website: stfranciscathedc.org, so the sick can make a “spiritual communion” until they return to good health.

The sign of peace should be exchanged without physical contact. Distribution of the Precious Blood of Christ from the chalice is to be suspended. Furthermore, no member of the faithful is obliged to receive the Body of Christ on the tongue; worthy, reverent reception by hand is preferred until otherwise notified.

The Chrism Mass

On Monday, April 6, 2020, Bishop James F. Checchio will celebrate the Chrism Mass with the priests of the Diocese. At this Mass, the Bishop will bless and consecrate the Holy Oils which each parish receives for the rites of anointing. Saint Ambrose (340-397) began this custom — which we now call the Chrism Mass — in his Cathedral in Milan. These Holy Oils, which are used to sanctify the Faithful, have been channels of holiness for centuries! The Oil of Catechumens is used to anoint infants and adults before their Baptism; the Oil of the Sick is used on the forehead and hands of the infirm in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick; and Sacred Chrism is used to anoint the head of the newly baptized, the foreheads of confirmandi, the hands of a priest at his ordination, the head of a bishop at his ordination, and the altar and walls of new churches. At the Mass, all priests make a Renewal of Commitment to Priestly Service, recommitting themselves to their Bishop and to their ministry to God and His People; the Bishop and all Priests then ask the people for a pledge of their prayerful support. All are strongly encouraged to join in the ancient, grace filled Chrism Mass at the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi in Metuchen at 4:00 PM.
Saint Matthias Parish School is one of the largest and most vibrant schools in the Diocese of Metuchen. In its 55 year history it has educated over 27,000 students.

In 2017, Eileen Brett was hired as our interim principal and tasked with beginning a revitalization and reorganization of the school. Her passion for and commitment to Saint Matthias School soon became a three year stay earning the respect and gratitude of the school family. During her tenure, Eileen has focused on many areas of school life and curriculum development. The following are some of the highlights of Saint Matthias School in its movement forward to maintain its legacy of excellence.

A professional development plan to align curriculum standards and methods of instruction with best practices. Staff members are actively involved in professional book studies to include Ellin Keane and Jo Boaler. Daily instruction in all areas of the curriculum to include grade level standards instruction for all students with a balance of small group instruction to ensure growth for all students. Increased use of technology on a one-on-one basis which will be realized in 2020-2021 for all grades one through eight. The development of the workshop model of instruction in the areas of literacy and math. Increased volume of classroom libraries and math manipulatives. Research and development of a middle school. Extended after-school opportunities for students. Research and development of a Makerspace mindset.

Father Abraham Orapankal arrived in 2018 and joined in that revitalization with a rejuvenation of the Parish Finance Committee and the School Advisory Council (SAC). He emphasized the need for better communication, accountability and transparency within the school community especially with the parents. He firmly believes that spiritual formation of our students and teachers will have a positive impact on the character and discipline of students. The presence of Msgr. Joe Curry has been a great blessing. His presence in the school and interaction with the students has made a positive impact on the choices students make. His open dialogue with the students and encouragement to make good choices has established a trusting relationship.

These steps outlined above have all moved in the direction of strengthening the learning process and preparing Saint Matthias Parish School to best serve the students of today and tomorrow in a challenging and responsible manner.

With the announced retirement of Miss Brett in June of 2020, a Search Committee has been formed to find a new principal to continue this work of planning and revitalization. The Search Committee members with representation from the parents, staff, SAC, HSA and the parish are Msgr. Joe Curry, Jackie Schneider, Eileen Brett, Joe Gidaro, Laura Albanese, Mary Lynch and Nick Grippo. This committee will be responsible for interviewing candidates and recommending candidates to Father Abraham and the Superintendent, Dr. Lockwood, for their approval.

As we move forward to this time of transition, there will be continued dialogue to clearly articulate the vision for Saint Matthias School moving into a fruitful future. These conversations will include the school administration and staff, students, parents, SAC and the parish community. We will continue to work together to embrace an action plan for the future of the school to include, but not to be limited to, a Strategic Plan, a Marketing and Development Plan and a Technology Plan.

We have a great adventure ahead of us, but we will move forward together with “Eyes Wide Open” and with a commitment to work for the continued legacy of faith, service and excellence at Saint Matthias School.

Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Pastor

Eileen Brett
Principal
Stewardship Reflection — Mar 15, 2020:
Third Sunday of Lent

“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again” Jn4:13

Jesus reminds us that material things, even something as basic as water, can never satisfy us for long. When we build our lives around material possessions we always want more. True Joy and Peace only come when we follow Jesus; when we become more “God-centered” and less “self-centered.”

Reflexiones—15 de marzo de 2020
3er domingo de Cuaresma

“Todos los que beban esta agua volverán a tener sed” Jn4:13

Jesús nos recuerda que las cosas materiales, incluso algo tan básico como el agua, nunca pueden satisfacernos por mucho tiempo. Cuando construimos nuestras vidas alrededor de posesiones materiales, siempre queremos más. La verdadera alegría y la paz solo llegan cuando seguimos a Jesús: cuando nos volvemos más centrados en Dios y menos egocéntricos.
Caring for Others

Rice Bowls for Lent

Parishioners are welcome to pick up a Catholic Relief Services “Rice Bowl” (a cardboard box) at the entrance to the church. This is one way to practice aimsgiving during Lent. At the end of Lent, please return the funds that you have collected, by writing a check made out to St. Matthias Church with “RICE BOWL” in the memo line, or place the cash (no coins please) in an envelope labeled “RICE BOWL”, in the collection basket. Thank you.

Day of Service **We Still Have Openings!**

The next Day of Service will be held NEXT Saturday, March 21st. We will meet in the Parish Office (DePorres Room) at 9:00 am and then proceed to the sites afterwards (those going to the Food Bank will go directly there at 8:30). If you are interested in volunteering, please email John and Coleen Zdziarski at jzdziarski@comcast.net as soon as possible. Those under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent.

The three sites:

1. The Franklin Township Food Bank - 224 Churchill Avenue in Somerset - hours are 8:30 am - 12:00 noon - maximum of 10 volunteers - minimum age is 14 - sorting canned goods, assembling food bags, providing customer assistance

2. The Pregnancy Aid Center - 59 Thompson Street in Raritan - maximum of 8 volunteers - sorting children’s clothing

3. The Ronald McDonald House - 145 Somerset Street, New Brunswick - maximum of 6 volunteers - general cleaning/sanitizing.

Building Community

**CALLING ALL YOUNG ADULTS!**

Please come join us for the next Spirituality in Spirits (young adults 21-35) meeting this Tuesday, March 17th at 7 PM in the de Porres room of the Parish Office. We look forward to it being an exciting meeting. It’s St. Patrick’s Day! We will discuss St. Patrick who brought Christianity to Ireland! Also, you may have many questions about the saint-making process in the Church.

If you have any questions, please check the Spirituality in Spirits Facebook page or feel free to contact Caitlin Regan at teacherreganc@gmail.com Come join our group for a truly spiritual evening of fun discussion, drinks, and food.

Student Artwork in Parish Office

Drop by the Parish Office to see the beautiful artwork created by our very own St. Matthias School students. This will be a rotating exhibit. Enjoy!
Second Annual Empty Bowls
NEXT SUNDAY March 22, 2020
1-4 PM, DoubleTree by Hilton, Somerset, NJ
Come share a meal and receive a ceramic bowl. Opportunities to purchase locally made art and hand crafts. Proceeds go to the Franklin Food Bank.
Adults: $35 adv/$40 at the door; Children: $20. www.emptybowlsfranklin.org

The Ministry to Caregivers of St. Joseph’s Church
Saturday, Mar. 28, 9AM – 1PM
(830AM Mass is optional)
The ministry is having a spiritual and informative morning for all caregivers. The goal of the morning is to take time for yourself as well as experience spiritual renewal. Lunch is complimentary. St. Joseph’s Church, 34 Yorktown Rd., Hillsborough, NJ. To register and for additional information: Carol, 908-369-7143. CarolU623@comcast.net

Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend
Special families begin with special husband-wife relationships. Please join us for a special weekend experience. A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend gives you the time and tools to revitalize romance, deepen communication, and nourish the spirituality in your marriage. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend will be held April 24 -26. Please apply by April 10, as space is limited. Phone 1-732-904-9636 for application and information. Visit us at: www.aweekendforyourmarriage.org

Caritas Chamber Chorale Concert - Into Your Hands
Caritas Chamber Chorale will present a series of Lenten concerts of sacred music entitled Into Your Hands. Remembering Christ’s passion and honoring those who have gone before us, this program features the Faure Requiem as well as works by Rheinberger and Gesualdo. Caritas Chamber Chorale is joined by Simply Strings and Wayne Dietterick on organ. The concert will be presented:
- Friday, March 20, 2020 at 7:30 pm at Blessed Sacrament Church, Martinsville
- Saturday, March 21, 2020 at 6 pm at St. John the Evangelist Church, Lambertville
- Sunday, March 22 at 3pm at St. Andrew Church, Avenel
All concerts are free and open to the public. A freewill offering will benefit the St. Francis Caracciolo Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Africa. Directed by Barbara Sanderman, Caritas Chamber Chorale is dedicated to serving the poorest of the poor through the art of sacred music. Visit www.caritaschamberchorale.org or call 732.718.0775.

Walking with Moms in Need – A Year of Service
Pregnant and parenting moms in need are in our parishes and our neighborhoods. As Pope Francis reminds us, our parishes need to be “islands of mercy in the midst of a sea of indifference.” Everyone in our parish community should know where to refer a pregnant woman in need. Join this nationwide effort from March 25, 2020 to March 25, 2021. For more information please visit www.walkingwithmoms.com

Healing the Heartbreak of Abortion
Begin the journey towards healing with Surrendering the Secret, an interactive program and study of God’s Word, hosted by Life Choices Resource Center.
This powerful redemptive study helps each hurting woman find her personal path to healing. Let’s walk together on your journey toward freedom.
Dates: 8-week sessions beginning April 23rd, after Divine Mercy Sunday
Time: 7:00 – 8:30 pm, Thursday Evenings. Location: On the Grounds of St. Mary’s, Plainfield
TO REGISTER or have any questions answered: Contact: Healing@lifechoicesrc.com
***All communications are strictly confidential.
Visit SurrenderingtheSecret.com for an overview of the program.

About St. Matthias
Parish Registration — Welcome new members! Please register in the Parish Office during business hours — 9 AM—9 PM Mon-Thurs, 9AM –6PM Fri., and 9 AM - 1 PM Sat.
Homebound/Hospital Visitaton — We visit St. Peter’s & Robert Wood Johnson Hospital several times. If you have a family member in any area hospital, please call the parish office to let us know.
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.
Marriage — Registered parishioners should contact the parish office a year before the desired wedding date.
Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
The R.C.I.A. process is an opportunity for instruction and spiritual transformation for any adult seeking a deeper understanding of the Catholic tradition or full incorporation into the Catholic Church. If you are interested in becoming a Catholic or completing the Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism/Confirmation/Eucharist, please call the Parish Office.
Stewardship
Stewardship is a way of life, a way of thanking God for all our blessings by returning a portion of the time, talent and treasure allotted to us. Whether it is clothes for the poor, food for the hungry, outreach to youth, in education, in worship, or simply arms stretched out to someone who is lonely, the Catholic Community of St. Matthias encourages everyone to become stewards of the gifts they have been given by God, returning a portion in gratitude to God for the work of ministry here at St. Matthias and beyond our local community.
Monthly Food Collection
On the first Sunday of each month parishioners are asked to bring food items for the Franklin Food Bank.
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.
Bulletin Article Requests
Please email proposed bulletin articles to bulletin@stmatthias.net by 6 pm, Wednesday, 10 days before the intended issue (earlier for holiday weekends).