SMS is Closed this Week.

The diocese has cancelled all Masses until April 3. For our parish information updates, please call the Parish Office, 732-828-1400, or website, www.stmatthias.net/Until further notice the office will be closing at 6PM M-F, & closed on Saturdays.

From Fr. Abraham—

Prayer of Trust

Loving God, we thank you for your many blessings. Today we come to you for your help as we feel helpless faced with the Corona virus pandemic. Despite all our progress, prosperity and innovation, we are reminded of our frailty and our dependence upon you. Forgive us for thinking that we are self-sufficient and that we are in control of our life.

We thank you for the good will and sacrificial work of all the medical doctors, nurses, and health care professionals; we pray for them to have strength and physical immunity at this time of their heroic service. Help the scientists, disease experts, and epidemiologists who are working feverishly on vaccines and testing mechanisms. We remember all who are affected by Covid – 19.

Help us to trust your Word. Thank you for the assurance you have given us throughout the Bible in these or similar words: “Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10). May we listen to your Son Jesus who told us: “Come to me all you who are wearied and find life burdensome, and I will give you rest.” (Mt. 11:28). We praise you and thank you for your providential care for us all.

We surrender these and all our intentions through the prayer that Jesus our Lord and Healer taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven ....... Amen.

Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Please visit our website “Parish Calendar” for the most up-to-date information — www.stmatthias.net/connect/calendar

Directives issued by Bishop Checchio in response to COVID-19

March 16, 2020
Our Lord is with us through this all. As the coronavirus pandemic evolves, we must remember that Our Lord sacrificed Himself for us, and He does not abandon us in our need.

Lent reminds us of this and draws us closer to Him through our own sacrificial practices. We did not know what sacrifices this Lent would bring as we began Lent this year. We pray that the joys of Easter will likewise be heightened for us too.

The Catholic faithful of the Diocese — priests, religious and lay faithful — are advised to keep informed and updated regarding the progress of the coronavirus pandemic during this global, national and state emergency. We will continue to monitor the situation and continue to communicate with you. As the situation evolves, more resources and updates will continue to be posted on our diocesan website: diometuchen.org/coronavirus; and on our diocesan social media pages: @diocesemetuchen.

I continue to ask that you avoid crowded areas, maintain good hygiene practices, keep appropriate distances outside the home and if feeling sick, stay at home. I ask that all the faithful remember the elderly and other persons at risk in their families and communities, and reach out to them by phone to see if help is needed.

Out of concern for the safety and health of our local community, I have asked that the following directives be implemented no later than March 18, 2020:

Temporary Suspension of Public Masses

All public Masses throughout the Diocese of Metuchen will be temporarily suspended beginning no later than March 18 and resume no earlier than April 3, 2020, when the situation will be re-evaluated as circumstances unfold. Priests should advise the faithful of this change at their Masses on March 17 as we celebrate St. Patrick’s Day Masses and invite his assistance. Despite the suspension of public Masses, a private Mass will be celebrated daily at 7 a.m. in the Cathedral of Saint Francis of Assisi and can be viewed at that time on their website: www.stfranciscathedral.org. Televised or online celebrations of the Mass and other religious programming are available for use of the faithful on several television channels.

If possible, priests are encouraged to livestream their Masses online. If one chooses to do so, please contact the Office of Communications so that this might be communicated to the entire diocese. The Office of Communications may be reached at (732) 529-7936 or communications@diometuchen.org.

Since the Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life, all priests of the Diocese of Metuchen must celebrate Mass privately for the good of all the Christian faithful entrusted to their care and for all people during this critical time. Priests should celebrate this private Mass even if another priest or deacon cannot be with them to (con’t. on pg 7)

This Week at St. Matthias

From the Pastor & Pastoral Staff

JESUS THE SEER

There are a handful of books that turn out to be life changing for me. I keep them with their dog-eared pages, phrases highlighted in yellow, and notes written in the margins where there is a significant truth for me. One of these books is “Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer” by Richard Rohr.

Everything Belongs challenges us to move beyond the understanding of our egotistic selves to an awareness rooted in our connection to God. I’m reminded in this book that my Lenten “prayer” could be a whole lot simpler than what I typically plan. Deep down, if I am honest, my goal is to come out of Lent feeling good about myself because I spent every Friday in a prayer group or because I read a reflection every day. But I am missing the point. Richard Rohr says that today’s Gospel about The Man Born Blind illustrates this about “prayer” very simply.

“Prayer is not primarily saying words or thinking thoughts. It is rather a stance; a way of living in the awareness of the presence, delighting in the presence, and even enjoying the presence. All spiritual disciplines have one purpose; to get rid of illusions so we can be present... see what is...see who we are...see what is happening. [Jesus was a seer]. On the contrary, our mass cultural trance is like scales over our eyes. We see only with the material eye. If we are to believe Jesus, nothing is more dangerous than people who presume they already see. God can most easily be lost by being thought found.”

It is without judgement that I come into the world so that those without sight may see, those with sight be turned blind. (John 9:39)

When I first encountered Everything Belongs, it propelled me into the exploration of contemplative prayer. I must say that I have not made much progress as a contemplative since reading it but if you decide to pick up the book, I highly recommend chapters 2 (Vision of Enchantment) and 4 (Cleansing the Lens). After reflecting on today’s Gospel through my re-visitiation with Richard Rohr, I come away with this Lenten plan for my “prayer” going forward.

I will not set my sights on trying to “get somewhere” with my prayer. My starting point is that I am already there. I cannot attain the presence of God because I am already totally in the presence of God. What is absent is my own awareness. I will keep my prayer simple and learn to “see” what is already there. I will simply practice the presence of God.

Phyllis Stone

Phyllis Stone
**Readings for the Week**

- **Monday**: Is 65:17-21; Ps 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12a and 13b; Jn 4:43-54
- **Tuesday**: Ez 47:1-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Jn 5:1-16
- **Wednesday**: Is 7:10-14; 8:10; Ps 40:7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 11; Heb 10:4-10; Lk 1:26-38
- **Thursday**: Ex 32:7-14; Ps 106:19-20, 21-22, 23; Jn 5:31-47
- **Friday**: Wis 2:1a, 12-22; Ps 34:17-18, 19-20, 21 and 23; Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30
- **Saturday**: Jer 11:18-20; Ps 7:2-3, 9bc-10, 11-12; Jn 7:40-53
- **Sunday**: Ez 37:12-14; Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45 or Jn 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

**Mass Intentions for the Week**

- **Saturday, Mar 21**: 5:00PM Jo Russo, by The Nastasi & Nitti Families
- **Sunday, Mar 22**: 8:00AM Intention of Parishioners
  - 10:00AM Mr. & Mrs. M. Lynch, by Marty Collins
  - 12:00PM Mary & Eugene Sullivan, by Mary & family
  - 5:30PM Melecio Panaligan, by Lily Panaligan
- **Monday, Mar 23**: 8:00AM Thomas Morgan, by Jolene Cerullo
- **Tuesday, Mar 24**: 8:00AM Ted Brew, by Gil & Ellen Ossandor
- **Wednesday, Mar 25**: 8:00AM Thomas Doyle, by Susan Novak
- **Thursday, Mar 26**: 8:00AM William Oberlander, by Suzanne & Jeff Adams
- **Friday, Mar 27**: 8:00AM Eddie & Julia Song, by Children
- **Saturday, Mar 28**: 5:00PM Susan & James Shinnors, by Mary
- **Sunday, Mar 29**: 8:00AM The Yacone Family, by Espy
  - 10:00AM Intention of Parishioners
  - 12:00PM Veronica, Kevin & Ronnie Regan, by Brian Regan
  - 5:30PM Sr. B. Miller, by Mignon Miller-Baldini

**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. Names will be listed in the bulletin for 6 weeks. 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 Blanchini
- 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
- Briania Edward
- Jeanette Etterere
- Ada Galdi
- Marianne Gerace
- Emma Gergely
- Rose Gessner
- Mary Gidaro
- John Gross
- Fr. Doug Haefner
- Paul Haucke
- Sloopy Hoffman
- Sandra Huset
- Merla Isabelo
- Jack Kenefick
- Michael Kirugi
- The Litrakis Family
- Kenneth Magat
- Al Maglio
- Susan Manansala
- Christine Matthews
- Elizabeth Miller
- Lucy Mimm
- 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish Pastoral Council, Co-Chairs: Tom Phalen, <a href="mailto:thomasephalen@gmail.com">thomasephalen@gmail.com</a> Nick Grippo <a href="mailto:nickgrippo@gmail.com">nickgrippo@gmail.com</a> Tom Aussem</th>
<th>Parish Finance Council: Joe Porter, Chair financecouncil @stmatthias.net Joe Porter, Chair Susan Klimcsak Barney Dusault Gwen Orlowski</th>
<th>Joseph Lesky</th>
<th>Joe Percoco</th>
<th>Marybeth Purcell</th>
<th>Wina Reyes-Brice</th>
<th>Lisa Robinson</th>
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<th>Audrey Francis</th>
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Sunday Reflections

Smile with Your Family

Marvin and Tina were not a very religious couple but tried their best; they only went to church once a year. As they were leaving the church, the priest said, “Marvin, it sure would be nice to see you and Tina at Mass more than once a year!” “I know,” replied Marvin, “We’re very busy people, leading active lives but at least we keep the Ten Commandments.” “That’s great,” the priest said. “I’m glad to hear that you keep the Commandments.” “Yes, we sure do” Marvin said proudly. “Tina keeps six of them and I keep the other four.” ☺

An exasperated mother, whose son was always getting into mischief, finally asked him, “How do you expect to be saved and get to Heaven?” The boy thought it over and said, “Well, I’ll run in and out and keep slamming the door until St. Peter says, ‘For Heaven’s sake, young man, come in or stay out!’”☺

My face in the mirror isn’t wrinkled or drawn. My house isn’t dirty. The cobwebs are gone. My garden looks lovely, and so does my lawn. I think I might never put my glasses back on. ☺

Parenting Tune-Up

Teach your child two contradictory life lessons: 1. How to stand up for themselves. 2. How to forgive someone who has hurt them. Model it. Role play potential situations. (Susan Vogt)

Marriage Tune-Up

"Not as humans see does God see, because humans see the appearance but the Lord looks into the heart." (1 Sam. 16:7) Yes, love can be blind, but deep love sees beneath annoying habits to the inner goodness. Name one positive quality that you see in your beloved that others might not see.

Join Earth Hour! March 28, 2020 at 8:30PM

Started by World Wildlife Fund and partners as a symbolic lights-out event in Sydney in 2007, Earth Hour is now one of the world’s largest grassroots movements for the environment, engaging millions of people in more than 180 countries and territories. It has become a catalyst for positive environmental impact, driving major legislative changes by harnessing the power of the people.

On Saturday, March 28, join millions of people around the world—along with businesses, landmarks, and cities—to turn off lights from 8:30pm to 9:30pm local time in celebration of Earth Hour.

Modern Spiritual Blindness

Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, because he does not keep the Sabbath." The blind man said: "One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see." John 9:1-41

A country preacher was listening to a seminary professor cast doubt on the core issues of the Faith and the authenticity of the claims of Jesus. When the professor finished his lecture, the elderly pastor got up, took an apple from his lunch bag and started eating it as he said, "Mr. Professor, I haven’t read many of the books you quoted." Then he took another bite of the apple. "Mr. Professor, I don’t know much about the great thinkers you mentioned," as he took still another bite of his apple. "Mr. Professor, I admit I haven’t studied the Bible like you have," as he finished his apple and dropped it back in the bag. "I was just wondering, this apple that I just ate, was it sour or sweet? The Professor responded, "How could I know? I haven’t tasted your apple." To which the old preacher replied, "With all due respect, sir, I was just wondering if you had ever had a taste of my Jesus?" The blind man says, "Whether or not the cure was approved by the FDA, I once was blind, but now I see." You all argue and explain all you want, but that’s enough for me.

Although the Pharisees have long since disappeared from history, there are still many among us who are blinded by the same pride and prejudice. Spiritual blindness is very common in modern times. Perhaps, the most awful disease in our country today is spiritual blindness. Such blindness refuses to see the truths of God’s revelation. This blindness refuses even to admit that God or Christ exists. In their pride, the spiritually blind claim that everything ends with death and that there is no life after death. They propagate their errors and accuse believers of childish credulity and folly. They ignore the gifts of the intellect we all possess. God’s revelation through Christ informs us that there is a future life awaiting us in which our spiritual faculties and our transformed bodies will be fully and fittingly glorified. According to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, the miracle of the healing of the blind man is a sign that Christ wants not only to give us sight, but also open our interior vision, so that our faith may become ever deeper and we may recognize Him as our only Savior. He illuminates all that is dark in life and leads men and women to live as “children of the light” (Lenten message-2011).
**A Lenten “Recall Notice!”**

The maker of all human beings is recalling all units manufactured, regardless of make or year, due to the serious defect in the primary and central component or heart. This is due to a malfunction in the original prototype units, resulting in the reproduction of the same defect in all subsequent units. This defect has been technically termed, ‘Sub sequential Internal Non-Morality,’ or more commonly known as S-I-N, as it is primarily symptomatic by loss of moral judgment. Some other symptoms are:

(a) Loss of direction  
(b) Foul vocal emissions  
(c) Amnesia of origin  
(d) Lack of peace and joy  
(e) Selfish, or violent, behavior  
(f) Depression or confusion in the mental component

The manufacturer, who is neither liable or at fault for this defect, is providing factory authorized repair and service, free of charge to correct this SIN defect, at numerous locations throughout the world. The number to call for the recall station in your area is: P-R-A-Y-E-R

WARNING: Continuing to operate the human unit without correction, voids the manufacturer’s warranty, exposing owner to dangers and problems too numerous to list. For free emergency service, call on J-E-S-U-S for prompt assistance at any location worldwide.

“**You Idiot, Someone Has Stolen Our Tent!”**

Sherlock Holmes and his smart assistant Dr. Watson go on a camping trip, enjoy a heavy barbecue dinner with a bottle of whisky, set up their tent, and fall asleep. Some hours later, Holmes wakes his faithful friend. "Watson, look up at the sky and tell me what you see." Watson replies, "I see millions of stars," "What does that tell you?" Watson ponders for a minute. "Astronomically speaking, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, it tells me that Saturn is in Leo. Time wise, it appears to be approximately a quarter past three. Theologically, it’s evident the Lord is all powerful and we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it seems we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you?" Holmes is silent for a moment, then speaks. "Watson, you idiot, someone has stolen our tent." Watson had missed the most obvious. He was clever enough to notice the complexities of the stars but he missed what was plain and simple.

Today’s Gospel reading is about a whole lot of people who miss the point. In Jesus’ healing of a blind man, the Pharisees missed the most evident point that it was a real miracle by Divine intervention. We all have blind-spots -- in our marriages, our parenting, our work habits, and our personalities. We often wish to remain in the dark, preferring darkness to light. Even practicing Christians can be blind to the poverty, injustice and pain around them. Let us remember, however, that Jesus wants to heal our blindness. We need to ask Him to remove from us the root causes of our blindness: namely, self-centeredness, greed, anger, hatred, prejudice, jealousy, addiction to evil habits and hardness of heart. Let us pray with the Scottish Bible scholar William Barclay, “God our Father, help us see Christ more clearly, love him more dearly and follow him more nearly.”

**Blinded by Prejudice!**

In the late 1700s, the manager of a large hotel in Baltimore refused lodging to a man dressed like a farmer. He turned the farmer away because he thought this fellow’s shabby appearance would discredit the reputation of his distinguished hotel. The farmer picked up his bag and left without saying a further word to anyone. Later that evening, the innkeeper discovered that he had turned away none other than the Vice President of the United States - Thomas Jefferson! Immediately, the manager sent a note of apology to the famed patriot, asking him to come back and be his guest in the hotel. Jefferson replied by instructing the messenger as follows, “Tell him I have already reserved a room. I value his good intentions highly, but if he has no room for a common American farmer, then he has no room for the vice-president of the United States of America.”

Are we aware of the cultural blind-spots we may have? Our culture has become anesthetized to the violence, the sexual innuendo, and the enormous suffering of the world around us. Our culture, our media, our movies and our values, are often blind as to what it means to love selflessly and sacrificially. Our culture, in spite of scientific proofs, is blind to the reality that life begins at the moment of conception, and it callously promotes abortion. We continue to advance destructive practices and refuse to see the consequences of godless behavior on human society. In the name of individual rights, the radical left in our society decries any public demonstration of religious beliefs and practices, or the public appearance of traditional values, questioning the substance of family values. The radical right, on the other hand, decries the immorality of our times, without lifting a finger to help the poor and the underprivileged and without ever questioning unjust foreign policies and wars. This cultural blindness can only be overcome as each one of us enters the living experience of having Jesus dwelling within us and within others, through personal prayer, meditative reading of the Bible and a genuine Sacramental life.
**Sunday Reflections**

"I Do Not Know Everything of Christ, Only This Much."

The book God's Annoying Love for Imperfect People by Michael Yaconelli tells the story of a man recently converted to Jesus and how an unbelieving friend sought to "see" why. "So you have been converted to Christ?" "Yes." "Then you must know a great deal about Him. Tell me, what country was he born in?" "I don't know." "What was his age when he died?" "I don't know." "How many sermons did he preach?" "I don't know." "You certainly know very little for a man who claims to be converted to Christ." "You are right. I am ashamed at how little I know about him. But this much I know: Three years ago I was a drunkard. I was in debt. My family was falling to pieces; they dreaded the sight of me. But now I have given up drink. We are out of debt. Ours is a happy home. My children eagerly await my return home each evening. All this Christ has done for me. This much I know of Christ."

Does it not sound like the answers given by the blind man healed by Jesus? Jesus gave to the blind beggar not only his bodily eyesight but also the light of Faith. This story also shows how the stubborn pride and prejudice of the Pharisees prevented them from seeing in the humble "Son of Man" the long-expected Messiah, and that made them incapable of recognizing the miracle. When the parents of the blind man convinced them that their son had been born blind, the Pharisees argued that the healer was a "sinner," because the miracle had been performed on the Sabbath. But the cured man insisted that Jesus, his healer, must be from God. The blind man was asked: "Who healed you?" First, he answered, "A prophet healed me." Then he answered, "The Son of Man healed me." Finally, when he realized who Jesus was, he fell down on his knees and worshipped him. As a result, he was excommunicated. "The blind man's progress in spiritual sight reminds us that we need God's grace and revelation to move toward sharper spiritual vision."

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**Pastoral Council Seeks New Members**

The Parish Pastoral Council is currently seeking 4 new members for the 2020/21 season. The Council advises the Pastor and is designed to be a connection with all other ministries. Terms are for 3 years.

If you are interested, please contact Nick Grippo, nickgrippo@gmail.com, or Tom Phalen, thomasephalen@gmail.com. Please prayerfully consider this.

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**Important Parish Information**

Here are some highlights for our parish:

The Parish Office remains open as of Mar. 17, 2020. It will close M-F at 6PM. It will be closed on Saturdays.

St. Matthias Church remains open through this week from 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Church will also be open from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, including for confessions from 11-12 with priests paying special attention to distancing health guideline.

Church will also be open from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Sunday.

There are no choir rehearsals this week.

Although there are no organized Friday Stations this coming Friday, the church will be open for private prayer or individual payer of the Stations.

Please check the parish website for canceled events as most gatherings (including religious education sessions) have been canceled.

We will continue to post updates as they occur. Decisions with regard to other parish activity will be made as the situation evolves.

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**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].

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**Lent Video Interview — Fr. Abraham**

Don’t miss the Lent video of Fr. Abraham being interviewed by P.J. Parker of the Franklin Reporter & Advocate on their Facebook page. We have provided a link from our website, www.stmatthias.net As of the time this bulletin was printed, the video had over 7,600 views!

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**Gift Cards (Scip)** ARE AVAILABLE IN THE PARISH OFFICE
Celebrating Our Faith — Liturgy

St. Matthias Music Ministry
St. Matthias Music Ministry has been dynamically preparing for Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Here are just a few of the choral highlights you can look forward to being inspired by in the coming weeks. (There will be lots of beautiful music for you, our assembly, to sing, too!)

April 5- Palm Sunday
5:00- Our Folk Group will sing “Take Up Your Cross” by Curtis Stephan, Sarah Hart and Marc Byrd.
10:00- Our Sunday Morning Choir will sing “What Have We Done—Senzeni Na” based on a traditional South African song.

April 9 - Holy Thursday
Our Adult Handbell Choir will play “Jesu Joy of Man’s Desiring” followed by our combined choirs singing “Glorious Is the Name of Jesus” as our prelude. After Communion, we will sing a brand new setting of “In Remembrance of Me” by Ed Bolduc.

April 10- Good Friday
Our combined choirs will sing “I Will Carry Your Cross”, an inspiring anthem by our own assistant choir director Chris Rath.

April 11 - Easter Vigil
There’s so much great music I can’t even list it! The Exsultet, Exodus, the Litany of Saints…. But after Communion we will sing “Empty Now” by Joseph Martin. It’s one of our favorite Easter anthems, chosen by our beloved first director of our choir, Eileen Casazza. We have not sung it in several years.

April 12 - Easter Sunday
10:00- Our Children’s Choir will sing “A Jubilant Song” by Mary Lynn Lightfoot and our Youth Handbell Choir will play a new arrangement of “Morning Has Broken.”
12:00 - Our Combined Choir will sing “Empty Now”, and our Adult Handbell Choir will play a favorite arrangement of “Lift High the Cross.”

The Chrism Mass
Monday, April 6, 4:00PM

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.

(Easter Brigade)

EASTER BRIGADE
NOT GOING TO THE EASTER PARADE THIS YEAR?

JOIN US FOR THE EASTER CLEANING BRIGADE INSTEAD.
AT 9:30 A.M. ON HOLY SATURDAY
HELP SPRUCE UP THE CHURCH FOR ST. MATTHIAS EASTER VISITORS
BREAKFAST INCLUDED

“During this Lent, let us all ask the Lord: Make our hearts like yours.”
-Pope Francis
Stewardship Reflection — Mar 22, 2020:
Fourth Sunday of Lent

"Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance but the Lord looks into the heart." 1 Sam 16:7

How often do we invest our time, talent and treasure in creating an appearance that does not matter at all to God? We strive to impress with our clothing, home, career, possessions, car and other marks of distinction. But none of these illusions of greatness will impress God. Instead, He will look into our hearts to see how much we loved Him, how much we loved others and how we showed that love by the way we used our time, talent and treasure here on earth.

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year 2019-2020

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<td>March 1, 2020</td>
<td>$16,965</td>
<td>$10,446.09</td>
<td>$27,411.09</td>
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<td>$1,022,371.28</td>
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*Faith Direct amount will be posted when available

Being Good Stewards

Discover St. Matthias School

During the week of March 23, the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Metuchen will be visited by an Accrediting Team of professionals to affirm the vision and direction of all of the schools in the diocese. Each school has been active participants in a self-study and Action Plan for the future to prepare for this visitation. While each school is in readiness for this process, only five of the schools will be visited.

As the school leadership and teaching team conducted the self-study and design for improvement at St. Matthias School, the Action Plan was focused on a continued use of data to drive effective and meaningful instruction for all students. This plan allows for small group instruction directed at the specific needs of students to allow for growth for all students. The school technology team has moved forward in its plan to provide one on one use of Chromebooks for all students in grades one through eight. Teachers of literacy and math are exploring programs that provide technology assisted learning to guide students from one stage of proficiency to the next.

Discover St. Matthias School

The School Advisory Committee is working with the HSA leadership and the school staff to continue its exploration of creating a Makerspace to provide a mindset of creativity and innovation. The teaching staff has been actively involved during the 2019-20 school year in professional development that fosters and embraces a Makerspace “mindset”.

Discover St. Matthias School

As we announced last week, our parish is now using “Parish Giving”, a leading provider of secure, user-friendly Electronic Funds Transfer systems specializing in religious and charitable organizations. You will be able to maintain full control over your account so that you can change your offering as needed. You will also be able to generate a giving report, contribute to Christmas and other special collections, and change the method and/or timing of the billing. We encourage you to sign up for Parish Giving by going to our website, www.stmatthias.net, and clicking on the orange tab that says “Donate”. Thank you!

Being Good Stewards

Reflexiones—22 de marzo de 2020
4o domingo de Cuaresma
“Dios no ve lo que el hombre ve, porque el hombre ve la apariencia pero el Señor mira al corazón”. (1 SAMUEL 16: 7)

¿Con qué frecuencia invertimos nuestro tiempo, talentos y tesoros en crear una apariencia que no le importa a Dios? Nos esforzamos por impresionar con nuestra ropa, casa, carrera, posesiones, automóviles y otras marcas de distinción. Pero ninguna de estas ilusiones de grandeza impresionará a Dios. En cambio, Él mirará en nuestros corazones para ver cuánto lo amamos, cuánto amamos a los demás y cómo mostramos ese amor por la forma en que usamos nuestro tiempo, talentos y tesoros aquí en la tierra.

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year 2019-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Month</th>
<th>In-Pew Collection</th>
<th>Faith Direct*</th>
<th>Weekly Total</th>
<th>Month-to-date</th>
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Please consider supporting our parish by signing up for Parish Giving.
**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 almsgiving 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.

**Building Community**

**Stay Connected to Our Parish**

If you are staying home, remember that we publish our weekly bulletin on our website. Go to [www.stmatthias.net](http://www.stmatthias.net) and click on the orange tab.

**St. Matthias Carnival Update!**

Carnival All Volunteer meeting on Tuesday, May 5, 7:30 PM in the cafeteria. This is an important meeting for all volunteers (especially new volunteers) as we be reviewing the new Carnival Lay-out on the Parking Lot. So most, if not all tent locations will change this year.

Carnival opens on **Wednesday**, May 13 at 6 PM and ends on **Sunday**, May 17th 9 PM

**Carnival Volunteers Sign-up** website should be available on or about April 1. More to follow. Check our website for the latest information: [www.stmatthias.net](http://www.stmatthias.net) and click on the orange tab “Carnival 2020”.

**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!
More Student Artwork from St. Matthias School

Connecting with Our Local Community

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.

Mother Seton Regional HS
One Valley Rd., Clark,
Visit motherseton.org or call 732-382-1952
OPEN HOUSE: Thursday, April 2 – 7:00 p.m.
The Future is Hers

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 members 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 RCIA 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 PreK-8 Preparatory 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).

About St. Matthias (continued)

Building Community

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