



**St. Matthias Parish Office:**

Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm.  
 168 JFK Boulevard, Somerset, NJ 08873  
 732-828-1400, fax: 732-828-0866  
[www.stmatthias.net](http://www.stmatthias.net)

**Mass Schedule (in person):**

Sat - 5PM, Sun - 8, 10 AM & 12 noon  
 M/T/W/Th/F at 8:00AM  
 And also on our YouTube channel  
[youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ](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**, Mon-Fri 8AM to 3PM.

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

**Pastor:** Rev Abraham Orapankal, **abraham**  
**Senior Priest:** Msgr. Seamus Brennan, **sbrennan**  
 Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Business Administrator  
**mpburke-grospin**  
 Deacon Ron Caimi, *Senior Deacon*  
 Kelly Counts, *Receptionist*, **kcounts**  
 Deacon Russell Demkovitz, **rdemkovitz**  
 Nathalie Godet, *Website 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**  
 Trish Stumper, *Parish Support Secretary*,  
**tstumper**  
**St. Matthias School (add @stmatthiasnj.org)**  
 Mary Lynch, *Principal*, **mlynch**  
 Joseph Gidaro, *Vice Principal*, **igidaro**

**THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS**  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2023-**  
**Palm Sunday of the Passion of The Lord**

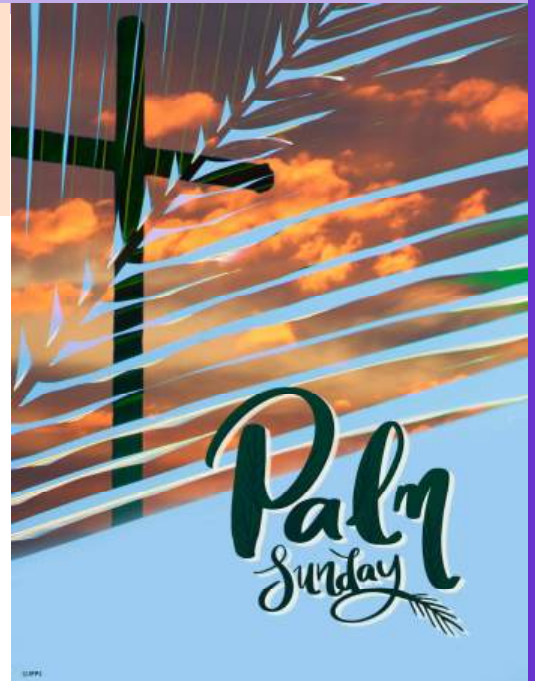
Retirement Collection for  
 Diocesan Clergy  
**This weekend**  
 April 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 See page 8



**Holy Week**

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

Join us on Friday at 2:00PM  
 for **The Outdoor Stations**, a  
 devotion intended to help us  
 follow Jesus on his way to  
 Calvary.



**HOLY WEEK/EASTER 2023 SCHEDULE**

**Saturday, April 1st**

Sacrament of Reconciliation  
 (Individual confessions)  
 3:00 – 4:30 PM  
 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the  
 Lord  
 Vigil Mass—5:00 PM

**Sunday, April 2nd**

Palm Sunday of the Passion of  
 the Lord  
 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 12:00 Noon  
 Parish Reconciliation Service—  
 6:00 PM

**Tuesday, April 4th**

Chrism Mass at  
 St. Francis Cathedral—4:00 PM

**HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 6th**

Solemn Mass of the  
 Lord's Supper—7:30 PM  
 Combined Choir  
 Procession and Adoration of the  
 Blessed Sacrament  
 (Cafeteria)  
 Night Prayer (Cafeteria) – 10:45 PM

**GOOD FRIDAY, April 7th**

Morning Prayer (Church) – 8:30 AM  
 Outdoor Stations (SMS parking lot)  
 – 2:00 PM  
 Children's Choir  
 Celebration of the Lord's Passion—  
 7:30 PM Combined Choir

**HOLY SATURDAY, April 8th**

Morning Prayer (Church) – 8:30 AM  
 Blessing of Food (Cafeteria) –  
 12:00 Noon  
 Great Easter Vigil – 8:00 PM  
 Combined Choir

**EASTER SUNDAY, April 9th**

Mass Schedule  
 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM and 12:00 Noon  
 Combined Choir at 10:00 AM  
 Handbell Choir at 12:00 PM

**EASTER MONDAY, April 10th**

No Mass

# This Week @ St. Matthias From Our Pastor

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

## The Church is open for individual prayer

Mon-Fri: 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, Apr 2, 2023 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

### Retirement Collection for Diocesan Clergy

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
12:00PM	Mass	Church
2:00PM	Eagle Scout Ceremony w/Priest Followed by reception	Church Cafeteria
6:00PM	Parish Penance Service	Church

## Monday, Apr 3, 2023 St. Richard of Chichester, Bishop

8:00AM	Mass /Miraculous Medal Novena	Church
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## Tuesday, Apr 4, 2023 St. Isidore of Seville, Bishop

8:00AM	Mass	Church
4:00PM	Children's Choir Gr. 3 thru 8	Church
6:30PM	SMS SAC Mtg.	de Porres Rm
7:15PM	Hand bell Rehearsal	Church
7:30PM	SVDP Society Mtg.	de Porres Rm

## Wednesday, Apr 5, 2023 St. Vincent Ferrer, Priest SMS Dismissal—12:15pm

8:00AM	Mass—St. Joseph Novena	Church
9:00AM	SMS Honor Roll	Church
9:30AM	Prayer Group 1 Holy Spirit	de Porres Rm
11:00AM	SMS Living Stations	Church
7:30PM	Folk Grp. Easter Vigil Rehearsal	Church

## Thursday, Apr 6, 2023 Holy Thursday, The Paschal Triduum, Day 1 Parish Office Closed & SMS Easter Break All Day SVDP Collection

8:00AM	No Mass	
9:15AM	Liturgy Rehearsal	Church
7:30PM	Mass of the Lord's Supper	Church
10:45PM	Night Prayer	John XXIII Rm

## Friday, Apr 7, 2023 Good Friday, The Paschal Triduum Day 2 & Holy Land Collection Parish Office Closed

8:30AM	Morning Prayer	Church
9:15AM	Liturgy Rehearsal	Church
2:00PM	Outdoor Stations of the Cross	
7:30PM	Passion of the Lord	Church

## Saturday, Apr 8, 2023 Holy Saturday, The Paschal Triduum, Day 3

8:30AM	Morning Prayer	Church
9:15AM	Liturgy Rehearsal	Church
12:00PM	Blessing of the Food	Cafeteria
3:30PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Mass	Church
8:00PM	Easter Vigil Mass	Church

## Sunday, Apr 9, 2023 Easter Sunday

8:00AM	Easter Sunday Mass	Church
10:00AM	Easter Sunday Mass—Interpreter	Church
12:00PM	Easter Sunday Mass	Church

Dear Friends,

I read this story about comedian Yakov Smirnoff, a Ukrainian-American comedian, actor and writer who began his career as a stand-up comedian in the Soviet Union. When he first came to the US, he was not prepared for the incredible variety of instant products available in American grocery stores. He says, "On my first shopping trip, I saw powdered milk—you just add water, and you get milk. Then I saw powdered orange juice—you just add water, and you get orange juice. And then I saw **baby powder**, and I thought to myself, What a country!"



Smirnoff is joking but we could be making these assumptions about Christian Transformation. We go to church as if we are going to the grocery store: **Powdered Christian**. Just add water and disciples are born not made. Unfortunately, there is no such powder and disciples of Jesus Christ are not instantly born. We must understand what it means to be a disciple. Does this mean that we should deny ourselves and take up the cross? YES, many times we are called to do that because that is exactly what Jesus said and did!

Today we are beginning the most Holy Week of the liturgical year and the three holiest days of this week are called the "Sacred Paschal Triduum." Last Sunday in the bulletin, **Msgr. Brennan had explained beautifully the theological and practical meaning of these most holy three days and invited us all to attend these celebrations filled with Scriptures, symbols and rites that touch us and enrich us spiritually.**

I too invite us all to come and celebrate this unfathomable love of God for each one of us during the Triduum. Join the Church services of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil/Sunday. Keep the schedule handy on your refrigerator or mark those events on your calendar. We will grow in greater knowledge of our faith when we attend these liturgical services.

Our wonderful choir has been practicing for these services. I have been enjoying the preview of what they have in store for us this holy week. **The sacrifice these talented and committed music ministers of our parish has been making, under the leadership of our wonderfully gifted Joan Seamon, will fill us all with a prayerful taste of soul-filling and inspirational music.** Come as a family and let this week help you grow closer to Jesus Christ who loves each one of us so much: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (John. 3:16)..

May He enrich us and bless us.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal



## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** Is 42:1-7; Ps 27:1-2, 3, 13-14; Jn 12:1-11  
**Tuesday:** Is 49:1-6; Ps 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5ab-6ab, 15, 17; Jn 13:21-33, 36-38  
**Wednesday:** Is 50:4-9a; Ps 69:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34; Mt 26:14-25  
**Thursday:** Chrism Mass: Is 61:1-3ab, 6a, 8b-9; Ps 89:21-22, 25, 27; Rv 1:5-8; Lk 4:16-21  
 Lord's Supper: Ex 12:1-8, 11-14; Ps 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18; 1 Cor 11:23-26; Jn 13:1-15  
**Friday:** Is 52:13 — 53:12; Ps 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25; Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9; Jn 18:1 — 19:42  
**Saturday:** a) Gn 1:1 — 2:2 or Gn 1:1, 26-31a; Ps 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35; or Ps 33:4-5, 6-7, 12-13, 20, 22;  
 b) Gn 22:1-18 or Gn 1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Ps 16: 5, 8, 9-10, 11;  
 c) Ex 14:15 — 15:1; Ex 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18;  
 d) Is 54:5-14; Ps 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13;  
 e) Is 55:1-11; Is 12:2-3, 4, 5-6;  
 f) Bar 3:9-15, 32 — 4:4; Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11;  
 g) Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28; Ps 42:3, 5; 43:3-4 or Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6 or Ps 51:12-13, 14-15, 18-19;  
 h) Rom 6:3-11; i) Mt 28:1-10  
**Sunday:** Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23; Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8; Jn 20:1-9

## Mass Intentions for the Week

<b>Saturday, Apr 1</b>	5:00PM	Kevin Doyle, by Isabelle & John Baker
<b>Sunday, Apr 2</b>	8:00AM	Intention of Parishioners
	10:00AM	Hugh Scott, by Wife, Pearl
	12:00PM	Alejandra Sunga, by Flora Sunga
<b>Monday, Apr 3</b>	8:00AM	Kevin Coffey, by Mafalda & family
<b>Tuesday, Apr 4</b>	8:00AM	Rasathy Edwin, by Mercy Gabriel
<b>Wednesday, Apr 5</b>	8:00AM	Birthday Blessings for Mariana Medina, by Her parents, Dennys & Maribel
<b>Thursday, Apr 6</b>	7:30PM	Mass of the Lord's Supper
	10:45PM	Night Prayer (St. John XXIII Rm.)
<b>Friday, Apr 7</b>	8:30AM	Morning Prayer (Church)
	7:30PM	Passion of the Lord
<b>Saturday, Apr 8</b>	8:30AM	Morning Prayer (Church)
	12:00PM	Blessing of the Food (cafeteria)
	8:00PM	Easter Vigil Mass, Patty Lara, by The Maglio Family
<b>Sunday, Apr 9</b>	8:00AM	John Gleason, by Barbara Gleason
	10:00AM	Intention of Parishioners
	12:00PM	Theresa (Patty) Spinelli, by Ann Blaise & Carl Atoldite

## Pray for those who are sick...

Erika, Jay & Beth Adams  
 Carolyn Banghart  
 Tammy Baskaran  
 Arthur & Regina Berlowitz  
 John Blum  
 Bishop Paul Bootkowski  
 Anthony Brandi  
 Barbara Butler  
 Bianca Canlas  
 Tara Capatosto  
 Ellen Catalina  
 Kyle Davidson  
 Lisa DeFeo  
 Ann Devlin  
 Michael DiMaggio  
 William Dolphin  
 Vivian Dong  
 Josephine Geenty  
 Claudia Gemgnani  
 Helen Geraghty

Emma Gergely  
 Carol Gryskiewicz  
 Sloopy & John Hoffman  
 Marilyn Horvath  
 Baby Isla-Rose Huffman  
 Robert Kashinsky  
 Al Kepenis  
 Kathleen Langenbacher  
[Henrietta Lesiak](#)  
 The Litrakis Family  
 Mary Lou Litrakis  
 John Litrakis  
[Joseph Lubrano](#)  
 Jude Raymond Maceren  
[Aries Magali](#)  
 Clarissa & Kevin Magat  
 Kenneth & Kelly Magat  
 Al Maglio  
 Susan, Tosh & King  
 Manansala

Christine Mathews  
 Beatrice May  
 Anne McElwee  
 Margaret Menendez  
 Carol Millemann  
 Sabrina Moloney  
 Kathlyn Moore  
 Eleanor Nagy  
 Janice Navatkowski  
 Danny Ongchango  
[Bernadine Pasternak](#)  
 Paul & Doris Paetow  
 Robert Pellegrino  
 Jim Pettit  
 Christina Pietrowiak  
 Valerie Polci  
 Kim Price  
 Nathan Reavey  
 Caitlin Regan  
 Doris Regan

Gabriel Rivera  
 Jaxon Rivera  
 Arina Robinson  
 Arthur Robinson  
 Maria Schwenzer  
 Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF  
 Sr. Bernadine Marie  
 Stemmcock  
 Jeff Sullivan  
 Tom Szabo  
 Nancy Whelan  
 Mark Worthington  
 Angie Yettyet

**And for all who are ill, homebound, elderly, in nursing care, or living with chronic illness, we pray.**

## Pray for those who have died...

— "His mercy endures forever." Chronicles

Rocco Melchione; Tippur Seshagiri, husband of Mary; James Isola, husband of Christine



## Smile with Your Family



The six-year-old came home from Palm Sunday services proudly carrying his palm. Mom and Dad quizzed him on his Sunday school lesson for the day. He responded enthusiastically, “Jesus came to Jerusalem on a donkey. And the happy people waved their palm branches and sang, “O Susanna 😊

Little Johnny was sick on Palm Sunday and stayed home from Church with his mother. His father returned from church holding a palm branch. The little boy was curious and asked why. His father explained, “You see, when Jesus came into town, everyone waved palm branches to honor him; so we got palm branches today. “Aw, shucks,”

grumbled Little Johnny.; “The one Sunday I can’t go to Church, and Jesus shows up!” 😊

A girl asks her father, “Why does it rain? Is it God sweating or crying?” “No says her father, it rains to make the plants grow. Do you understand?” “Not exactly says the girl. “Why does it rain on the sidewalk” 😊

“Will you cry at my funeral?”, asks a husband to his wife. “Sure” answers the wife, “You know I cry over the silliest things.” 😊

### Welcome to the triumph and the tragedy of the Holy Week

On Palm Sunday, April 9, 1865, Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant, General of the Union Army, at the McLean house in Appomattox, Virginia. This surrender ended the bloodiest war ever fought on American soil. State against state, brother against brother, it was a conflict that literally tore the nation apart. Five days later, on Good Friday, April 14, 1865, America’s most revered president, Abraham Lincoln, was shot and mortally wounded by John Wilkes Booth in Ford’s Theatre. It was Lincoln who wrote the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation that ended slavery in the U.S. forever. It was Lincoln who wrote and gave The Gettysburg Address. Lincoln hated war, but he was drawn into this one because he believed it was the only way to save the nation. On Palm Sunday the war ended. Triumph. On Good Friday, Abraham Lincoln became the first U.S. president to be assassinated. Tragedy.

Welcome to Holy Week. Welcome to the triumph and the tragedy of the six days preceding Easter. The Church celebrates this sixth Sunday of Lent as both Palm Sunday and Passion Sunday. This is the time of year we stop to remember and relive the events which brought about our redemption and salvation. What we commemorate and relive during this week is not just Jesus’ dying and rising, but our own dying and rising in Him, which will result in our healing, reconciliation, and redemption. Attentive participation in the Holy Week liturgy will deepen our relationship with God, increase our Faith and strengthen our lives as disciples of Jesus. Today’s liturgy combines contrasting moments, one of glory, the other of suffering: the royal welcome of Jesus in Jerusalem and the drama of His trial, culminating in His crucifixion, death and burial.

### Palm Sunday Reflections

#### Political Messiah and Palm Sunday Connection!

A key element of understanding the connection between the Palm Sunday receptions given to Jesus and Good Friday is to recognize that the actions, words and symbols of Palm Sunday indicated a religious and political Messiah who would save the Jews from foreign rule and regain for them religious and political freedom. The occasion of reception was carefully chosen by Jesus’ disciples to coincide with the Passover feast which celebrated the Jewish liberation from Egyptian rule and slavery. The palms used in the procession and the slogan used (Hosanna meaning save us, God) were those used in the 164 BC Maccabean victory parade to the Temple. That parade took place after the Maccabean army, led by Judas Maccabeus, had defeated the ruling Greek king and his army and liberated both the city of Jerusalem and the Temple which the Greeks had desecrated. In 1 Maccabees 13:51, we read: “On the twenty-third day of the second month, in the one hundred seventy-first year, the Jews entered it with praise and palm branches, and with harps and cymbals and stringed instruments, and with hymns and songs, because a great enemy had been crushed and removed from Israel.” It was natural, then, that the Romans saw the crowds of people carrying palm branches and giving a royal reception to a very popular, miracle-working rabbi, Jesus, as a potential threat to their power and a banner for revolution. Hence, the governor Pilate and his counselors were justified in their concern. They interpreted people’s slogan “Hosanna” as “save us” from Roman occupation. Besides, the Jewish rabbi had been teaching that the final redemption of the Jews would take place with the Messiah’s arrival. With 1½ to 2 million Jews in and around the city for the Passover, the situation was highly volatile, and Jesus’ ride on a donkey as prophesied by Zachariah seemed to have all the signs of producing great trouble and revolt. So the Romans informally made allies of some of the Temple priesthood

## Palm Sunday Reflections (continued)

(largely Sadducees) who were planning to arrest Jesus (the suspected center for the trouble), because these priests were the people most closely allied to Rome, and would lose their power and income in the case of a popular uprising. This collusion between Pilate and the High Priest Caiaphas and their supporters is exactly what we see in the Passion accounts describing the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus. Given the political, religious and social context, this is hardly surprising. Keeping that in the back of our minds helps us to make sense of certain parts of the action that will follow.

### Arrested and handcuffed on a Palm Sunday!

The light turns green, but the man doesn't notice that the light has changed. The woman behind him begins pounding on her steering wheel and yelling at the man to move! The man doesn't move! The woman is going ballistic, ranting and raving at the man, pounding on her steering wheel. When the light turns yellow, the woman begins blowing her car's horn and screaming curses at the man. Finally, the man looks up, sees the yellow light, and accelerates through the intersection just as the light turns red.

While she is still ranting, she hears a tap on her window and looks up into the barrel of a gun held by a very serious looking policeman. The policeman tells her to pull her car to the side, shut off the engine, come out and stand facing the car, while keeping both hands on the car roof. She is quickly cuffed, and hustled into the patrol car. The woman is too bewildered to ask any questions, and she is driven to the police station, where she is fingerprinted, photographed, searched, booked, and locked up in a cell. After a couple of hours a policeman approaches the cell, and opens the door. The policeman hands her the bag containing her things, and says, "I'm sorry for this mistake, but you see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, and cursing at the car in front of you. I noticed the **Choose Christ** license plate holder, and the "Follow Me to Sunday School" bumper sticker, and Palm Sunday palm leaves inside the back windshield. So naturally I assumed you had stolen the car because such a nice Christian, who courageously displays Christian symbols in her car, would never act as you did."

## Donkey with a Christian name?

An interesting as well as challenging old fable tells of the colt that carried Jesus on Palm Sunday. The colt thought that the reception was organized to honor him. "I am a unique donkey," this excited animal might have thought. When he asked his mother if he could walk down the same street alone the next day and be honored again, his mother said, "No, you are nothing without Him who was riding you".

Five days later, the colt saw a huge crowd of people in the street. It was Good Friday, and the soldiers were taking Jesus to Calvary. The colt could not resist the prospect of another royal reception. Ignoring the warning of his mother, he ran to the street, but he had to flee for his life as soldiers chased him and people stoned him. Thus, the colt finally learned the lesson that he was only a poor donkey without Jesus riding on him. As we enter Holy Week, today's readings challenge us to examine our lives to see whether we carry Jesus within us and bear witness to him through our living or we are Christians in name only.

## Holy Thursday Reflections

What do we celebrate on Holy Thursday?

On Holy Thursday we celebrate three anniversaries:

- 1) the anniversary of the first Holy Mass,
- 2) the anniversary of the institution of ministerial priesthood in order to perpetuate the Holy Mass, convey God's forgiveness to repentant sinners and preach the Good News of Salvation,
- 3) the anniversary of Jesus' promulgation of His new commandment of love: "Love one another as I have loved you."

Today we remember how Jesus transformed the Jewish Passover into the New Testament Passover. The Jewish Passover was, in fact, a joint celebration of two ancient thanksgiving celebrations. The descendants of Abel, who were shepherds, used to lead their sheep from the winter pastures to the summer pastures after the sacrificial offering of a lamb to God. They called this celebration the "Pass over". On the other hand, the descendants of Cain, who were farmers, held a harvest festival called the Massoth in which they offered unleavened bread to God as an act of thanksgiving. The Passover feast of the Israelites (Exodus 12:26-37) was a harmonious combination of these two ancient feasts of thanksgiving, commanded by the Lord God to be celebrated yearly by all Israelites to thank God for the miraculous liberation of their ancestors from Egypt and their exodus from slavery to the Promised Land.



## The Stole and the Towel

That is the title of a book, which sums up the message of the Italian bishop, Tony Bello, who died of cancer at the age of 58. On Maundy Thursday of 1993, while on his deathbed, he dictated a pastoral letter to the priests of his diocese. He called upon them to be bound by “the stole and the towel”.

The stole symbolizes union with Christ in the Eucharist, and the towel symbolizes union with humanity by service. The priest is called upon to be united with the Lord in the Eucharist and with the people as their servant. Today we celebrate the institution of both the Eucharist and the priesthood: the feast of “the stole and the towel” the feast of love and service.

### “What did you have for breakfast today?”

President Nelson Mandela of South Africa was one of those rare politicians who had the common touch even when the cameras were not rolling. When he spoke at banquets, he made a point of going into the kitchen and shaking hands with every dishwasher and busboy. When out in public he often worried his bodyguards because he was prone to stop to talk with a little child. Typically he would ask, “How old are you son?” Then his next question was “What did you have for breakfast today?” In that strange, wonderful company called the Kingdom of God, even the bosses wash feet.

Have you allowed Jesus to give you a servant’s heart and servant’s hands? Be servant leaders.

In that strange, wonderful company called the Kingdom of God, even the bosses wash feet.

Have you allowed Jesus to give you a servant’s heart and servant hands? Be servant leaders in a serving community. We need to serve humbly. Our celebration of the Eucharist requires that we wash one another’s feet, i.e., serve one another, and revere Christ’s presence in other persons. To wash the feet of others is to love them, even when they don’t deserve our love. It is to do good to them, even if they don’t return the favor. It is to consider others needs to be as important as our own. It is to forgive others from the heart, even if they don’t say, “I’m sorry.” It is to serve them, even when the task is unpleasant. It is to let others know that we care when they feel downtrodden or burdened. It is to be generous with what we have. It is to turn the other cheek instead of retaliating when we’re treated unfairly. It is to make adjustments in our plans in order to serve other’s needs, without expecting any reward.

## How to explain Bread and Wine becoming Eucharist?

A man came to a priest and wanted to make fun of his faith, so he asked, “How can bread and wine turn into the Body and Blood of Christ?” The Priest answered, “No problem. You yourself change food into your body and blood so why can’t Christ do the same?” But the man did not give up. He asked, “But how can the entire body of Christ be in such a small host?” “In the same way that the vast landscape before you can fit into your little eye.” But he still persisted, “How can the same Christ be present in all your churches at the same time?” The priest then took a mirror and let the man look into it. Then he let the mirror fall to the ground and break and said to the skeptic, “There is only one of you and yet you can find your face reflected in each piece of that broken mirror at the same time.”

### Good Friday Reflections

On Good Friday the Church our mother gives us her children a challenging reminder: “Look at this Holy Cross of Christ and learn to appreciate the great price he paid for our freedom from the slavery of sin by his suffering and death on the cross.” What is the message of the cross? The poet gets the message of the love of God from the cross. The business man views the cross as a ransom, a redemption price. The lawyers and judges prefer to remember the message of the cross as an expression of the justice of God for the wages of man’s sin. The converted Jews prefer to compare the cross to the sacrifices of the Old Testament. For the martyrs and saints the cross of Christ gives meaning to our pains and suffering.

### “But you wear a Cross!”

On her first night there, the head counselor said that three of the boys had asked to escort her to dinner. Alone! How would she handle it if all three decided to act out at once? She swallowed hard. She desperately needed this job so she fought back the panic and walked with her charges to the dining hall. They passed through the cafeteria line as tantrums and fights erupted around them. Fortunately none of her boys exhibited any kind of behavioral outburst. They made their way to a table in the center of the busy cafeteria and the boys took their seats. Margaret picked up her fork and was about to take the first bite when she noticed that all three boys were staring at her. “What’s the matter?” she asked. Aren’t you going to ask a blessing?” asked eight-year-old Peter. “I didn’t think I was supposed to,” she responded. “This is a state school, isn’t it?” “Yes,” said David, his blue eyes brimming, “but you wear a cross.” Her grandmother’s words surged to the surface of her memory. “Never forget what this cross means,” her grandmother said. “We thought that meant something,” said Roman, clearly disappointed. “It does. Thank you for reminding me,” Margaret said, as she bowed her head, no longer afraid.

Continued

## Reflections

**“But you wear a cross!”** (cont'd)

(CATHOLIC DIGEST, Feb. 92, p. 64) Margaret learned something about sainthood that day. Saints trust in God and God alone for their ultimate security. Saints submit their will to the will of God. Saints stand firm and witness to their faith.



## Pray

### Only Two Weeks to the Divine Mercy Sunday!



St. Maria Faustina Kowalska, a 20th-century Polish nun who received prophetic messages from Christ, received revelations about the infinite mercy of God – coined “Divine Mercy” – and her obligation

to spread the message to the world, as recorded in her diary, “Divine Mercy in my soul.”

When St. Pope John Paul II canonized Sr. Faustina (making her St. Faustina), he established Divine Mercy Sunday as a feast day for the entire Church. Divine Mercy Sunday is the first Sunday after Easter, considered the greatest day of grace of the year. The Church teaches that those who worthily receive the Eucharist with trust in God’s mercy on this day and are merciful to others will obtain COMPLETE forgiveness of all sin and punishment. It is likened to a second baptism! In addition, Jesus promises, **ALL** the divine floodgates through which grace flows are opened.” On this day, ask the Lord with trust for blessings, healings, reconciliations, etc.

Please join us in praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet in the church on Sunday, April 16th before the 12 Noon Mass. (11:45 a.m.)



### Silver & Gold Wedding Anniversary Celebration



You are cordially invited to celebrate your 25<sup>th</sup> or 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary with the Church of Metuchen and renew your marriage vows with Bishop James F. Checchio at a special Evening Prayer Service at the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi in Metuchen on Sunday, October 22, 2023 at 3:30 PM. Registration is required. Please register online at: <https://www.diometuchen.org/silver-and-gold-anniversary-celebration>. If you are unable to access, please contact the Family Life Office at 732-562-1543 or [amarshall@diometuchen.org](mailto:amarshall@diometuchen.org). Registration will close on October 6, 2023. Although no fee is required, in the past many Jubilarian couples have given a donation of gratitude to the Church in memory of this special occasion. Donations of Gratitude may be made online at <https://www.diometuchen.org/silver-and-gold-anniversary-celebration> or calling 732-562-1543.

## Connect

### EUCCHARISTIC REVIVAL COMMITTEE:

**As announced , the Diocese is asking  
Every parish to form a  
Eucharistic Revival Committee.  
Those who feel called to this ministry,  
please contact:  
Fr. Abraham or Msgr. Brennan.**

### Parish Updates

If you are now solely using a cell phone, have changed your phone number or address, please call the parish office, so we can update your records. We would also like to update our parish data base with e-mail addresses.

**Email Kelly at: [kcounts@stmatthias.net](mailto:kcounts@stmatthias.net)**

to have your email address included or to update an email address. Thank you!

If you are moving, please notify the Parish Office so we can keep our parishioner records current.

Thank you!



### From the 60th Anniversary Fundraising Committee

Dear Fellow Parishioners and Friends,

The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fundraising team and Father Abraham would like to express our sincere gratitude to all who have already donated to this special fundraiser to repair, renovate, and restore our church. Some of the proposed projects are completed and planning for the rest is ongoing.

A ‘progress thermometer’ is in the church vestibule. The funds raised to date will be noted on the progress thermometer each month. If you have not already donated, donation envelopes and a fundraiser information letter are in the church vestibule. With your support, we are confident that we will raise the funds needed to complete these projects. If you have any questions, please call Mary Jo Loboda at the parish office at 732-828-1400..

### Dear St. Matthias Roman Catholic Church,

On behalf of the clients we serve, our staff, volunteers, and Board of Trustees, thank you so much for your donation in the amount of \$1000 made on 2/23/2023 in support of our efforts for Empty Bowls 2023 Sponsorship.



2022 was a year of historic growth – not just in terms of the families we served (over 22,000 families) but also in terms of as an organization. The Franklin Food Bank was, not too long ago, a small but robust operation, serving a reliably static number of 1,800 families per year. Moving a reliably static number of 1.3 million pounds of food each year. Running a reliable but singular program of food assistance each year.

That’s different now. As the sun rose on 2023 the food bank has served more families in one year than we have in the past five years combined – including the Covid-19 pandemic. This blossoming has all been made possible by the incredible support of our neighbors like you.

We are here for the residents of Franklin Township and beyond. The need is there and we know how we are going to meet it in this next year. Thank you for believing in us, for supporting our efforts and for giving us the chance to help so many. We promise to work to make you proud and will keep you updated on our successes and challenges.

To an exciting year ahead – and to you for being with us through it all – thank you!

With Gratitude, Allie O’Brien Development Director





**HELP SPREAD THE WORD! SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024**

Saint Matthias School registration is open. We are enrolling students in PreK 3, PreK 4, Kindergarten and grades 1-8. Please help us spread the word about our school filled with faith, caring, and excellence to your relatives, friends, and neighbors. ALL are welcome! Thank you!

**Give (and Receive!)**

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023				Last Year's Total
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 36 - Mar 5, 2023	\$12,602.00	\$20,070.75	<b>\$32,672.75</b>	\$36,094.75
Week 37 - Mar. 12, 2023	\$10,523.00	\$23,236.25	<b>\$33,759.25</b>	\$30,521.25
Week 38 - Mar. 19, 2023	\$8,700.00	\$12,795.82	<b>\$21,495.82</b>	\$24,352.25
Week 39 - Mar. 26, 2023	\$23,206.20	\$9,032.25	<b>\$32,238.45</b>	\$20,592.25
			<b>Month-to-date Total</b>	<b>Mar Total Last Yr</b>
			<b>\$120,166.27</b>	\$111,560.50
			<b>Current Year-to-date Total</b>	<b>Year-to-date as of Mar</b>
			<b>\$1,060,708.79</b>	\$1,008,537.07



**2023 Bishop's Annual Appeal  
Renewed and Sent on Mission by the Eucharist**

Thank you to those who have already responded to the Bishop's Annual Appeal. If you have yet to make your pledge to this year's Bishop's Annual Appeal, you can still do so. Please prayerfully consider a gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal to help our parish reach its goal. If we can exceed our goal, 50% of the amount collected over goal will be returned to us in the form of a parish rebate. Every gift, no matter the size, is important and greatly appreciated. Thank you. There are Envelopes and cards in the pews that you can use. You can find the link to the Bishop's Annual Appeal at <https://diometuchen.org/BAA>

**Stewardship Reflection Apr. 2, 2023  
Palm Sunday**

**“As they were marching out, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross.” (Matthew 27:32)**

The Lord calls us to love God and to love our neighbor. Every day we are presented with opportunities to love our neighbor and help him “carry his cross.” These opportunities aren't usually big events, they are usually ordinary occurrences like helping someone carry their groceries or holding the door open for them. The key is putting the other person's needs before our own and not expecting anything in return.

**Reflexiónese Abril 2 de abril de 2023 –  
Domingo de Ramos**

**“Mientras marchaban, se toparon con un hombre de Cirene, llamado Simón; a este hombre lo obligaron a llevar su cruz” (MATEO 27:32)**

El Señor nos llama a amar a Dios y a nuestro prójimo. Todos los días se nos presentan oportunidades para amar a nuestro prójimo y ayudarlo a & cargar su cruz. Estas oportunidades no suelen ser grandes eventos, suelen ser acontecimientos comunes como ayudar a alguien a cargar sus alimentos o mantener la puerta abierta para ellos. La clave es poner las necesidades de la otra persona antes que las nuestras y no esperar nada a cambio.

# Serve



The HSA is organizing its first Blood Drive! We have been asked to gather interest before booking a date and time, so please let us know if you would be interested in donating.

SMS families receive 1 hour toward their 4-hour commitment.

To register visit: [www.stmatthias.net/blooddrive2023](http://www.stmatthias.net/blooddrive2023)

## Connect with Our Local Community



### Senior Day at St. Francis Center for Renewal Saturday, May 13th, 10AM-3PM

Celebrating the Gift of Years, preceded by an opening prayer service and followed by lunch, discussion and sharing with other seniors, and a relaxing walk around our grounds. Share time with our Sisters as we pray together, share together and honor and celebrate our "gift of years."

All-Day Attendance (including lunch) — \$40 per person  
Bring a Friend (including lunch) — \$75 per pair  
Online Via Zoom (Sister Marguerite's talk only) — \$20 per person.  
395 Bridle Path Road, Bethlehem PA 18017



### Mt. St. Mary House of Prayer

Registration for all offerings is required 10 days in advance to avoid the program being cancelled. You can register and pay for any program at [www.msmhope.org](http://www.msmhope.org).

Friday, April 14, 10-11:30 a.m. at the House of Prayer and on Zoom. Also on May 12, June 9

### SPIRITUAL AWAKENINGS VIDEO CLUB

There are many great spiritual masters of our time. Richard Rohr, OFM and others have works that have touched millions of God-seekers.

2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month (\$20-\$30 / session as you are able)

### In God's Image

In God's Image, the Catholic Faith Sharing Group for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people at Church of the Sacred Heart, South Plainfield, meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7:00PM. Our next meeting is April 12 and will be both in person and online. Please email for more information. The group is open to LGBTQ adults, 18 and over, and their families. All are welcome for faith sharing, prayer, conversation and support. For more information, contact Fr. John at 908 756 0633, ext 125 or the group may be reached via email at [sacredheartigi@gmail.com](mailto:sacredheartigi@gmail.com)



### Part-Time General Maintenance Person

St. Matthias is looking for a part-time general maintenance person.

This employee will be responsible for maintaining the safety and cleanliness of the church/school.

Please contact Mary Pat Burke-Grospin at: [mpburke-grospin@stmatthias.net](mailto:mpburke-grospin@stmatthias.net) or (732) 828-1400 ext.121.

## Parish Leadership

### Parish Pastoral Council:

#### Co-Chairs:

Rose Peng, [rosepeng@optonline.net](mailto:rosepeng@optonline.net)  
John Taylor, [jptaylor1068@yahoo.com](mailto:jptaylor1068@yahoo.com)

### Co-Secretaries:

Frank Rees  
Marilyn Wegg  
Stephan Busono  
Anne Marie Francis  
Bill Isele  
Maria Tapia-Burch

Msgr. Seamus Brennen, Ex-Officio  
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

### Trustees:

Pearl Scott  
Marge Richards

### Parish Finance Council:

Kester Hector, Chair  
Finance Council  
[@stmatthias.net](mailto:@stmatthias.net)  
Carmen Driz-Melilli  
Barry Dusault  
Gwen Orłowski

Audrey Francis  
Joe Porter  
Joan Pritchard  
Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Ex-Officio  
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

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

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

Apply online prior to an event for on-the-spot interviews!

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Tuesday, 10/25

**November 2022**

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Tuesday, 11/08

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