



**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**  
 Juan Diaz Flores, *Custodian*  
 Nathalie Godet, *Website Coordinator*, **ngodet**  
 Leslie Guillen, *Bulletin Editor*, **lguillen**  
 Amy Hanna, *Accountant/Databases*, **ahanna**  
 Mike Lanyi, *Sacristan*  
 Sue Lenczewski, *Youth Coordinator*, **SMYLE**  
 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, *Par. Support Secretary*, **tstumper**

**St. Matthias School (add @stmatthiasnj.org)**  
 Mary Lynch, Principal, **mlynch**  
 Joseph Gidaro, Vice Principal, **jgidaro**

# THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS

## SUNDAY, DEC 11, 2022-

### 3rd Sunday of Advent- Gaudete Sunday

### SMYLE Youth Group Project for Christmas

Here is the list of items needed for the Unity Square collection which will be held this weekend at all Masses.

- Socks
- Gloves
- Hats
- Scarves
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Dunkin Donut gift cards (\$5 please)
- Chapstick



This weekend,  
 December 10th and 11th  
 There is a Second collection  
 for Retirement Fund for  
 Religious. See pg. 8

**Christmas Tree Directory  
 Now Available! See page 8**



This is the last weekend to  
 bring gifts to donate for  
 the Giving Tree recipients.  
 See pg. 10 for details

## Christmas Season Schedule

**Sacrament of Reconciliation**  
 Tuesdays & Fridays after the  
 8:00AM Mass  
 Saturday Dec 17th 3:00PM to  
 4:30PM before 5:00PM Mass  
 Parish Penance Service: Sunday,  
 Dec. 18 at 6:30PM  
**Saturday, Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**Christmas Eve**  
 4:00PM Church  
 4:00PM Cafeteria  
 6:30PM  
 12 Midnight Mass  
**Sunday, Dec. 25, 2022 (Christmas)**  
 10:00AM  
 12:00PM

**Saturday, Dec. 31, 2022**  
**New Year's Eve**  
**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**  
 5:00PM Vigil Mass  
**Sunday, January 1, 2023**  
**New Year's Day**  
**Solemnity of Mary Mother of God**  
 10:00AM Mass  
 12:00PM Mass  
**Sunday, January 8, 2023**  
**The Epiphany of the Lord**  
 Saturday 5:00PM Mass  
 Sunday 8:00AM, 10:00AM &  
 12:00PM Masses,  
 1:15PM Franklin High School  
 Madrigals (Church)



Please select **St. Matthias Church/School** as your charity on Amazon Smile. You only need to do this once. Then always shop at [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com), and we will automatically receive a portion of the purchase total. Thank you!

## 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, Dec. 11, 2022 **3rd Sunday of Advent**  
**SMYLE Collection for Unity Square at all Masses**  
**Retirement Fund for Religious Collection**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass Sign Language Interpreter	Church
10:00AM	1st Reconciliation #3 @ 10:00AM	Mass
12:00PM	Mass	Church
4:00PM	SMYLE Mtg. Pack bags from collection to go to Unity Square	

**Monday, Dec 12, 2022 Memorial, Our Lady of Guadalupe**

8:00AM	Mass/Miraculous Medal Novena	Church
8:30AM	SMS—St. Nick Sale	John XXIII Rm
6:30PM	SMS: Mom/Daughter Session, Middle School Girls	John XXIII Rm

**Tuesday Dec 13, 2022 Memorial, St. Lucy, Martyr**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:45AM	Reconciliation	Church
8:30AM	SMS—St. Nick Sale	John XXIII Rm
6:30PM	SMS Christmas Band Concert	Church
7:00PM	Racial Justice Initiative Mtg.	Zoom
7:15PM	Handbell rehearsal	Church

**Wednesday, Dec 14, 2022 Memorial—St. John of the Cross, Founder & Doctor of the Church**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:30AM	SMS—St. Nick Sale	John XXIII Rm
9:30AM	Holy Spirit Prayer Grp.	de Porres Rm
2:30PM	Alzheimer's Group Mtg.	de Porres Rm
7:00PM	SMDP Mtg.	Zoom
7:30PM	Folk Grp. Rehearsal	Church

**Thursday, Dec 15, 2022 St. Maria di Rosa, Foundress, Handmaids of Charity**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
3:30PM	Children's Choir Gr. 3 & 4	Church
4:00PM	Children's choir Gr. 5-8	Church
7:00PM	Prayer Shawl Ministry	Neumann Rm
7:30PM	Adult Choir rehearsal	Church

**Friday, Dec 16, 2022 St. Adelaide of Italy, Holy Roman Empress**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:45AM	Reconciliation	Church
TBD	Pre-K Nativity Play	Church
6:00PM	SMDP Mass	Cafeteria
7:00PM	SMDP Dinner Event	Cafeteria

**Saturday, Dec 17, 2022 St. Joseph Manyaneti Vives, Priest & Founder**

3:00PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Mass	Church

**Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022 4th Sunday of Advent**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
12:00PM	Mass	Church
6:30PM	Parish Penance Service	Church

Dear Friends,

The Christmas and New Year season is an exciting time but it can also be a time of frenzy. Is it going to be a wonderful time filled with fun, peace, joy, laughter, optimism, fellowship, family, friends, good food, giving, winter activities, cozy evenings, and fond memories? Or is it going to be a miserable time of stress, anxiety, sadness, frustration, hurry, loneliness, disappointment, overworking, overeating, overdrinking, and overspending? The choice is ours. Of course, we will all choose the first option. But what do we need to do for achieving that wonderful time? There are so many ideas but let me focus on just three:

1) Get enough sleep. It may sound too obvious, and even simplistic, but the fact is that too many of us get too little sleep. God gave us the night to rest and sleep. Science tells us that when we get good sleep, the body does its best repair work. We feel fully refreshed. Research has shown that those who sleep less than six hours have their cortisol levels rise. That means a higher stress level for the body, throwing our physical, psychological, and emotional health off balance. Keep the balance with enough sleep.

2) Live in the present moment. People generally live in the past (with guilt, regret, resentment etc) or in the future (planning, worrying, imagining, etc). In the process what they are doing is destroying the joy of living in the present moment. This is not any new age philosophy but straight from the gospels. For lack of space, let me give just two examples from what Jesus taught: One: "Give us this day our daily bread." Why did Jesus include that in that most important and only prayer he taught us? Once I have the food for this day (not only the physical food but also other human needs like shelter, clothing, friendship, acceptance etc), I can be happy for today, even though there are other problems and challenges that I may have to face tomorrow. Two: Every one of the beatitudes are given in the present tense (Blessed are the poor, Blessed are those who mourn, etc). That means the blessedness God is offering is not a future promise but a present reality. So focus on the present moment.

3) Take inspiration from Bible: Selections that the Church proposes for our reflection each Sunday will have some insights that will help us. For example, in today's 2nd Reading, St. James has very practical advice for us: "Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You too must be patient." (James 5:7-8). Precious advice we all need to practice.

4) Ponder the Christmas mystery with carols: What is the mystery? God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son to us in the most vulnerable human form possible – a helpless baby. Ponder this mystery. A very practical and easy way to do this is by listening to the words of your favorite Christmas songs – at home, in the car, etc.

Try doing these four ideas, and you will be amazed at how easily you get into the spirit of the season. You will be happily surprised that you are not only enjoying every moment of this season but also that you are spreading the same feeling to others.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal



## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Jdt 13:18bcde, 19; Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

**Tuesday:** Zep 3:1-2, 9-13; Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23; Mt 21:28-32

**Wednesday:** Is 45:6c-8, 18, 21c-25; Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14; Lk 7:18B-23

**Thursday:** Is 54:1-10; Ps 30:2 and 4, 5-6, 11-12a and 13b; Lk 7:24-30

**Friday:** Is 56:1-3a, 6-8; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 7-8; Jn 5:33-36

**Saturday:** Gn 49:2, 8-10; Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17; Mt 1:1-17

**Sunday:** Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24

## Mass Intentions for the Week

**Saturday, Dec 10** 5:00PM 1st Year Anniversary of Marie DeFeo, By Daughter, Lisa & Family

**Sunday, Dec 11** 8:00AM Eleanor (Honey) Fidecaro, by Linda & Skip Kudlow

10:00AM Lisa Wehner, by The Vladyka Family

12:00PM James Dolan, by Helen Palby

(5:30PM) Intention of Parishioners

**Monday, Dec 12** 8:00AM Ester Liban, by Cecilia Lee

**Tuesday, Dec 13** 8:00AM Mary Lou Fylstra, by Mr. & Mrs. John Chzanowski

**Wednesday, Dec 14** 8:00AM Ramon Barrameda, by The Tibay Family

**Thursday, Dec 15** 8:00AM Rocco Catanese, by Mr. & Mrs. Jared Santisi

**Friday, Dec 16** 8:00AM Stanley Phillips, by The Fehl Family

**Saturday, Dec 17** 5:00PM Bill Murphy, by The Family

**Sunday, Dec 18** 8:00AM Eleanor (Honey) Fidecaro, by Linda & Skip Hudlow

10:00AM Petey Kane, by Mary Sheil

12:00PM Rose Firetto, by Mike & Ali Buckelew

(5:30PM) Intention of Parishioners

## Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office or **email Kelly Counts** at [kcoun@stmatthias.net](mailto:kcoun@stmatthias.net) to add the name to this list. Names will be listed in the bulletin for **6 weeks**. Please let us know if this time period needs to be extended. We want to know how you are doing and want to offer you the support of our prayers. *New people on our prayer list are noted in blue.*

Erika, Jay & Beth Adams  
 Carolyn Banghart  
 Tammy Baskaran  
 Angela Berlund  
 Arthur & Regina Berlowitz  
 Anthony Brandi  
 Bianca Canlas  
 Tara Capatosto  
 Ellen Catalina  
 Kyle Davidson  
 Lisa DeFeo  
 Michael DiMaggio  
 William Dolphin  
 Vivian Dong  
 Claudia Gemgnani  
 Helen Geraghty  
 Emma Gergely  
 Mary Gidaro

Carol Gryskiewicz  
 Sloopy & John Hoffman  
 Marilyn Horvath  
 Baby Isla-Rose Huffman  
 Robert Kashinsky  
 Al Kepenis  
 Kathleen Lagenbacher  
 The Litrakis Family  
 Jude Raymond Maceren  
 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  
 Paul & Doris Paetow  
 Fiorello Parente  
 Robert Pellegrino  
 Jim Pettit  
 Christina Pietrowiak  
 Nathan Reavey  
**Caitlin Regan**  
 Doris Regan  
 Gabriel Rivera  
 Jaxon Rivera  
 Arina Robinson  
 Arthur Robinson  
 Maria Schwenzer

Tippur Seshagiri  
 Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF  
 Jeff Sullivan  
 Jay Swick  
 Tom Szabo  
 Nancy Whelan  
 Jay Worthington

*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*

Violet Engravalle, John Percoco, Beatrice Vassallo English

## Reflect



### Smile with Your Family



Patient: "Doctor, you have to help me, I think I can see into the future."

Doctor: "When did it start?" Patient: "Next Friday." 😊

I told my physical therapist I broke my arm in two places. He told me to stop going to those places. 😊

One of the shortest wills ever written: "Being of sound mind, I spent all the money." 😊

After a particularly strong sermon on tithing, Pastor Johnson was surprised to see Henry Lund, an old bachelor farmer, waiting for him after worship. "Pastor," said Henry, "I know I've not given as much to God as I should have, but I've decided to tithe this year." "God be praised" said Pastor Johnson. "May I ask what changed your heart, Henry?" "Well, your sermon got me to thinking that with the price of everything rising so much, I'd better commit to 10% before God raises the cost to 15%." 😊

A man who thought he was John the Baptist was disturbing the neighborhood, so for public safety, he was committed to a mental facility. He was put in a room with another crazy one. The new inmate immediately began his routine, "I am John the Baptist! Jesus Christ sent me! Jesus Christ sent me!" The other guy looked at him and declared, "No, I did not!" 😊

Visiting his parents' retirement village in Florida, my middle-aged friend, Tim, went for a swim in the community pool while his elderly father took a walk. Tim struck up a conversation with the only other person in the pool, a five-year-old boy. After a while, Tim's father returned from his walk and called out, "I'm ready to leave." Tim then turned to his new friend and announced that he had to leave because his father was calling. Astonished, the wide-eyed little boy cried, "You're a kid?" 😊



### Parenting Tune-Up

The purpose of Advent is not to shop but to learn to wait. Teaching your child to delay gratification is an important life skill. Perhaps this W.A.I.T. acronym could help: W - Waiting gives us time to make a good decision or to buy the right thing. A - Anticipation can enhance appreciation. I - Instant gratification is often fleeting. T - Take stock of your blessings.

### Marriage Tune-Up



"Be patient, brothers and sisters...Do not complain about one another." (James 5: 7-9). Preparation for Christmas can strain even the best relationships. Be gentle and patient with each other as you do the many tasks to prepare for Christmas.

## ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING AT HOME, THE 3<sup>RD</sup> CANDLE

(Assign readings among family members)



**Reader #1:** Today is the third Sunday of Advent. Advent is a time of waiting. We wait for God to send divine love and light into our dark world.

**Reader #2:** How does this happen?

**Reader #1:** God's light comes through Jesus, who became a human being just like you and me, so that he could show us the way back to God's divine love and light.

**ALL:** "Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us. Let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

**Reader #3:** A reading from the prophet Zephaniah: "Jerusalem, the time is coming, when it will be said to you: 'Don't be discouraged or grow weak from fear! The LORD your God wins victory after victory and is always with you. He celebrates and sings because of you, and he will refresh your life with his love.'" (Zephaniah 3:16-17)

**Reader #1:** We continue to wait for the coming of Jesus. Last Sunday, we began in the dark, and then we lit two candles. Today, on the third Sunday of Advent, we light three candles.

**First, second and third candles are lit. While this is being done, the following is read:**

**Reader #2:** Every week in Advent, we light another candle. Each candle that we light reminds us that the Light of the World will soon come to us in the human form of the baby Jesus, the Messiah who will show us the way back to God.

**ALL:** *The Messiah is on the way to us. As we prepare for his coming, may we repent of our sins. May we remember our baptisms with water. May we be ready to be baptized with God's Holy Spirit and fire. May we be ready to help our Lord proclaim the good news of God's love to all people, so that the world will be filled with joy. Amen.*



## Gifts “for” Christmas

*“What did you go out to the desert to see . . . ? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.”*

*Matthew 11: 2-11*

What do you want for Christmas this year? Ask children that question and the accent is on “want,” with the answer usually something like a new bike, the latest video game, or jeans in a cool color. But as we get older, the question changes. It’s not about what we “want,” but what we “want **for**”: We want **for** the healing of a broken relationship. We want **for** someone to again say “I love you.” We want **for** the courage to correct something that is wrong, to change a dynamic that is hurting those we care about, to heal the brokenness we or someone we love is experiencing.

We want **for** the patience of the prodigal son’s father, the faith of the farmer who plants seed on less-than-promising ground, the hope of the merchant in search of the pearl of great price.

We want **for** the trust and faith of Mary that enables her to say “yes” to God’s call to her to bring his Christ to birth? We want **for** the compassion of Joseph who continues to love Mary and shields her from the fury of the Law when her pregnancy is discovered.

Realizing our greatest Christmas wish begins at the Jordan with John’s call to re-create our lives in the grace of the Messiah who comes. What we want **for** is not found under the tree on Christmas morning but in a manger in the cold, quiet starlit night.

**Advent is the season for opening our hearts to realize what we really “want for” Christmas. Realizing those “gifts” begins in the wilderness of our own hearts to see the love we take for granted, the love we fail to see, the love that remains despite ourselves. John’s call to transform our lives in the justice and mercy of God certainly resonates in our broken hearts and despairing spirits — but are we willing to take on the hard work of converting and re-creating our hearts?**

**May the Spirit of Christmas open our eyes and hearts to see in the light of the Child of Bethlehem what we want our lives to be for and about and in God’s grace.**



## A Letter of Gratitude

*“Go and tell John what you hear and see . . . “Matthew 11: 2-11*

After suffering a devastating asthma attack, Laura Levis died in a Boston hospital. She was 34. Her husband, writer Peter DeMarco, composed a beautiful letter of thanks to the intensive care unit staff of CHA Cambridge Hospital who cared for her. Peter’s letter read in part: *As I begin to tell my friends and family about the seven days you treated my wife, Laura, in what turned out to be the last days of her young life, they stop me at about the 15th name that I recall. The list includes the doctors, nurses, respiratory specialists, social workers, even cleaning staff members who cared for her. “How do you remember any of their names?” they ask. How could I not, I respond.*

*Every single one of you treated Laura with such professionalism, and kindness, and dignity as she lay unconscious. When she needed shots, you apologized that it was going to hurt a little, whether or not she could hear. When you listened to her heart and lungs through your stethoscopes, and her gown began to slip, you pulled it up to respectfully cover her. You spread a blanket, not only when her body temperature needed regulating, but also when the room was just a little cold, and you thought she’d sleep more comfortably that way . . . Then, there was how you treated me. How would I have found the strength to have made it through that week without you . . . ? How many times did you check in on me to see whether I needed anything, from food to drink, fresh clothes to a hot shower, or to see whether I needed a better explanation of a medical procedure, or just someone to talk to? How many times did you hug me and console me when I fell to pieces, or ask about Laura’s life and the person she was, taking the time to look at her photos or read the things I’d written about her? How many times did you deliver bad news with compassionate words, and sadness in your eyes?*

And then, Peter DeMarco wrote, there was a final — and most memorable — gift of all: *On the final day, as we waited for Laura’s organ donor surgery, all I wanted was to be alone with her. But family and friends kept coming to say their goodbyes, and the clock ticked away. About 4 p.m., finally, everyone had gone, and I was emotionally and physically exhausted, in need of a nap. So I asked her nurses, Donna and Jen, if they could help me set up the recliner, which was so uncomfortable, but all I had, next to Laura again. They had a better idea. They asked me to leave the room for a moment, and when I returned, they had shifted Laura to the right side of her bed, leaving just enough room for me to crawl in with her one last time. I asked if they could give us one hour without a single interruption, and they nodded, closing the curtains and the doors, and shutting off the lights . . . I will remember that last hour together for the rest of my life. It was a gift beyond gifts, and I have Donna and Jen to thank for it. Really, I have all of you to thank for it.*

**The imprisoned John has sent friends to ask Jesus if he is the Messiah. Jesus tells them: Go tell John what you see and hear:**

*(Cont’d on next page)*

## A Letter of Gratitude (cont'd)

**the broken people who have been made whole; the crosses that have become the means to new hope and resurrection; the stories of those who refuse to yield to darkness and find forgiveness and peace in the light of God. Tell John — and everyone you encounter — that God is in our midst in every act of love, in every healing of a heart or spirit broken, on every bridge built over the chasm of hatred and violence. In the spirit of Peter DeMarco's touching letter of gratitude to the medical team who cared for his wife and family, tell everyone the true story of Christmas peace in our midst.**



### Unfinished Play

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-184) was an American novelist and short story writer. When he died in 1864 he had on his desk the outline of a play he never got a chance to finish. The play centered around a person who never appeared on stage. Everyone talked about him. Everyone dreamed about him. Everyone waited for his arrival. But he never came. All kinds of minor characters described him. They told everybody what he would do. But the main character never appeared. —The Old Testament is something like Nathaniel Hawthorne's play. It too ended without the main character's putting in an appearance. Everyone talked about the Messiah, everyone awaited his arrival. But he never came in the Old Testament period. In today's reading, we hear Isaiah describing what the Messiah would do by bringing salvation to all mankind.

**Today's Gospel tells us that when the real Messiah came, even the last prophet and the Messiah's herald, John the Baptist, could not believe that he was the expected Messiah.**

**The Jews in general expected a political Messiah who would reestablish the Davidic kingdom after overthrowing the Roman government. Hence, most of them were scandalized by Jesus' peaceful preaching and shameful death. The disciples of John the Baptist continued to insist that John was indeed the Messiah, and they awaited his return, causing problems to early Christians. Hence, all four Evangelists highlighted John's important role as the Messiah's herald but emphasized that John's was a secondary and subordinate role in salvation history. Matthew, in the second part of today's Gospel, presents Jesus, the true Messiah, as paying the highest compliments to John the Baptist as his herald and the last of the prophets, and to the courage with which John proclaimed his prophetic convictions.**

## "Joy to the World!"

Consider the story of one young man. He was often sick as a baby. He was always small, puny some would say. As a youth he was always frail and delicate. He was not able to play sports with the other boys his age. Eventually he entered the ministry. But his health was so fragile, he was unable to serve his growing congregation. Amazingly, he did not dwell on his troubles. In fact, his spirit soared. His only real complaint was the poor quality of the hymns of his day. He felt they did not convey hope and joy. Someone challenged him to write better ones. He did. He wrote over 600 hymns, most of them hymns of praise. When his health collapsed completely in 1748, he left one of the most remarkable collections of hymns the world has ever known. His name was Isaac Watts. In a few weeks we will be singing one of his most famous hymns, "Joy to the World!" Isaac Watts discovered joy in his life because he knew that God would never desert him. He was able to live his life with all sorts of health problems, feeling close to God and Jesus. He had joy deep in his heart.

### Encouraging others with facial paralysis!

*The Reader's Digest* once reported the story of an attractive and successful business woman who noticed a small lump behind her ear as she was brushing her hair one morning. As the days went on, she noticed that the lump was getting larger. So she decided to see her doctor. Her worst fears were confirmed. The doctor told her that the lump was a large tumor that would require immediate surgery. When she awoke following the surgery, she found her entire head wrapped like that of a mummy. She could see herself in a mirror only through two tiny holes cut into the wrapping. When the bandages were removed after a week she was shocked to see that her once attractive features had become disfigured by a facial paralysis caused perhaps by damage to facial nerves during the removal of the tumor. Standing before the mirror, she told herself that she had to make a choice whether to laugh or to cry. She decided to laugh. Although the various therapies tried were unsuccessful in alleviating the facial paralysis, the decision to laugh in the face of adversity allowed this woman to carry on with her life with joy, giving encouragement to those with similar paralysis.

**Today's Gospel tells us how Jesus encouraged the imprisoned John the Baptist by dispelling his doubts about the role of the Messiah and making him strong enough to face martyrdom.**



## From the Pastoral Staff

### Some musings about preparing ... waiting... and rejoicing again

In the Opening Collect for the Third Sunday of Advent - (Gaudete Sunday-Rejoice) we pray:

*“O God, who see how your people faithfully **await** the feast of the Lord’s Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the **joys** of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and **glad rejoicing.**”*

Preparing and waiting seem to be the most frequently expressed words I hear and often say during Advent. We wait in long lines or we wait for the online shopping confirmation and “rejoice” upon delivery! We prepare for tests and then we wait for hopeful results.

When John the Baptist was imprisoned, people were very troubled – anxious for the unexpected to happen. People were waiting a long time for change and a reason to hope. The political world was in upheaval. Rome ruled the known world and the Jewish nation didn’t like it. Numerous revolts had failed causing much bloodshed. The moral world was in collapse, immorality, murder, robbery and other sinful activities were the epidemic of the days. Everything that people would look to for stability was falling apart. People were blaming each other for everything. Sound familiar?

During these days of lessening daylight, during these uncertain times of increasing darkness in our world, I suggest we ask ourselves how well we are preparing and waiting? Who or What is the focus of everything we think is so important? Are you waiting for the end of Advent and maybe even Christmas to be over too? For Christ to become real for you this season, you have to help make it happen. Advent is the time to prepare for passing on the love of God which is visible in the Lord’s Nativity.

The prophet Isaiah says: *“the eyes of the blind will be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared... the tongue of the mute will sing.”* Implied here are several gift ideas that can become the reason for someone to rejoice when they experience through you the Christ who is the truest source of joy. When Jesus came, he was not at all what the people expected. Even a God whose love is unshakable and who always forgives was not expected to become one of us. SURPRISE! Who would you like to surprise?

Do you remember learning the vowels? “A-E-I-O-U and sometimes Y”? I think during these challenging times we need a reminder about how we can use six letters as a mnemonic to consider what gifts you can give this Christmas. Advent is a time of hoping and preparing for a change of heart so we can experience the joy of gifting others with our

presence - by being the blessing! To reconsider our familiar situations and people through another approach to the holidays b offering gifts of:

(A)ccptance – of ourselves and others as favored by God  
(E)ncouragement– of those who are brokenhearted  
(I)nvitation– to those who are outcast or shunned.  
(O)ppportunity – to start over through forgiveness  
(U)nderstanding – to those who have been held captive by our misjudgments.  
And of course: (Y)Why not? **God is always doing this for You!**

Think what a wonderful surprise and source of joy and blessing your presence can be for someone! It’s even okay if the recipient re-gifts to someone! You’ve set the example of providing “Gaudete” Joy – a reason to rejoice again – a surprise that lasts more than a moment! **To whom can you reveal the unimaginable depth of God’s love made real through you?** Their expression of gratitude will make all your preparing and waiting worthwhile.

Just think ... **You might be the answer to someone’s prayer and their reason to again Rejoice!**

Advent Blessings!  
Deacon John



## Pray

### The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

Just a reminder that the RCIA is intended for: + Unbaptized adults, + Adults who have been baptized into a non-Catholic



denomination + Adults who have been baptized Catholic but never received first Eucharist or Confirmation **NOW IS THE TIME TO FIND OUT MORE!** Contact our RCIA Co-Coordinators Anne Marie Francis: [alfrancis.30@gmail.com](mailto:alfrancis.30@gmail.com) or Mary Frances Reavey: [mfreavey@gmail.com](mailto:mfreavey@gmail.com) to find out more information or to set up an appointment.

DIocese of Metuchen Filipino Apostolate

# Simbang Gabi 2022

THE EUCHARIST: A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE 7TH NIGHT OF SIMBANG GABI ON

**December 21, 2022 · Wednesday · 7PM**

**St. Matthias Church**

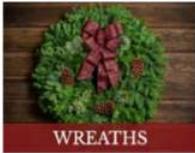
168 JOHN F. KENNEDY BOULEVARD, SOMERSET, NJ 08873



### Oplatek Christmas Wafers

The Christmas tradition, of breaking the Oplatek wafer before the Christmas Eve dinner and sharing it with those around the table, began in Poland in the 10th century. We currently have Oplatek wafers available in the Parish Office during regular hours for parishioners to pick up if they would like to celebrate this tradition.

### St. Matthias Christmas Adornments



**WE EARN 15%**

Supporting our fundraiser is easy...  
Simply decorate your home or send an elegant evergreen gift!



#### SUPPORT OUR CAUSE

- 1 Visit [www.lynchcreekfundraising.com/c/299666](http://www.lynchcreekfundraising.com/c/299666)
- 2 Click on a product category or Shop Online
- 3 Choose a Team Member to support (if applicable)
- 4 Click Shop Now to give back 15% of your purchase!



### “Spread the Light”

The Christmas Tree Directory is now available on our Website: [stmatthias.net/treedirectory](http://stmatthias.net/treedirectory)



**St. Matthias School Fund Raiser Deadline for ordering TODAY!**

ENTIRE PRODUCT AVAILABILITY ONLINE

PREFER TO ORDER BY PHONE? CALL 1-888-426-0781 AND REFERENCE CAMPAIGN # 299666

### Retirement Fund for Religious

As announced, we have a second collection today for retired Religious women and men – the Sisters and Brothers who may have taught you much of what you know. Our parish contributions will help their religious communities take care of their elderly Sisters and Brothers.

Speaking of generosity, please think ahead to your Christmas contribution to our parish. We do face higher costs and bills as you do. We simply ask for everyone to be as generous to God and our Church as they reasonably can be each Sunday, but especially as we thank God for the Gift of the birth of our Savior.

### A Note of Thanks

#### To our Fellow Parishioners,



We thank you so much for your recent support in our Baby Bottle Boomerang campaign, and the ticket sales for the NJRTL raffle. **Our raffle proceeds were \$900 from our parish. The Baby Bottles earned \$6,636.** The total proceeds are split evenly among The Pregnancy Aid & Information Center, Great Expectations, NJ, Life Choices. Metuchen and First Choice Women's Resource Center, New Brunswick to support moms in need.

WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL!

*Fran Johnson*

*NJ Right to Life Rep. at St. Matthias*

#### The results of the NJRTL Raffle are as follows:

1st prize - 2022 Volvo - winner - Olenik from Mendham, NJ

Ticket 18811

2nd prize - \$1000. Shoprite Gift Card - winner - Ann Roche, Lake Como, NJ Ticket 26639

3rd prize - \$750. Shoprite gift card - Winner - Paul from Manville, NJ Ticket 082161

4th Prize - \$500. - Winner - Dolores Klenso - Toms River, NJ Ticket 140251

## 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 19 - Nov. 6, 2022	\$8,811.00	\$19,314.75	<b>\$28,125.75</b>	\$32,634.75
Week 20 - Nov. 13,	\$8,308.25	\$20,781.25	<b>\$29,089.50</b>	\$28,911.25
Week 21 - Nov. 20,	\$8,212.00	\$13,052.25	<b>\$21,264.25</b>	\$24,771.25
Week 22 - Nov. 27,	\$10,522.00	\$8,690.25	<b>\$19,212.25</b>	\$15,044.25
			<b>Month-to-date Total</b>	<b>Nov Total Last Yr</b>
			<b>\$97,691.75</b>	\$101,361.50
			<b>Current Year-to-date Total</b>	<b>Year-to-date as of Nov 30,</b>
			<b>\$546,405.67</b>	\$554,643.91

### Stewardship Reflection Dec 11, 2022 3rd Sunday of Advent

**“You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.” JAMES 5:8**

Patience is another one of those things many of us struggle with. We want things to go according to our plan and our schedule; we like things to be convenient. Any change brings anxiety and fear. Through daily prayer God reveals to us what He wants us to do with the gifts He has given us. We are able to better align ourselves with God’s will and His plan, which is far better than anything we can come up with on our own.

### Reflexiónese 11de diciembre de 2022 3er Domingo de Adviento

**“Sean también pacientes. Fortalezcan sus corazones, porque la venida del Señor está cerca.” Santiago 5:8**

La paciencia es otra de esas cosas con las que muchos de nosotros luchamos. Queremos que las cosas que vayan de acuerdo con nuestros planes o nuestros horarios; nos gustan las cosas convenientes. Cualquier cambio conlleva ansiedad y temor. A través de la oración diaria Dios nos revela lo que Él quiere de nosotros con los dones que Él nos ha dado. Seremos capaces de alinearnos con la voluntad de Dios y Su plan, que es mucho mejor que cualquier cosa que se nos ocurra por nuestra cuenta.

## Connect



### St Vincent de Paul Society at St Matthias

We are looking for a volunteer to join us to manage our communications (website, social media, and print copy). If you think you have the skills and are interested in joining a ministry that makes a world of difference in the lives of our neighbors in need, please send an email to [SVDPatSM@gmail.com](mailto:SVDPatSM@gmail.com) for more information.

### St Vincent de Paul Society at St Matthias

Do you have a vehicle that you are looking to donate? Look no further. The St Vincent de Paul Society has a program that will pick up your vehicle, at no cost to you, and handle the rest, from selling your vehicle to providing a tax receipt. Your vehicle donation helps fund local programs for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul – such as housing, utilities, food, disaster relief, job training, and more for neighbors in need. All types of vehicles, including cars, trucks, motorcycles, trailers, boats are accepted! You can use the following link to access their on-line form à <https://svdpusa.careasy.org/home>

## From Msgr. Kerrigan

### Invitation from Msgr. Kerrigan

Our parishioners who attended the Retreat/presentation by Msgr. Joe Kerrigan had a taste of contemplative practice, and were very touched to hear about 'Monastic Mondays' in his parish of St. Joseph in Bound Brook. Interested in attending one? He is inviting us to his parish on December 19 for a Monastic Monday experience of contemplative prayer. Here’s the link to know what to expect that day:

<https://www.dreamsofstjoseph.org/blog/parish-news/special-advent-version-of-monastic-monday/>

# Serve



## St. Matthias GIVING TREE

Located at the front of Church, still filled with ornaments for Ozanam Family Shelter, YES Early Learning Centers and PACT, is our Annual Giving Tree. Please select an ornament, purchase a requested gift or two and return them back to the Church.

If you're joining us online or just prefer shopping online, visit the St. Matthias website [www.stmatthias.net](http://www.stmatthias.net) to view the "Wish Lists" for the other local organizations and have the gifts shipped directly to their location.

**ALL GIFTS WILL BE COLLECTED IN THE CHURCH THIS WEEKEND ON DECEMBER 10 th & Dec 11 th. ONLY GIFT CARDS may be placed directly**

into the collection basket.

**\*\*Most importantly, ALL YES Early Learning Center gifts MUST be returned by December 11 th to allow distribution to the children at their holiday party. Also, please SECURE all ornaments to the outside of the package so we can identify to which organization they belong.**

Thank you all in advance for your continued support in making this effort a success. The organizations are so grateful to the St. Matthias Community for assisting them once again this year. Please be as generous as your means allow. If you have any questions, please contact Joanne Diana (732) 322-6270 or [j-diana@comcast.net](mailto:j-diana@comcast.net).

# Connect with Our Local Community



## SACRED TIME, SACRED SPACE

A personal, quiet day to enjoy God's presence. Day begins with communal prayer. Bring a bag

lunch.

**Wednesday, December 13 from 9:30am-3pm and January 25**

*(\$20-\$30 as you are able)*

[www.mshope.net](http://www.mshope.net)

908-753-2091

## Loyola Jesuit Center

161 James St., Morristown, NJ 973-539-0740



**Friday, December 16, 2022, 6:00 PM**

Silent Weekend Retreat for men and women on Ignatian Spirituality.

**Theme is "We Need A Little Christmas!"**

**Retreat Leader is Joe Costantino, S.J.**

# Parish Leadership

<p><b>Parish Pastoral Council:</b> <b>Co-Chairs:</b> Rose Peng, <a href="mailto:rosepeng@optonline.net">rosepeng@optonline.net</a> John Taylor, <a href="mailto:jptaylor1068@yahoo.com">jptaylor1068@yahoo.com</a></p>	<p><b>Co-Secretaries:</b> Frank Rees Marilyn Wegg  Stephan Busono Anne Marie Francis Bill Isele Maria Tapia-Burch</p>	<p>Msgr. Seamus Brennen, Ex-Officio Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio  <b>Trustees:</b> Pearl Scott Marge Richards</p>	<p><b>Parish Finance Council:</b> Kester Hector, Chair <b>FinanceCouncil@stmatthias.net</b> Carmen Driz-Melilli Barry Dusault Gwen Orlowski</p>	<p>Audrey Francis Joe Porter Joan Pritchard Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Ex-Officio Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio</p>
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# About St. Matthias (please contact the staff members on the cover for up-to-date information)

**Parish Registration** — Welcome to St. Matthias! Please register on our website. [www.stmatthias.net/join-us](http://www.stmatthias.net/join-us), or visit the Parish Office.

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

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

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



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



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Tuesday, 10/11	Tuesday, 11/08
Tuesday, 10/18	Tuesday, 11/15
Tuesday, 10/25	Tuesday, 11/29

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