



St. Matthias Parish Office:

Open Mon-Thu: 8:30-5:00PM; Fri: 8:30-4PM
 168 JFK Boulevard, Somerset, NJ 08873
 732-828-1400, fax: 732-828-0866
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

St. Matthias School (SMS):

170 JFK Blvd., Somerset, NJ 08873
www.stmatthias.info 732-828-1402

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

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THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS

SUNDAY, DEC 26, 2021 –

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Keeping Christmas

Are you willing...

- To forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you?
 - To ignore what the world owes you, and to think what you owe the world?
 - To put your rights in the background, and your duties in the middle distance and your chances to do a little more than your duty in the foreground?
 - To see that men and women are just as real as you are, and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy?
 - To own up to the fact that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are going to get out of life, but what you are going to give to life?
 - To close your book of complaints against the management of the universe, and look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness?
- Are you willing to do these things even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas.



Are you willing...

- To stoop down and consider the needs and desires of little children?
 - To remember the weakness and loneliness of people growing old?
 - To stop asking how much your friends love you, and ask yourself whether you love them enough?
 - To bear in mind the things that other people have to bear in their hearts?
 - To try to understand what those who live in the same home with you really want, without waiting for them to tell you?
 - To trim your lamp so that it will give more light and less smoke, and to carry it in front so that your shadow will fall behind you?
 - To make a grave for your ugly thoughts, and a garden for your kindly feelings, with the gate open?
- Are you willing to do those things, even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas.

Are you willing...

- To believe that love is the strongest thing in the world, stronger than hate, stronger than evil, stronger than death - and that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem two thousand years ago is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love?
- Then you keep Christmas.

And if you can keep it for a day, why not always?

But you can never keep it alone.

- Henry Van Dyke

Come Visit Our Nativity and Tree Display
6 pm till Midnight every night through January 6.



If you shop on Amazon, please help us by starting at:
www.stmatthias.net/Amazon

This Week at St. Matthias

Masses are celebrated in-person and 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 from 7:30 am to dusk,
Sat from 9 am to 6pm, and
Sun from 7:30 am to 1 pm,
unless another service is taking place.

Sunday Dec 26, 2021 **The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**

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

Monday, Dec 27, 2021 **St. John, Apostle & Evangelist**

SMS: Christmas Break Mon—Fri.

Parish Office is Closed on Monday

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:30AM	Miraculous Medal Novena	Church

Tuesday, Dec 28, 2021 **Holy Innocents, Martyrs**

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
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Wednesday, Dec 29, 2021 **St. Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:30AM	Coffee with a Cop (Police Officer) for all Parishioners	Cafeteria

Thursday, Dec 30, 2021, **St. Anysia of Salonika,**

8:00AM	Mass	Martyr Church
3:30PM	Children's Choir Gr. 3 & 4	Church
4:15PM	Children's Choir Gr. 5-8	Church
7:30PM	Sunday 10AM Choir	Church
7:30PM	NeXt Level Mtg.	Zoom

Friday, Dec 31, 2021 **St. Sylvester I, Pope**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
5:00PM	Solemnity of Mary Vigil Mass	Church

Saturday, Jan 1, 2022 **Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**

10:00AM	Solemnity of Mary Mass	Church
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Sunday Jan 2, 2022 **Epiphany of the Lord** **Together in Charity Collection**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
10:30AM	RCIA	John XXIII Rm
12:00PM	Epiphany Mass	Church
1:00PM	Franklin High School Madrigals	Church



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends, Merry Christmas!

Interestingly, this year, the Feast of Christmas and the Feast of the Holy Family occur back to back on Saturday and Sunday! I do hope you all had a happy time with your families for Christmas dinner. But it takes more than a festive Christmas dinner for many families to really have a great time with each other. Bringing a family together requires the patience to listen, the selflessness to forgive, the commitment to heal and mend. To be a family is to seek out and bring back whoever is lost, to look beyond behavior to understand what is prompting such anger, bitterness or disaffection, to put aside one's own expectations to respect another's perspective.

It may come as a surprise to many when I say that the Holy Family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus – whose feast we celebrate today – was not an ideal family as we have been brought up to believe! This family understood all too well the struggles and challenges of staying together as a family in their situation because they too had their share of challenges of communication between spouses and between parents and the teenage Jesus. Gospel vignettes give us inklings to their struggles: Matthew, the Evangelist, says: "Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you." (Matthew 2: 13-15, 19-23). Why? They had to escape Herod's murderous wrath. As is clear from the infancy narratives (from Luke and Matthew), Jesus, Mary and Joseph as a family experienced heartache, fear, misunderstanding and doubt, but together they created a family of love and compassion, of nurture and acceptance. That is how the Holy Family becomes a model for us to deal with our own family's challenges.

One easy way to make every family member feel accepted and loved is to express words of appreciation. I don't mean that you simply say "you look great" or "you did wonderful." Instead, think of some way each member is contributing to your happiness. Say, for instance, "Oh Brad, when I see you playing with your sister I feel so happy and grateful that you and your sister are enjoying each other." "I wanted to tell you Erin, how much I enjoyed the funny stories you say at the dinner table!" Even if you think it is difficult, take a moment to think about what this person brings to your life that you wouldn't have without him or her. It may be joy, laughter, spontaneity, support, fun, play, peace, etc.

Merry Christmas and a happy Feast of the Holy Family! We raise up all parents and children in prayer, especially those who experience the pain of separation and single parent families who heroically face the challenges of life. As we will soon ring in the New Year 2022, may we all experience more unity, love and peace in our families and communities!

Your brother in Christ,
Fr. Abraham Orapankal



Readings for the Week

Monday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a and 2-8

Tuesday: 1 Jn 1:5 — 2:2; Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7cd-8; Mt 2:13-18

Wednesday: 1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35

Thursday: 1 Jn 2:12-17; Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10; Lk 2:36-40

Friday: 1 Jn 2:18-21; Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13; Jn 1:1-18

Saturday: Nm 6:22-27; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21

Sunday: Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, Dec 25	10:00AM	Deceased Members of DeGuzman & Valdez Families, by Alma & Family
	12:00PM	Michael Gleason, by John Galet
Sunday, Dec 26	8:00AM	Barbara Craisis, by Mary
	10:00AM	Joseph Infusino, by Nancy Sekelsky
	12:00PM	Sadie, Milton & Jean Callender, by Antoinette Surdo-
	(5:30PM)	Intention of Parishioners
Monday, Dec 27	8:00AM	John Natale, by Joanne & Vinie
Tuesday, Dec 28	8:00AM	Robert Spitzer, by Joan Simmons
Wednesday, Dec 29	8:00AM	Linda Grey, by Suzanne & Jeff Adams
Thursday, Dec 30	8:00AM	Fidela Durana, by The Bandong Family
Friday, Dec 31	5:00PM	Will Cuddeback, by Mom & Dad
Saturday, Jan 1	10:00AM	Louis Natasi, by Frances & Children
Sunday, Jan 2	8:00AM	Frank Catalina, by John & Maureen Schroeder
	10:00AM	Max Regan, by Deacon Russ & Monica
	12:00PM	Russell Mulholland, by John & Family
	(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 kcounts@stmatthias.net to add the name to this list. Names will be listed in the bulletin for 6 weeks. Please let us know if this time period needs to be extended. We want to know how you are doing and want to offer you the support of our prayers. New people on our prayer list are noted in blue.

Carolyn Banghart	William Dolphin	Margaret Menendez	Maria Schwenzer
Maria Barreiro	John Farkas	Gail Miranda	Sr. Mary Amata Shina, OSF
Virginia Briggs	Claudia Gemgnani	Sabrina Moloney	Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF
Marie Brody	Emma Gergely	Dave Moynihan	Catherine Sloomaker
Thomas Burns	Rose Gessner	Baby Ezran Natural	Encarnacion (Gina) So
Tara Capatosto	Mary Gidaro	Patricia Nese	Alessandro Spagnolo
Ellen Catalina	Marie Godet	Danny Ochangco	Dennis Stuewe
Tom Current	Sloopy Hoffman	Jim Pettit	Jeff Tami
Marie DeFeo	Baby Isla-Rose Huffman	Christina Pietrowiak	Fred & Carolyn Vanmiddlesworth
Joseph DeFrancesco	Kathleen Lagenbacher	Oscar Poisler	Eulalia Villanueva
Cenon DeGuzman	Al & Rose Larangeira	Baby Griffin Rademaker	Judi Wojna
Mary Ellen Delaney	Erlina Liem	Kevin Reavey	Mark T. Worthington
Alaina Derecola	The Litrakis Family	Chris Retz	
Surya & Juliany Dharma	Al Maglio	Ann Ritchick	Everyone who is ill with Covid-19
Jim Dolan	Sue Maglio-Alese	Jaxon Rivera	...and for all who are homebound,
Mary Dolan	Beatrice May	Angela Romanek	elderly, in nursing care, or living with chronic illness

Pray for those who have died...

— “His mercy endures forever.” Chronicles

Elia G. Catanese
Lisa Wehner
Maria De Foe

Reflect



Smile with Your Family



Blessing before meals: A 4-year-old boy was asked to give the blessing before Christmas dinner. The family members bowed their heads in expectation. He began his prayer, thanking God for all his friends, naming them one by one. Then he thanked God for Mommy, Daddy, brother, sister, Grandma, Grandpa, and all his aunts and uncles. Then he began to thank God for the food. He gave thanks for the turkey, the dressing, the fruit salad, the cranberry sauce, the pies, the cakes-- even the Cool Whip. Then he paused, and everyone waited--and waited. After a long silence, the young fellow looked up at his mother and asked, "If I thank God for the broccoli, won't He know that I'm lying?" 😊

God in a parking lot: A man is struggling to find a parking space. "Lord," he prays. "I can't stand this. If you open a space up for me, I swear I'll give up the drink and go to mass every Sunday." Suddenly, the sun shines on an empty parking spot. Without hesitation, the man says: "God, never mind, I found one!" 😊

In the Army of the Lord: A friend was in front of me coming out of church one day, and the preacher was standing at the door as he always is to shake hands. He noticed a young man who showed up in the church for Christmas and Easter as Poinsettias and Easter Lilies do. He grabbed my friend by the hand and pulled him aside. Pastor said, "You need to join the Army of the Lord!" My friend said, "I'm already in

the Army of the Lord, Pastor." Pastor questioned, "How come I don't see you except at Christmas and Easter?" He whispered back, "I'm in the Secret Service." 😊

Funny Christmas Q&A:

How do you help someone who has lost their Christmas spirit?
Nurse them back to elf.

What is a Christmas tree's favorite candy?
Orna-mints!

What do you call an elf wearing earmuffs? Anything you want—he can't hear you!

What do you call a greedy elf? Elfish.

How does a gingerbread man make his bed? With a cookie sheet!

Consider Christmas Again!

When Pope Julius I authorized December 25 to be celebrated as the birthday of Jesus in A.D. 353, who would have ever thought that it would become what it is today?

In 1223 when St. Francis of Assisi **used a nearby cave to set up a manger filled with straw, and his friend, Vellita, brought in an ox and a donkey, just like those at Bethlehem, nobody thought how that novel idea was going to evolve through centuries.** When Professor Charles Follen lit candles on the first Christmas tree in America in 1832, who would have ever thought that the decorations would become as elaborate as they are today?

There is an unproved legend that Martin Luther is responsible for the origin of the Christmas tree. This story says that one Christmas Eve, about the year 1500, he was walking through the snow-covered woods and was struck by the beauty of the snow glistening on the trees. Their branches, dusted with snow, shimmered in the moonlight. When he got home, he set up a small fir tree and shared the story with his children. He decorated the Christmas tree with small candles which he lighted in honor of Christ's birth. In 2021, as we walk through Advent again in the midst of all the excitement, elaborate decorations and expensive commercialization which surround Christmas today, we are given another opportunity to pause, to consider again the event of Christmas and the person whose birth we celebrate.

Danish Theologian Kierkegaard's Fable

A king fell in love with a poor maid. The king wanted to marry her. When asked, "How shall I declare my love?" his counselors answered, "Your majesty has only to appear in all the glory of your royal raiment before the maid's humble dwelling, and she will instantly fall at your feet and be yours." But it was precisely that which troubled the king. He wanted her glorification, not his. In return for his love, he wanted hers, freely given. Finally, the king realized love's truth, that freedom for the beloved demanded equality with the beloved. So late one night, after all the counselors of the palace had retired, he slipped out a side door and appeared before the maid's cottage dressed as a servant to confess his love for her.

Clearly, the fable is a Christmas story. God chose to express His love for us humans by becoming one like us. We are called to obey, not God's power, but God's love. God wants not submission to His power, but in return for His love, our own.

Jesus the Savior as the Fulfillment of Prophecy

The name Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew Yehosua, which means "YHWH is salvation." Just as the first Joshua (successor of Moses), saved the Israelites from their enemies, the second Joshua (Jesus) will save them from their sins. The Jews, however, did not expect a Messiah Who

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Reflect

Jesus the Savior (continued)

would save them from their sins, but one who would deliver them from their political oppressors. Matthew stresses the fact that the birth of Jesus as Savior is the fulfillment of a prophecy by Isaiah (7:14): "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." The fulfillment of the prophecy is important to Matthew's first audience, Jewish converts, which is why he mentions the fulfillment of eleven prophetic statements about Jesus in his Gospel. The context of the verse taken from Isaiah, is the dilemma of King Ahaz in the eighth century BC. Jerusalem was under siege, and it appeared that both the city and the nation might be destroyed. Isaiah's prophecy was that a boy-child would be born and that, by the time he reached maturity, the threat from the enemy would have passed. We do not know that boy's identity, but the city and nation were both spared.



"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. This is the season when 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.

We need to experience Jesus the Emmanuel: The real meaning of Christmas actually is Emmanuel, God-with-us – God coming down to us; God seeking us out; God coming alongside us; God revealing Himself to us; God bringing us forgiveness, healing, comfort, moral strength, guidance; God dwelling within us. Each one of us has, deep down in our soul, an incredible hunger: a hunger for purpose and meaning; a hunger to feel and celebrate the redeeming, forgiving, sustaining love of God; a hun-

ger to be in the presence of God. Christmas is special because it reminds us concretely that God is, indeed, with us. In every circumstance of life, even when we are frightened or lonely or in sorrow, God is with us. So let's go home to the heart of Christmas and embrace Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

Joseph the "father" of Jesus (Mt. 1: 18-25)

While Luke's Gospel emphasizes the role of Mary, Matthew's brings Joseph to the forefront. Joseph is important to Matthew's Gospel, because Jesus came from David's lineage through Joseph (1:1-17). The Davidic descent of Jesus is shown as both legal and natural. In other words, Jesus is descendant of Abraham and David not only by physical descent but also by God's supernatural action. The Davidic descent of Jesus is transferred not through natural paternity but through legal paternity. Matthew carefully constructs verse 1: 18 to avoid saying that Jesus was the son of Joseph. As Mary's legal husband, Joseph became the legal father of Jesus. Later, by naming the child, Joseph acknowledged Him as his own. The legal father was on par with the biological father as regards rights and duties. Since it was common practice for couples to marry within their clan, probably Mary also belonged to the house of David. Several early Church fathers, including St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Irenaeus, St. Justin and Tertullian, testify to this belief, basing their testimony on an unbroken oral tradition. Joseph is presented as a righteous man (v. 19), who chose to obey God's command rather than to observe rigidly a law that would have required him to divorce Mary publicly. He resolved to divorce Mary quietly in order that he might not cause her unnecessary pain. In doing so, he serves as a model of Christ-like compassion. He also demonstrates a balance between the Law of Torah and the Law of Love. While Luke tells the story of the Archangel Gabriel's appearance to Mary (Luke 1:26-38), Matthew tells us only that the Child was conceived by the Holy Spirit.



The First Christmas Visitors

Since David was a shepherd, it seems fitting that the shepherds were given the privilege of visiting David's successor in the stable. If these shepherds were the ones in charge of the Temple sheep and lambs which were meant for daily sacrifice in the Temple of Jerusalem, no wonder they were the first to see the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world! Shepherding was a lonely, dirty job, and shepherds found it difficult to follow all the obligatory religious customs. Hence, they were scorned as non-observant Jews. So Baby Jesus selected these marginalized people to share His love at the beginning of his earthly ministry. The shepherds expressed their joy and gratitude by "making

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Reflect

Christmas Visitors (continued)

known what had been told them" (v. 17). Just as very ordinary people later became witnesses to the Resurrection, very ordinary shepherds became witnesses to the Incarnation. Other than the angels, they were the first to proclaim the Good News of Jesus' birth. Once we have been privileged to experience God's presence, we, too, have a responsibility to share that experience with other people -- to spread the word -- to proclaim the Gospel.

The Golden Rice Grains

There is a beautiful poem by Tagore, the mystic poet of India, extolling the reward of generous giving. It tells the story of a king who regularly visited his people, passing through the streets in a chariot. One morning as the king was passing by, a beggar woman who planned to ask him for alms, stood on the road side with her begging bowl. As the king approached her, however, he descended from his chariot and stretched out his hand as though he was expecting a gift from the woman. Excited and surprised, the woman put her hand in the cotton bag on her shoulder, took out a pinch of rice, and with trembling hands gave it to the king. The king was well pleased; he smiled at her put her offering in his pocket and gave her back a pinch of grains from his other pocket. When the woman returned to her small hut that evening and examined the grains she had gotten that day, she was surprised to find a few grains of gold in the rice. You can imagine both her surprise and despair when she realized she should have given all her rice grains to the king.

We are here to offer our gifts to Child Jesus in the manger as His birthday gift. Let us remember that Jesus does not want our material gifts as much as He wants our selves, with all our weakness and temptations, our merits and demerits. Let our Christmas gift to him be a heart full of love and a strong and sincere resolution to share it generously with others.



The Face of God

I heard the story once of a great Cherokee wood carver. He took logs and sat them on a stump outside his back door and sat in front of that log sometimes for hours just staring at it. Finally, he would pick up his carving tools and start carving the most beautiful of things out of the wood. He was known for his intricate details in feathers of eagles, or the look of sadness in the eyes of the faces he carved. A tourist once asked him how he decided what to carve, and the young man said that he looks for the picture that is already in the wood, then just takes the excess wood away, leaving the beautiful finished image. He said people would continually ask him how he came up with the ideas as to what he was going to carve.

People are curious about everything. For hundreds of centuries, people wanted to know what God looked like, too. Many thought He might have the face of a demanding judge or strict disciplinarian. It seems we always put the face on God that we fear the most. On a Christmas Eve, some 2,000 years ago, God took off His mask and showed the world what He looked like. He let us see Him how He really looks. We have all heard what we call "the Christmas Story", and we all feel very comfortable with Jesus in a manger, don't we? But how comfortable are we with what Jesus taught?

A Christmas Carol

"A Christmas Carol" of Charles Dickens, is all about Ebenezer Scrooge, the mean banker who hoards all his money, and goes around saying, "Bah! Humbug!" On Christmas Eve, he is visited by the ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Future. Then he wakes up on Christmas morning, and finds out he's been given a second chance. He buys the biggest goose for Bob Cratchett and Tiny Tim, is reconciled with his family, serves everyone, and loves everyone for the rest of his life.

What makes this such a great story is that Scrooge wakes up on Christmas and decides to spend his life consciously loving and serving others, to live every day as if it were Christmas, loving and serving Christ in everyone. We need to be Christ-bearers and Christ-givers. Since it is Jesus Who gives real meaning to our celebrations, Jesus must be reborn in us each time we celebrate Christmas. Hence, let us leave "room in the inn" of our hearts for Jesus to be reborn in our lives. Let us remember the famous lines of Alexander Pope: "What do I profit if Jesus is born in thousands of cribs all over the world during this Christmas, if He is not born in my heart?" So let us pray for the grace of Jesus' birth in each one of us today, bringing us love, mercy, kindness and compassion to give away. Let us help all those around us to experience the newly-born Savior – Jesus within us - as sharing love in the form of compassionate words, unconditional love and forgiveness, selfless service, merciful deeds and overflowing generosity.



From the Pastoral Staff

Every year on the Sunday between Christmas and New Year, we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family. It brings us to think about the fact that in addition to Jesus having a divine nature, he had a human nature.

While we don't know very much about the year's between His birth and His coming of age to leave home and do His Father's work, we know that he was a good Son to Mary and Joseph.

Today's Gospel gives us a glimpse into the life of the Holy Family. I'm sure many of you have seen the film "Home Alone." It's about a family who leaves on a trip only to realize too late that they left their young son alone ... by himself! While we may think that this scenario is far-fetched, it's exactly what happens to the Holy Family in today's Gospel.

In those days people traveled in caravans. So it was one of those situations where Mary and Joseph thought that Jesus was with one of His relatives traveling with them. It wasn't until they reached their destination that they realized Jesus was missing. We can only imagine how Mary and Joseph felt knowing their child was missing a parent's worst nightmare!

They travel back to Jerusalem finding Him preaching in the Temple. Of course they are relieved.. but upset that he did what He did. Some may think his answer was flippant, but it was true. Even at the age of twelve He knew what his mission in life was, and it wasn't too early to start.



On this feast of the Holy Family we need to give thanks to the Lord for our families, whomever we call our "Family". During this time of the year, on this Feast of the Holy Family, we need to reach out to say we love them. And for those in our Families who are no longer with us, we need to say a prayer of thanks and gratitude for having them with us.

I wish all of my Saint Matthias "Family" a continued Blessed Christmas season and a Happy Healthy New Year.

The peace of the new born Child be with you,

Deacon Russ

Pray



ST. MATTHIAS CHRISTMAS SEASON MASS SCHEDULE (in church)

Solemnity of Mary—Friday, Dec 31 5:00PM Vigil Mass

Solemnity of Mary - Saturday, January 1st (New Year's Day) — 10:00 Mass in church

Epiphany of the Lord - Sunday, January 2nd—8:00 Mass, 10:00 Mass, 12:00 Mass in church

Franklin HS Madrigals - 1:00 pm in church

*** Please note the addition of the Friday, Dec. 31st Vigil Mass at 5:00PM ***

*** Please also note that there will be no 5 PM Vigil Mass on Saturday January 1. ***



Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Reflection Dec 26, 2021

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

"See what love the Father has given us that we should be called children of God; and so we are." (1 John 3:1)

During this season of giving, let us remember a beautiful gift that we have received – being children of God! As God's children, it's in our DNA that we share and express our love for others as well. Tell your spouse, children, other family members and friends that you love them, every day! Also, pray for those people that are different than you, those that you may not like or those that go out of their way to annoy you. Your prayers may be the start of a new friendship.

Reflexiónese — 26 de diciembre de 2021

La Fiesta de la Sagrada Familia de Jesús, María y José

"Miren con cuánto amor nos ama nuestro Padre que nos llamamos hijos de Dios, y eso es lo que somos." (1 Juan 3:1)

Durante esta temporada de dar, permitámonos recordar el bello regalo que hemos recibido - ¡el ser hijos de Dios! Como hijos de Dios, el compartir y expresar nuestro amor por los demás también está en nuestro ADN. Dígale a su esposo, hijos, otros miembros de la familia y amigos que los ama, ¡todos los días! También, rece por las personas que son diferentes a usted, por aquellos que a lo mejor no le agradan o aquellos que se desviven por molestarlo. Sus oraciones pueden ser el comienzo de una nueva amistad.

St. Matthias School Update



We are excited to share all the positive and exciting news that abounds at St. Matthias School this academic year. Our new principal, Mrs. Mary Lynch, is proving to be a focused and effective leader. She is forming strong relationships with faculty, students, families, the Home-School Association, and various committees. She, along with Mr. Gidaro, our vice principal, is doing everything possible to keep the school fully operational while adhering to current pandemic guidelines.



This year St. Matthias School has joined the Catholic Math League. This national organization holds four annual competitions. The competitions take place in the classrooms in the form of a 30-minute math test. Students in grades 3 to 8 compete against other students around the country. The highest scores are posted after each competition. When competitions come to a close in the springtime, awards are given to the school's highest scorers in each grade. We are excited to offer this opportunity to our students. It is challenging work to be sure, but fun! In other math news, 7th and 8th grade students are invited to participate in the 15th annual Math Contest sponsored by Saint Joseph High School and Mount Saint Mary Academy.



Middle School is an exciting place to be this year. We are proud to announce that we will be establishing the National Junior Honor Society Chapter here at SMS for grades 6-8. Students will be invited based on academics, service, leadership, honor, and character. The National Junior Honor Society will meet to complete service projects and give back to their community and the school. Well done, SMS Scholars! Student socials are being brought back, with the first one being held in the new year. The Student Council is back to having in-person meetings and planning lots of fun and meaningful activities and events. They are pleased to report that one of their goals has come to fruition.

The first of several bottle filling stations has finally been installed. These new water fountains will benefit all who use the school facilities.



The Student Council has also made outreach ministry a priority in their agenda. Thus far, they have collected food for the food bank, raised money for a local family in need, held a pajama drive, and organized Christmas cards and carols for our friends at Willow Creek Nursing Home. Another piece of exciting news is that the students were thrilled to be able to travel to St. Thomas Aquinas High School to enjoy a beautiful Christmas concert.

Speaking of Christmas, a new tradition is being established just for the 8th grade class. Every year, our oldest students



will have the honor of decorating our school Christmas tree all while enjoying a festive party organized by homeroom parents.

Promethean boards have been installed in every classroom and are being fully utilized by the teachers. These high-tech interactive boards were made possible because of generous donations by patrons and sponsors during last year's Giving Tuesday fundraising campaign. We truly are most grateful for your generosity to our school. Another new addition to our campus is the refurbishing of our Prayer Nook. It went from shabby to chic in just one summer. Our MakerSpace

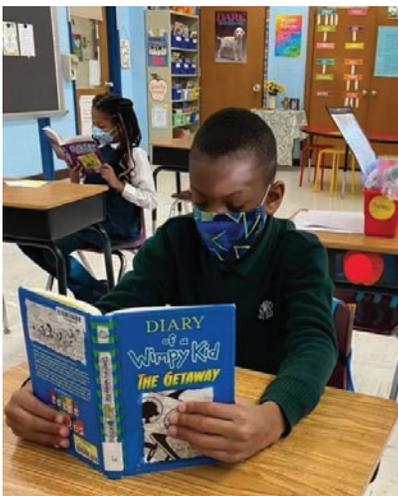
St. Matthias School Update

Continued from previous page



area is currently being planned and prepared. We can't wait to announce the "Grand Opening!"

In-person clubs are once again being offered and enrollment has been high in all of them. Some of the fall clubs that were in session include Prayer Group, Speed Stackers, Speech and Debate,



Art, Corn hole, Chess, Carving Hearts, Handwriting, Bricks for Kids, and Book Clubs. In-person school wide Masses have also been brought back. It is so wonderful to be able to worship as a school community once again. Every grade level has the opportunity to plan and lead either a Mass or Prayer Service. This kind of service to our Lord can be so meaningful for the children.

Between our rigorous curriculum and academic endeavors, we do our best to make time for fun. Trunk or Treat was a spooktacular affair and was soon followed by the Kindergarten Thanksgiving Celebration.

Our students performed many random acts of kindness and were rewarded with the opportunities to chalk our sidewalks and silly string the principal.

Another fun event was a surprise visit by several therapy dogs. The Ned Show was a remote live assembly enjoyed by all grade levels. To top it off, the students were treated to yo-yos and the chance to hone their yo-yo skills. The St. Nick Sale and Christmas Around the World were special holiday events that helped to brighten our December.



Saint Matthias School provides a quality education for students in grades PreK3 through 8th. We offer a strong Christ-centered foundation, rigorous curriculum, experienced and caring faculty, access to technology, before and after care programs, clubs, and much more.

Consider a visit to SMS to discover for yourself why St. Matthias School continues to be the right choice for today's child. Call 732-828-1402 to schedule a tour.



Peace and Blessings.

Connect



Coffee with a Cop

Join us on **Wednesday, December 29th at 8:30 am** in the School Cafeteria for "Coffee with a Cop".

This initiative brings the community together with our local police department, one cup of coffee at a time to discuss how they can better serve us. The officers will also discuss our congregation's concerns in our Township and surrounding towns.

We are grateful to Officer Evan Sullivan of the Franklin Township Police Department for coordinating this. Join us this Wednesday!

Job Opening

The Catholic Community of St. Matthias is looking for a general maintenance worker with a black seal license. Responsibilities include janitorial duties in maintaining the safety and cleanliness of the facilities, and responding to work orders from the school and parish. This position will have a competitive salary and excellent benefits. Please contact Mary Pat at mpburke-grospin@stmatthias.net or (732) 826-1400.



CAREGIVER/CARE SUPPORT MINISTRY ZOOM MEETING

We'd like to invite parishioners who are caring for ill loved ones, or are coping with chronic illness themselves, and in need of spiritual and emotional support, to join us for discussion and prayer via Zoom.

SATURDAY, January 29th, 2022; 10am - 11 noon

Please contact: Donna Kahora: friendsofnikki@comcast.net or Sister Marie Therese: msherwood@stmatthias.net 732-828-1400 for Zoom details if you are interested in joining us.

Vocations Ministry - Called to Build God's Kingdom — Dec 26, 2021

Pope Francis in "Gaudete et Exultate" on the call to holiness in today's world says:

Let us listen once more to Jesus, with all the love and respect that the Master deserves. Let us allow his words to unsettle us, to challenge us and to demand a real change in the way we live. Otherwise, holiness will remain no

more than an empty word. We turn now to the individual Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew (cf. Mt 5:3-12). We often do not want to be challenged by the Gospel, but would rather just be comforted and affirmed. But when we let the Gospel move us to take a closer look at our lives, our choices, our perspectives-(how could the poor in spirit be blessed anyway?) then we are open-

ing our hearts to the Gospel's transformative effect. Only then does real change become possible.



Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council:

Co-Chairs:

Claudine Langrin
ClaudMLangrin@gmail.com and
Mary Beth Vetter-Purcell
marybeth.vetter@gmail.com

Co-Secretaries:

Lorraine Farr and
Anne Marie Francis

Rose Peng
Frank Rees
Maria Tapia-Burch
John Taylor

Marilyn Wegg
Ana Kelly, Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

Trustees:

Isaac Peng
Marge Richards

Parish Finance Council:

Joe Porter, Chair
FinanceCouncil@stmatthias.net
Barry Dusault
Gwen Orłowski
Audrey Francis
Kester Hector

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, 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 8th grade school rooted in faith, inspired by love, and dedicated to academic excellence. Before and After School Care Programs are available. Come visit! Contact 732-828-1402 to schedule a tour.



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