



St. Matthias Parish Office:

Open 8:30-6:00PM Mon-Fri
 168 JFK Boulevard, Somerset, NJ 08873,
 732-828-1400, fax: 732-828-0866,
www.stmatthias.net

Mass Schedule (in person):

Sat—5PM, Sun-10 AM & 12 noon
 M/T/W/Th/F at 8:00AM
 And also on our YouTube channel
www.youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ

St. Matthias School (SMS):

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

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

Pastor: Rev Abraham Orapankal, [abraham](mailto:abraham@stmatthias.net)
Parochial Vicar: Rev. Msgr. Joseph Curry, [jcurry](mailto:jcurry@stmatthias.net)

Pastoral Staff

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 Dolores R. Nann, *Faith Formation*, [dnann](mailto:dnann@stmatthias.net)
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St. Matthias School (add@stmatthiasnj.org)

Elena Malinconico, *Principal*, [emalinconico](mailto:emalinconico@stmatthiasnj.org)
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Parish Office Staff

Kelly Counts, *Day Receptionist*
 Nathalie Godet, *Formation/Parish Support Sec.*
 Leslie Guillen, *Bulletin Editor*
 Amy Hanna, *Parish Support Secretary*
 Vinnie Natale, *Bookkeeper*
 Trish Stumper, *Parish Support Secretary*
 Make Lanyi, *Sacristan*

Maintenance Staff

Julio Montero, *Maintenance Supervisor*
 Conroy Davis, *Custodian*
 Juan Diaz Flores, *Custodian*
 Silvia Nizama, *Housekeeper*

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS
SUNDAY, DEC 6, 2020 –
Second Sunday of Advent

Blessing of the Christmas Tree & Nativity with Bishop Checchio
THIS Saturday, Dec. 5. — see below.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception—Tues., Dec. 8.
Masses are 8:00AM & 7:00PM
 Novena will follow. Details on page 6.

Parish Office: Closed on Dec 8.

SMS School Photos—12/9 & 12/10



“Spread the Light” - Christmas Tree Blessing



Please join us THIS Saturday, Dec. 5, following the 5 pm Mass

Bishop Checchio will join our parish at approximately 5:45 pm for the Blessing of the Christmas Trees and the Nativity. You can come to Mass or just come to the parking lot by 5:45 pm.

Afterwards, feel free to walk around the trees and view the plaques. Remember to wear a mask and stay socially distant. The trees will be lit every night through January 6. Strolling through the trees throughout the season can be a wonderful way to celebrate and be together with your family outside, while staying socially distant and safe. Please see map on page 8 for help in finding your tree.

#GivingTuesday Thank You!

Thank you to everyone for your overwhelming support for our “Smart Tech for Smart Kids” initiative! So far, we have raised \$15, 220 — enough to buy almost 4 Interactive Technology Displays for our School.

If anyone would still like to contribute, please go to: <http://charity.gofundme.com/sms-givingtuesday2020> or visit our website, www.stmatthias.net, and click on the link for GivingTuesday under *Latest News*.



This Week at St. Matthias

- **All Masses** will be celebrated **in-person** (overflow in the cafeteria).
- **Masses** will also be **livestreamed on our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ](https://www.youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ)**

The **Church is open** for **individual prayer** Sun-Fri from 7:30 am to 7pm & Sat from 9 am to 7pm, unless another event is taking place (Mass, Funeral, Wedding, etc.)

Sunday, Dec 6, 2020 2nd Sunday of Advent

10:00AM Mass Church
10:30AM Communion outside front doors
10:30AM RCIA de Porres Rm
12:00PM Mass Church
12:30PM Communion outside front doors

Monday, Dec 7, 2020 SMS Closed

8:00AM Mass Church
6:30PM Dee's Small Grp. Mtg. via Zoom

Tuesday, Dec 8, 2020 SMS & Parish Office Closed Feast of Immaculate Conception

8:00AM Daily Mass followed by Novena Church
7:00PM Immaculate Conception Mass Church

Wednesday, Dec 9, 2020

8:00AM Daily Mass Church
8:30AM SMS School Pictures John XXIII Rm

Thursday, Dec 10, 2020

8:00AM Daily Mass Church
8:30AM SMS School Pictures John XXIII Rm

Friday, Dec 11, 2020

8:00AM Daily Mass Church

Saturday, Dec 12, 2020 3rd Sunday of Advent Retirement Fund for Religious

3:30-4:30PM Confessions Church
5:00PM Mass Church

Sunday, Dec 13, 2020 3rd Sunday of Advent Retirement Fund for Religious

10:00AM Mass Church
10:30AM Communion outside front doors
12:00PM Mass Church
12:30PM Communion outside front doors



Bulletin Article Requests:

If you would like to send information to be included in our bulletin, please email it to bulletin@stmatthias.net by **6 pm, Wednesday, 10 days before the intended issue** (earlier for holiday weekends). Approved content is published on a space-available basis.

From the Pastor & the Pastoral Staff



Advent, a time for watching and waiting, is for me one of at least two times of the year when I focus on channeling Mary, the Mother of God. (The other time is Lent). One time, joy. (The other time, sorrow). In Mary's honor, it seems only right for me to make her front and center this Sunday of Advent; and I honor her today with *The Song of Mary* (Luke 1:46-55) by poet John Shea. (Apologies that the poem's stanzas have been modified for space).

When I listen to Mary's Manificat, I feel she takes my hand and leads me, looking ahead at a path I cannot see.

Then she looks back, checking my willingness to be led, making sure I am not pulling back in fear.

Although she does not say so, her smile tells me she is happy we are traveling together and still more – she cannot wait to show me our destination.

Our journey is a descent inward and downward. We pull away from the social traffic, from the competitions of the outer world, from the fray whose fights define me, from the noise that smothers the whispering of the spirit.

I leave reluctantly. This is the world I know.

She closes her eyes and I, her follower, do the same. We enter the inner landscape of the body. Every sensation is allowed. Every pleasure and pain embraced. We float in the rivers of my veins. Then another chamber opens. We are on the balcony of the mind, watching the dance of thought and feeling. Everything is moving, and I could linger in the unfolding dramas.

But she is a step ahead, urging me forward. "We are almost there", she says. "Where?" I ask. She does not look at me. Her pace has quickened. "The soul," she says.

Suddenly we are in the center where nothing is separate. The umbilical cord to God is uncut, and divine life flows into us, turning our lowliness into largeness, magnifying the life we are rejoicing in.

And everything that is drives towards everything else that is. We rest in Holy Communion.

"So this is the other side of fear," I say. "Mercy," she says, and the word expands, filling space and time until everything is pregnant.

And I know now how we keep ourselves from this fullness - how proud thoughts scatter us, how riches bring us to famine, how ruling over others keeps us from service, how from generation to generation we seek but cannot find the promises that burnt in the bones of Abraham and Sarah. I look around. Mary is gone. Her work is done. She has been called to guide another listener of her song.

Only the memory of her voice keeps me aware that with every breath I am giving birth.

How much more we are than we know!



Phyllis Stone

Readings for the Week

Monday: Is 35:1-10; Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14; Lk 5:17-26

Tuesday: Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38

Wednesday: Is 40:25-31; Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10; Mt 11:28-30

Thursday: Is 41:13-20; Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab; Mt 11:11-15

Friday: Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6; Mt 11:16-19

Saturday: 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

Sunday: Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

*The Mass intentions will be fulfilled by Fr. Abraham and Fr. Joe as they celebrate private masses for these intentions, when we don't have a public mass scheduled. Everyone is welcome to join us in spirit as we pray for these intentions.

Mass Intentions for the Week*

Saturday, Dec 5	5:00PM	Paul & Maureen Doyle Endres, by Isabelle & John Baker
Sunday, Dec 6	8:00AM	Intention of Parishioners
	10:00AM	Jack Sullivan, by Mary & family
	12:00PM	Kenneth C. Luke, by Dad & brother
	5:30PM	Spiritual Intention of Sadie Calender, by Anne Marie Francis
Monday, Dec 7	8:00AM	Margaret Coubet, by The Demkovitz Family
Tuesday, Dec 8	8:00AM	In Thanksgiving for friends, old & new, by Vinnie
	7:00PM	Health & Blessings for Adorocion DeGuzman, by the DeGuzman Family
Wednesday, Dec 9	8:00AM	Spiritual Intention of Holy Spirit Prayer Group, by Joan M.
Thursday, Dec 10	8:00AM	Stella & Joseph Michalski, by The Demkovitz Family
Friday, Dec 11	8:00AM	Helen Shapiola, by The Kosty Family
Saturday, Dec 12	5:00PM	Elsie Meagher, by Tom Meagher
Sunday, Dec 13	8:00AM	Msgr. Joseph Penna, by The Penna Family
	10:00AM	Intention of Parishioners
	12:00PM	Al Nowakowski, by Marge Schmidt
	5:30PM	Charles Coffaro, by Barbara Linko

Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please email Kelly Counts at 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.

Elbren, Sr. & Natalia
Agdeppo
Rosemary Albaugh
Robert Bachman
Lourdes Banaag
Edward Bauer
Cecillia Bongga Alcantara
Marion Bradford
Barbara Branham
Dylan Braunstein
Timothy Brennan
Marie Brody
Baby Isla-Rose Callahan
Tara Capatosto
Ellen Catalina
Frank Catalina
Barbara Coan
Wes Coddington
Lisa DeFeo
Marie DeFeo
Adoracion & Cenon
DeGuzman
Mary Ellen Delaney
Alaina Derecola
Nancy Diaz

Mary Dolan
William Dolphin
Dorothy Domenici
Jaclyn, Ariana & Thomas
Donlon
Mary Eads
Briana Edwards
Anne Fortune
Emma Gergely
Rose Gessner
Mary Gidaro
Katherine Giustino
John Gross
Michael Hagerty
Emma A. Himey
Sloopy Hoffman
Merla Isabelo
Pamela Kannaire
Allison Karakowski
Michael Kirugi
Milicent Kraft
Herman Krueger
Taylor LaCort
Al & Rose Larangeira
Rosemarie LaTorre

William Lecorchick
Pat Leposa
Alexander LiCausi
The Litakis Family
Alexander Maceven
Kelly Magat
Monique Marie Mageot
Al Maglio
Sue Maglio-Alese
Patrick Mahoney
Christine Matthews
Anne McElwee
Steve McGovern
Elizabeth Miller
Dave Moynihan
Russel Mulholland
Baby Ezran Natural
Patricia Nese
Cassian Ndukwu
Danny Ongchango
Julianne Opydike
Mafalda Parafioriti
Julie Parks
Jim Pettit
Annie Powderly

Samantha Renaud
Aubree Rezac
Diane Rice
Datius Rutashobya
Rudy Schaar
Maria Schwenzer
Lena Sciotto
Sr. Mary Amata Shina, OSF
Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF
Encarnacion (Gina) So
Alessandro Spagnolo
Dennis Stuewe
Juan Ulerio
Fred & Carolyn
Vanmiddlesworth
Eulalia Villanueva
Luzminda Villarica
Mark T. Worthington
Edward Yeager

Everyone who is ill with Covid-19
...and for all who are
homebound, elderly, in nursing
care, or living with chronic illness

Pray for those who have died...

Marion Bradford

- "His mercy endures forever." Chronicles

Sunday Reflections



Smile with Your Family



I did not send you!: A man who thought he was John the Baptist was disturbing the neighborhood. So, for public safety, he was forcefully taken to the psychiatric ward of a hospital. He was put in a room with another crazy patient. He immediately began his routine, "I am John the Baptist! The Lord has sent me as the forerunner of Christ the Messiah!" The other guy looked at him and declared, "I am the Lord your God. I did not send you!" 😊

Good sermon: A woman approached the minister after the sermon, and thanked him for his discourse. "I found it so helpful," she said. The minister replied: "I hope it will not prove as helpful as the last sermon you heard me preach." "Why, what do you mean?" asked the astonished woman. "Well," said the minister, "that sermon lasted you three months."..... 😊

Tricky questions:

- At a movie theatre, which arm rest is yours?
- If people evolve from monkeys, why are monkeys still around?
- Why is there a 'D' in fridge, but not in refrigerator?
- Who knew what time it was when the first clock was made?



Parenting Tune-Up

Mary's conception in the womb of her mother Anne is a good occasion to ask: What does it mean to conceive a child? Whether you are the mother or father, it means your life is forever changed. It is the start of enduring love and sacrifice for another life put in your care. Pause today and ponder your creative role.

Marriage Tune-Up

Are you ready? It's a common question as Christmas approaches, but these are sobering times with the continuing pandemic worries. Being ready depends on how you live today. Make today a day worthy of your life. Talk this over with your beloved.



Why Honor Mary?

"We never give more honor to Jesus than when we honor his Mother, and we honor her simply and solely to honor him all the more perfectly. We go to her only as a way leading to the goal we seek - Jesus, her Son."

--Saint Louis Marie de Montfort

"Immaculate Conception" of Mary...?

There's a popular misunderstanding that this feast refers to Jesus' conception by the Virgin Mary. It does not! Instead, it refers to the special way in which the Virgin Mary herself was conceived in the womb of her mother. This conception was not virginal. (That is, she had a human father Joachim and a human mother Anne.) But it was special and unique in another way. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (no.490) explains it this way:

"To become the mother of the Savior, Mary "was enriched by God with gifts appropriate to such a role." The angel Gabriel at the moment of the annunciation salutes her as "full of grace". Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, "full of grace" through God, was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin."

250 Years of Waiting for the New Class!!

At the 250th anniversary of the founding of Harvard University, the students marched in a torchlight procession. The most memorable group was the Freshman Class, one month old, which emerged with a gigantic banner reading, "The University Has Been Waiting 250 Years for Us."

The New Testament presents Jesus Christ and exclaims that all the ages have been waiting for His arrival that all history has been preparing for His coming. We are invited by the Church to prepare for Christmas. Christmas is the time for reflection and personal renewal in preparation for the coming of Jesus into our lives. Through the section of his letter which we read today, St. Peter reminds us, on the one hand, of God's great desire to come into our lives and, on the other, of our need to be prepared for that event when it happens. We want God's help and comfort, but we are not always prepared to change our ways to enhance genuine conversion. For God to come to us, we also need to go to Him. We need to let every day become Christmas and the "Day of the Lord" for each one of us.



Sunday Reflections

Advent Reflection: Make a Friend out of Your Enemy!

John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Mark 1: 1-8

Daryl Davis is an African American blues musician who has an interesting hobby. He collects Ku Klux Klan robes. He's got about 200 of them. How he gets them is the story. Davis got his first robe 30 years ago while playing in a bar in Frederick, Maryland. After his set, a white gentleman approached him. "I really enjoy your all's music," he said. "You know this is the first time I ever heard a black man play piano like Jerry Lee Lewis." Davis thanked him and then asked, "Where do you think Jerry Lee Lewis learned how to play that kind of style?" And then the musician explained the roots of rock 'n roll in the black blues tradition, that the rockabilly style he liked was not invented by Jerry Lee Lewis but developed by black artists like Fats Domino and Little Richard.

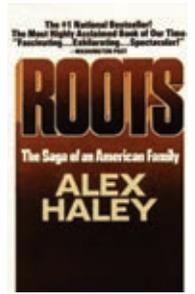
The two talked for some time. As the conversation went on, the man said, "You know, this is the first time I ever sat down and had a drink with a black man." He then said he was a member of the Ku Klux Klan. Davis laughed at first, not believing him - but he man pulled out pictures and produced his Klan card. Davis immediately stopped laughing. But the man was very friendly and asked Davis to call him the next time he played at the bar. "The fact that a Klansman and black person could sit down at the same table and enjoy the same music, that was a seed planted," Davis recalls. "So what do you do when you plant a seed? You nourish it." Davis decided to go around the country and meet and talk to as many Klan members as he could - music always being the entrée. First he learned all he could about the Klan to understand what they really think - that enabled Davis to sit down and talk with people who instinctively hated him. Davis deflated the racial stereotypes that fueled their anger and hatred. "How can you hate me when you don't know me?" he asks.

"If you spend five minutes with your worst enemy - it doesn't have to be about race, it could be about anything . . . you will find that you both have something in common. As you build upon those commonalities, you're forming a relationship and as you build upon that relationship, you're forming a friendship. That's what would happen. I didn't convert anybody. They saw the light and converted themselves." Once the friendship and trust blossom, the Klansmen realize that their hate may be misguided. When they renounce their membership, Davis collects the robes and keeps them in his home as a reminder of the dent he has made in racism by simply sitting down and having dinner with people. Daryl Davis has been having those conversations for three decades now. And he has their robes as testimonies. [NPR, August 20, 2017.]

A black blues musician reduces the ranks of the Ku Klux Klan by his message of music and kindness; he straightens a very crooked path by his courage to sit down and talk with those whose initial reaction is to see him destroyed. Daryl Davis is a prophet in the spirit of John the Baptizer. In baptism, each one of us has been called by God to the work of "prophet": using whatever talents and skills we possess to transform the wastelands around us into harvests of justice and forgiveness, to create highways for our God to enter and re-create our world in his compassion and peace.

Homecoming in Roots

Homecoming is featured in Alex Haley's epic saga of an American family, *Roots*. "Chicken George", son of Kizzy and grandson of the family's African patriarch, Kunta Kinte, had been sold by his master to a member of the English gentry who used the man's skills at training cocks to fight. George had been promised that, after a few years in Europe, he'd be able to return home to his family, as a free man. But, as with many such promises, years passed before it was fulfilled. When at last George did return, his coming home had significance for all his family. This would indeed be a new beginning. Now a free man, George had the capability of buying the freedom of his aged wife, grown sons, their wives and his grandchildren. Though their aged and furrowed faces bore a visible record of years of want and struggle, their eyes burned with an unmistakable determination to keep their family together and to keep alive the traditions of their ancestral African people. Those same eyes brimmed with tears of joy at the thought of leaving their slave quarters and of finally *coming home*, to a plot of land bought by Chicken George in Tennessee.



On this second Sunday of Advent, each of the selections from Scripture would also have us consider the notion of coming home – Babylonian exiles coming home, shalom or perfect peace coming home and Jesus the Savior "coming home" into our lives.

"Come Home for Your Daddy's Sake!"

Ian Maclaren once told a delightful story of Lackland Campbell and his daughter Dora. Dora left home and fell into the wrong kind of relationships. She began to misuse the gifts of life. Soon she did not respond to her father's letters because she found it difficult to relate to him. Maggie, Dora's aunt, wrote her a letter that finally melted her heart. At the end of the letter Maggie writes: "Dora, your Daddy is a grievin' ye. Come home for your own sake. Come home for your dear Daddy's sake. But, Dora, come home most of all for the dear Lord's sake!"

Christmas is a time of coming home. John the Baptist's message was simple: "Repent," turn your life around, change your mind, examine your motives, because the Messiah will be here soon. This brings us to the final theme of today's text. The first reading, taken from the prophet Isaiah, tells us about the Babylonian exiles coming home to their native country, Judah, and their holy city, Jerusalem. Isaiah assures his people that the Lord will lead them in a grand procession to their homeland and take care of them as a shepherd cares for his sheep. The Responsorial Psalm (Ps 85) describes how shalom or perfect peace is coming home with the Lord's coming. The second reading, taken from the second letter of Peter, invites us to get ready to go home to Heaven with Jesus at his second coming.

Sunday Reflections

A Tale of Repentance!

Not too many years ago, newspapers carried the story of Al Johnson, a Kansas man who repented of his sins and chose Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. What made his story so remarkable was the fact that, as a result of his newfound faith in Christ, he confessed to a bank robbery he had participated in when he was nineteen years old. Because of the statute of limitations, Johnson could not be prosecuted for the offense. But because of his complete and total change of heart, he not only confessed his crime but voluntarily repaid his share of the stolen money!

That's repentance – metanoia -- the radical change of heart demanded by John the Baptist in today's Gospel from Mark. While Matthew and Luke start their Gospels by giving

us a brief account of the conception, birth, and early boyhood of Christ and John begins his Gospel by pointing to the eternal life of Christ as the Word of the Father, Mark opens his Gospel with the preparation for Christ's public life, in which the chief actor is John the Baptist. This wilderness prophet proclaims the "here-ness" of an event and person every Jew was anticipating. "One more powerful than I," John announces, "is to come after me....I have baptized you in water; He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit." The essence of the Baptizer's message is "repent and return to the ways of the Lord." He preaches that the appropriate behavior for those preparing "the way of the Lord" is to be baptized "as they confess their sins."

Celebrating Our Faith: Liturgy

Sign up Today to Attend Christmas Mass In-Person

This year we are **requiring** parishioners who would like to attend Christmas Mass **in person** (in the church or cafeteria) to sign up. Why? We do not want to be like the inn-keeper who has to turn anyone away at the door when there is no more room. We already have 400 people signed up, but currently have room for more.

To sign up, go to www.thejesustoday.com/stmatthias/christmassignup.php (If you do not have access to a computer, then please call Kelly Counts at the Parish Office, 732-828-1400, to sign up.

Mass Times are Dec. 24th: 2:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 6:30 pm, Midnight
Dec. 25th 10:00 am, 12:00 Noon



Parishioners are allowed to sign up for as many as eight (8) people for one Christmas Eve/Day mass. Once you complete your sign-up, you receive a confirmation notice at your email address. **The notice will have a confirmation number which you will not need for entry but can use to cancel if needed.**

Please follow all NJ State and Diocese of Metuchen safety guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic, including: If you are not feeling well, you are requested to stay home. Wear a mask. Groups/individuals will be separated by 6 ft. Plenty of hand sanitizer will be on-hand. Pews and chairs will be sanitized after each mass. For proper ventilation during the winter months for enclosed building, the heat will be on but windows will be open and fans left on for air flow. Main doors will be the entry points and all mass goers will use one exit in a safely distanced manner. Those receiving communion are encouraged to receive the host on the hand. **If you receive communion on the tongue, you must remain seated at the end of mass until everyone else has received.**

Please note that we will continue to offer Communion outside approximately 30 minutes after Mass starts. Questions? Please feel free to contact Phyllis Stone, pstone@stmatthias.net, 732-828-1400, x127.



Marian Novena at St. Matthias

Among the popular piety, Marian devotion has a pre-eminent place of honor. Prayer is the language of the heart, and prayer to Jesus through our Blessed Mother strengthens us, gives us hope, and unites us to heaven. The Miraculous Medal is a symbol of devotion and love recognized by the Catholic Church. It is a support for those looking for a grace, for those facing a hard time in their lives, or for those who just want to remember every day that they are not alone, and have an endlessly good and loving Mother supporting and sustaining them.

We will inaugurate a weekly novena of The Miraculous Medal on the important Marian feast of the Immaculate Conception on **December 8, 2020** which is a Tuesday. Thereafter the novena will be **after the 8 am Mass on every Monday** which is traditionally the day of the novena. Join us in praying our Miraculous Medal Novena.



Oplatki Christmas Wafers

Oplatki Christmas wafers are available in the Parish Office. If you would like to receive these wafers, please come to the Parish Office during regular hours.

Celebrating Our Faith: Liturgy

DO YOU WANT TO BE A ST. MATTHIAS CHRISTMAS LITURGY ANGEL???



Volunteers Christmas Liturgy Angels are needed for various liturgical ministries for the six Christmas Eve/Christmas Day Masses – December 24 at 2:00, 4:00 and 6:30 pm, Midnight, and December 25 at 10:00 and 12:00. You can be one of these angels:

Minister of Hospitality (greeters) - greet and seat Christmas mass attendees according to the distancing charts in the Church, Cafeteria and John XXIII Room, and usher communion lines to ensure proper spacing.

Eucharistic (Extraordinary) Minister - serve communion (the Precious Body) as trained by St. Matthias and mandated by the Diocese of Metuchen. (Must be at least 16 years of age).

Mass Safety Captain - oversee our safety between masses by assisting volunteers who sanitize chairs and pews for the next round of mass goers.

Decorate – assist the Environment Team with sprucing up and decorating the church, cafeteria and the John XXIII room for Christmas services.

Tech Support & Volunteer—specific training will be scheduled once we have all the angels lined up.

Volunteer-specific training will be scheduled once we have all the angels lined up.

Sign-ups are available now into December at

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A054FA4AB2FAAFF2-christmas>

or by contacting Phyllis Stone directly at (732) 828-1400, ext 127 or pstone@stmatthias.net.

The Diocese of Metuchen

The Diocese has scheduled a number of events to celebrate the 1st Anniversary of the Consecration of the Diocese to Mary of Guadalupe this week. Please go to www.lightingheartsonfire.org for the details.

Discovering God: Formation

Nativity 2020



To keep everyone safe this year, we will be approaching our Christmas Eve Nativity a little bit differently. We invite children of our parish to narrate the Nativity story in their own words. We will then have actors perform the story just as they tell it. For an example, watch "Christmas According to Kids" on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suowe2czxcA>) Although we cannot use the entirety of every entry, we will do our best to ensure that every child has a part in the video.

If you would like your children to participate, we invite you to record a video of your children telling the Christmas story **by Sunday, December 13th** and upload it to:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1cJCUplD-J7x90-nPziayTAOaSQ6zW0uU?usp=sharing>

If you have any questions, please email Kelly Dillon or Camryn Hadley at kd199@comcast.net We look forward to seeing your videos!



Substitute Teachers Needed for SMS

Saint Matthias School is looking to augment their teacher substitute list. A minimum of sixty college credits are required for all candidates. If you or someone you know is available Monday through Thursday from 7:30 to 2:30 and/or Friday from 7:30 to 12:30, please contact Joseph Gidaro, jgidaro@stmatthiasnj.org, or Diane Flanagan, dflanagan@stmatthiasnj.org at the school.

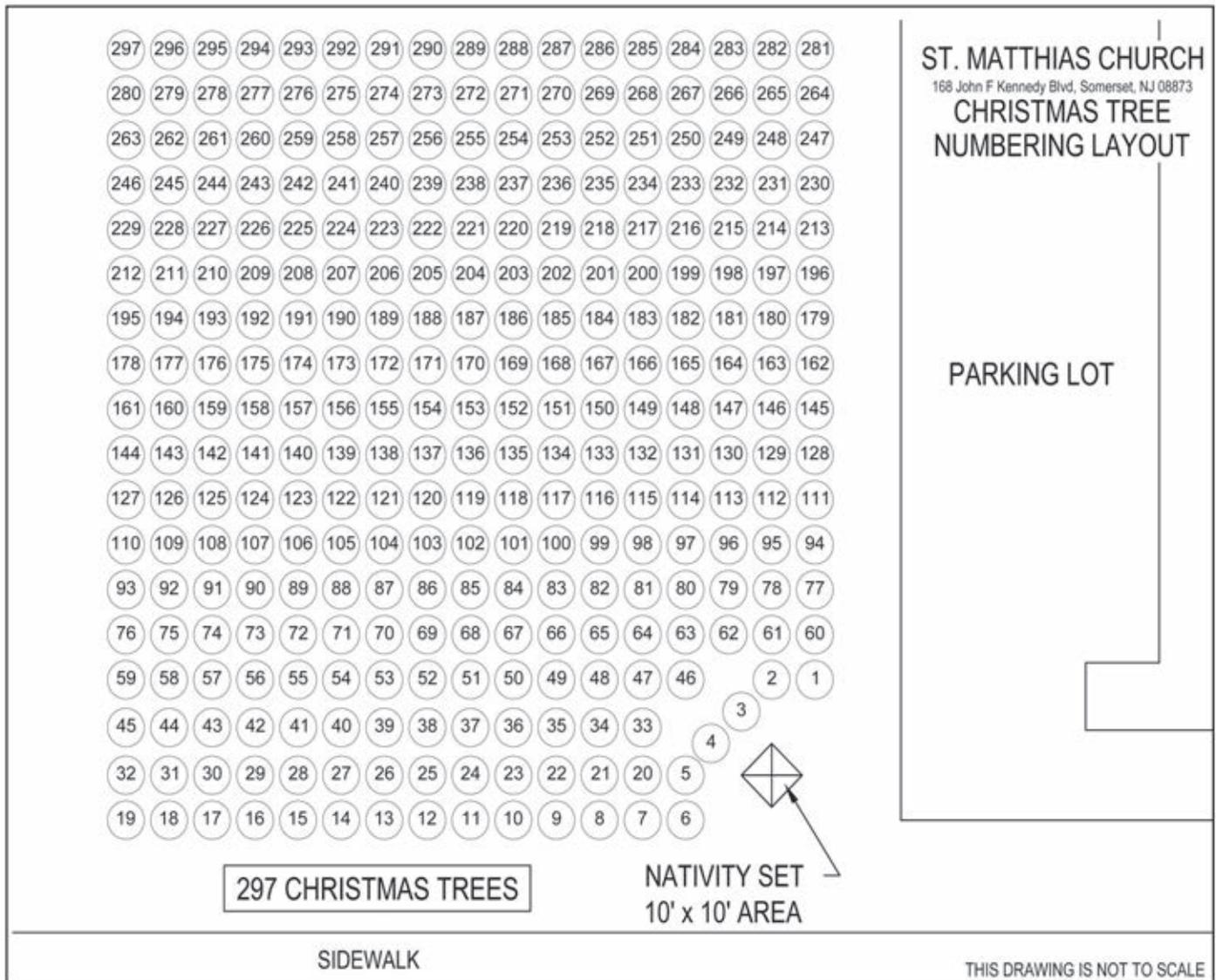
Building Community

Thank You to Fr. Joe and to Everyone Who Helped Setting Up The Christmas Trees!
The Blessing will be after the 5 PM Mass on Saturday, Dec. 5.



Map for Locating Your Christmas Tree

Go to www.stmatthias.net/tree for the list of names corresponding to the tree's number.



Being Good Stewards

Stewardship Reflection Dec 6, 2020
Second Sunday of Advent

Reflexiones — 6 de diciembre de 2020
2º Domingo de Adviento

"Prepare the way of the Lord..." - Mark 1:3

"Preparen el camino del Señor ..." - Marcos 1: 3

We are all called to live a holy life. We are all called to invite others to live holy lives. Living a stewardship lifestyle, being grateful and generous with our gifts, puts us on the path to holiness and is an example for others to be holy, too. We are responsible not only for our own lives, but for the lives of others as well.

Todos estamos llamados a vivir una vida santa. Todos estamos llamados a invitar a otros a vivir vidas santas. Vivir un estilo de vida de corresponsabilidad, ser agradecidos y generosos con nuestros dones, nos pone en el camino de la santidad y es un ejemplo para que otros también sean santos. Somos responsables no solo de nuestras propias vidas, sino también de las vidas de los demás.

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021				Last Year's Total
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 18 - Nov. 1, 2020	\$12,941.00	\$14,011.30	\$26,952.30	\$31,852.99
Week 19 - Nov. 8, 2020	\$10,009.53	\$13,666.35	\$23,675.88	\$27,873.99
Week 20 - Nov. 15, 2020	\$10,858.45	\$14,005.85	\$24,864.30	\$27,881.99
Week 21 - Nov. 22, 2020	\$11,337.15	\$13,925.85	\$25,263.00	\$27,835.99
Week 22 - Nov. 29, 2020	\$8,481.00	\$14,085.10	\$22,566.10	\$30,063.09
All Saints: \$2,115.12			Month-to-date Total	Nov Total Last Yr
All Souls: \$3,557.45			\$123,321.58	\$145,508.05
Catholic Campaign for Human Development: \$800			Current Year-to-date Total	Year-to-date as of Nov 30,
Thanksgiving: \$3,930.25			\$524,355.09	\$614,026.81

Key Provisions of the New CARES Act

The new law temporarily suspends the requirements for required minimum distributions (RMD) for the 2020 tax year. This may come as a relief to those who would have had to make a withdrawal. Many people use the RMD from their IRA to make a gift to charity. If you are 70½ or older, you can still make a gift from your IRA and reduce your taxable income, even if you do not itemize deductions.

In addition, the new law expands charitable giving incentives and allows taxpayers who take the standard deduction to make up to \$300 of charitable cash contributions to qualified charities this year. The \$300 deduction is per tax-filing unit, so the deduction is limited to \$300, even for married taxpayers filing jointly. For those who do itemize their deductions, the new law allows for cash contributions to be deducted up to 100% of your adjusted gross income for the 2020 calendar year. As always, please check with your tax advisor for details.



Merchant Discount Card Available for All —MAKES A GREAT STOCKING STUFFER!!!

The Home School Association is selling local discount cards for \$10.

Please use the following Sign Up Genius link below to request how many cards you wish to purchase:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A094BAAAE28AAF94-smsdiscount>

Payment can be sent to the SMS HSA PayPal account: <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/StMatthiasHSA?>

These cards may be purchased by anyone. You may use the discount once a day per merchant at the locations listed, until the expiration date stated. Details are on the card.

EVERYONE Is Encouraged to Purchase Gift Cards Online to Help Our School AT NO COST TO YOU

We have over 750 gift cards currently available online.

1. Go to your phone's App store and download "RaiseRight Fundraising" (If you are on a computer, go www.raiseright.com and follow the prompts.)
2. Click on "Join a Program"
3. Enter the following Enrollment Code to help St. Matthias School: **A68921F9388**
4. Then follow the prompts, skipping the optional boxes.

Remember to use **RaiseRight** every time you shop. Also, invite

friends/family/neighbors to purchase these gift cards. Questions? Contact Melissa Rizzo, melissamillerrizzo@gmail.com.



Caring for Others

A Joint Service Project *St. Matthias 6-12 Youth Ministry, GIFT Families, Confirmation Prep And All Who Want to Join In!*



GIFT BAGS OF WARMTH AND Joy Hats, Gloves and Scarves
FOR FAMILIES SERVED BY **UNITY SQUARE NEW BRUNSWICK**

Sunday, December 13 Between 9:30AM-1PM
Drop off Gift bags by shed/garage building at rear of St. Matthias Parking lot!
Because of the pandemic all items must be in gift bags only!
Questions or to help? Dee Nann, dnann@stmatthias.net

Unity Square is a community organizing and social concerns initiative of Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen. Their efforts focus on a target neighborhood of about 6,000 low-income residents of New Brunswick. Most neighborhood families are working poor, and have young children. Especially because of the pandemic these items were suggested as a need for many within the community. All gift bags will be donated directly to **Unity Square**.

2020 GIVING TREE – COVID-19 Edition

A symbolic Giving Tree is now in the Church; however, the ornaments will serve to provide general information only. Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, we will be supporting the less fortunate through virtual giving. In an effort to keep the staff and our volunteers safe, we will not be making deliveries this year. Therefore, **ABSOLUTELY NO GIFTS ARE TO BE DELIVERED TO THE CHURCH OR PARISH OFFICE.** Please check the parish website for additional details: www.stmatthias.net

Participating once again are: Great Expectations, Elijah's Promise, Ozanam Family Shelter, Ozanam Men's Shelter, PACT (gift cards only), Pregnancy Aid and YES Learning Center (pre-school children ages 3-5). **The Giving Tree will begin Thanksgiving week.** Please check the Parish website and/or bulletin for more information regarding the websites, wish lists and shipping addresses. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please call Joanne Diana (732)873-8521 or send an email to j-diana@comcast.net. Thank you!



Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council:

Chair: Nick Grippo
nickgrippo@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Lisa Robinson
lar0504@comcast.net

Secretary:
Tom Aussem

Co-Secretary:

Denise Brown
Lorraine Farr
Anne Marie Francis
Claudine Langrin
Garrett Linderoth
Joe Percoco

Rose Peng
Marybeth Purcell
John Taylor
Ana Kelly, Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

Parish Finance Council:

Joe Porter, Chair
Finance council
@stmatthias.net

Susan Klimcsak
Barry Dusault
Gwen Orłowski
Audrey Francis

Kester Hector
Mary Beth Oria, Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

Trustees:

Isaac Peng
Marge Richards

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

Parish Registration — Welcome new members! Please register by calling the Parish

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

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

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

The RCIA process is an opportunity for instruction and spiritual transformation for any adult seeking a deeper understanding of the Catholic tradition or

full incorporation into the Catholic Church. If you are interested in becoming a Catholic or completing the Sacraments of Initiation-- Baptism/ Confirmation/Eucharist, please call the Parish Office.

Stewardship

Stewardship is a way of life, a way of thanking God for all our blessings by returning a portion of the time, talent and treasure allotted to us. Whether it is clothes for the poor, food for the hungry, outreach to youth, in education, in worship, or simply arms stretched out to someone who is lonely, the Catholic Community of St. Matthias encourages everyone to become stewards of the gifts they have been given by God, returning a portion in gratitude to God for the work of ministry

here at St. Matthias and beyond our local community.



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

Bulletin Article Requests

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



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