



**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**  
 Mary Jo Loboda, *Parish Staff, Development*,  
**mjloboda**

Julio Montero, *Maintenance Supervisor*  
 Dolores R. Nann, *Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation*, **dnann**  
 Vinnie Natale, *Bookkeeper*, **vnatale**  
 Silvia Nizama, *Housekeeper*  
 Deacon John Radvanski, **deaconjohn**  
 Joan Best Seamon, *Pastoral Associate for Music Ministry*, **jseamon**  
 Sr. Marie Therese Sherwood, *OSF, Pastoral Assoc. for Social Concerns*, **msherwood**  
 Trish Stumper, *Parish Support Secretary*,  
**tstumper**

**St. Matthias School (add @stmatthiasnj.org)**

Mary Lynch, Principal, **mlynch**  
 Joseph Gidaro, Vice Principal, **jpgidaro**

**THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS**  
**SUNDAY, FEB 12, 2023-**  
**Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**World Marriage Day**



**Knights of Columbus  
 Pancake Breakfast  
 TODAY**



The Knights of Columbus will hold its annual Pancake Breakfast in honor of Past

Grand Knight Robert Norland on **Sunday, February 12th from 8:00am - 12:00 noon** in the school cafeteria.

**Proceeds from the breakfast will benefit St. Matthias School Tuition Angels.**

The cost is \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for ages 12-18 and children under 12 are free.

Breakfast menu is pancakes, eggs, sausage, bagels, juice, coffee and much more.

We look forward to seeing you there.



**Get Ready for the Lenten Groups!**

Start for the first time or continue with a St. Matthias Small Faith Sharing Group!

We have about 15 groups that meet on various days/times of the week. If you are new to this experience, please sign up online:

<https://forms.gle/r79iDpUS3wCTNVNj6>

Facilitators will be contacting group members who have been part of their group. Each group likely will be meeting on Zoom usually on the same date/time.

**Groups will begin the week of February 19! New members, please sign-up by February 15!**

Most groups will be using the same resource.



**Ash Wednesday  
 Drive-Thru Ashes**

**Can you volunteer?**

**Time: 4:00-5:45 PM  
 on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

**To sign up please visit:**

[www.stmatthias.net/ashwednesday](http://www.stmatthias.net/ashwednesday)

# 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.

**Black History Month  
World Marriage Day**

**Sunday, Feb 12, 2023 K of C Pancake Breakfast 8AM**

7:15AM K of C Pancake Breakfast set-up Cafeteria  
8:00AM Mass Church  
10:00AM Mass -Sign language Interpreter Church  
10:00AM 1st Communion Prep#1 @ Mass Church  
and classrooms  
12:00PM Mass Church

**Monday, Feb 13, 2023 SMS Closed Bishop's  
Holiday**

**St. Catherine De Ricci, Dominican Prioress**

8:00AM Mass/ Miraculous Medal Novena Church

**Tuesday Feb 14, 2023 Valentine's Day**

**Memorial -Sts. Cyril & Methodius—Apostles of the  
Slavs**

8:00AM Mass Church  
7:00PM Racial Justice Initiative Core Mtg. Zoom

**Wednesday, Feb 15, 2023 Sts. Jovita & Faustinus,  
Martyrs**

8:00AM Mass—St. Joseph Novena Church  
9:30AM Prayer Group 1 Holy Spirit de Porres Rm  
2:30AM SMS Play Practice School  
6:30PM Confirmation 7 John XXIII Rm  
7:30PM Folk Group Rehearsal Church

**Thursday, Feb 16, 2023 St. Onesimus, Martyr**

8:00AM Mass Church  
3:30PM Children's Choir Gr. 3&4 Church  
4:00PM Children's Choir Gr. 5-8 Church  
6:00PM ASP Safety Meeting Cafeteria  
7:00PM Prayer Shawl Ministry Neumann Rm  
7:30PM Adult Choir rehearsal Church

**Friday, Feb 17, 2023 SMS Dismissal 12:15PM**

**Seven Founders of the Order of Servites**

8:00AM Mass Church

**Saturday, Feb 18, 2023 Memorial St. Kuriakise  
Elias Chavara, Priest & Founder (India)**

9:00AM Secular Franciscans de Porres Rm  
3:30PM Reconciliation Church  
5:00PM Vigil Mass Church

**Sunday, Feb 19, 2023 Live Lent Groups Begin**

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

## Bulletin Article Requests:

If you would like to send information to be included in our bulletin, please email it to [bulletin@stmatthias.net](mailto:bulletin@stmatthias.net) by 8 AM, MONDAY, 5 business days before the needed bulletin date (earlier for holiday weekends). Approved content is published on a space-available basis.

Dear Friends,

Today is World Marriage Day, an annual observance to honor husband and wife as the foundation of the family, the basic unit of society. It salutes the beauty of their faithfulness, sacrifice and joy in daily married life. I invite every husband and wife to spend a little dedicated time in prayer and reflection by participating in a seven-day virtual retreat focused on marriage ([www.foryourmarriage.org](http://www.foryourmarriage.org)). See page 8 in this bulletin for more details about opportunities for marriage enrichment, divorce survival, and retreat.

We all know that marriage is NOT a bed of roses. Every marriage hits its rough spots. Pope Francis noted in his apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* that “the life of every family is marked by all kinds of crises. Couples should be helped to realize that surmounting a crisis need not weaken their relationship... Each crisis becomes an apprenticeship in growing closer together or learning a little more about what it means to be married. There is no need for couples to resign themselves to an inevitable downward spiral or a tolerable mediocrity” (no. 232). If you are struggling in your marriage, take heart! The Church cares about you and wants you and your spouse to find healing and a renewed sense of love. Be open to the resources our Church offers to enrich and support your married life.

At the same time, we need to be aware of those couples who have found it impossible to stay in marriage due to insurmountable difficulties and so have chosen to separate or divorce. All of us need to be sensitive to their situation as St. John Paul II beautifully asked us: “I earnestly call upon pastors and the whole community of the faithful to help the divorced and with solicitous care, to make sure that they do not consider themselves as separated from the Church... Let the Church pray for them, encourage them and show herself a merciful mother and thus sustain them in faith and hope.”

In this context, it is important to have a clear picture of their status in the eyes of the Church as there are many misconceptions: Catholics who are separated or divorced, and who have not remarried outside of the church, are in good standing in the church and can receive the sacraments, including holy Communion. That means divorced/separated Catholics are not excommunicated from the church as some mistakenly think. Annulments do not cost thousands of dollars. Annulments do not take years to process and do not have to be processed in Rome. Divorcees with children can get an annulment. Even if your “ex” does not cooperate in the annulment process, you can still get help. Separated/divorced Catholics are welcome at Mass and Church activities. Separated/divorced Catholics can receive the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation - provided their remarriage, if any, is in the church. They can be sponsors at Baptism and Confirmation. The children of the separated/divorced Catholics can be baptized and receive other sacraments.

Knowing that we are all God's children trying to live life to the best of our ability will give us a greater understanding of the struggles we all face, especially those with difficulties in marriage; it will then give us a greater appreciation of each other.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal



## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** Gn 4:1-15, 25; Ps 50:1, 8, 16bc-17, 20-21; Mk 8:11-13

**Tuesday:** Gn 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10; Ps 29:1a, 2, 3ac-4, 3b, 9c-10; Mk 8:14-21

**Wednesday:** Gn 8:6-13, 20-22; Ps 116:12-13, 14-15, 18-19; Mk 8:22-26

**Thursday:** Gn 9:1-13; Ps 102:16-18, 19-21, 29, 22-23; Mk 8:27-33

**Friday:** Gn 11:1-9; Ps 33:10-11, 12-13, 14-15; Mk 8:34 — 9:1

**Saturday:** Heb 11:1-7; Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 10-11; Mk 9:2-13

**Sunday:** Lv 19:1-2, 17-18; Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13; 1 Cor 3:16-23; Mt 5:38-48

## Mass Intentions for the Week

<b>Saturday, Feb 11</b>	5:00PM	Happy Birthday Louis Nastasi, By Frances, Louis Jr., Diane & Richard
<b>Sunday, Feb 12</b>	8:00AM	Kevin Coffey, by Mafalda & Family
	10:00AM	Intention Of Parishioners
	12:00PM	Birthday Blessings for Karen Francis & Fr. Sesena By Anne Marie Francis
<b>Monday, Feb 13</b>	8:00AM	Marie & Mauro De Feo, by Daughter, Lisa
<b>Tuesday, Feb 14</b>	8:00AM	Dennis Howard Stuewe, by The Stuewe Family
<b>Wednesday, Feb 15</b>	8:00AM	Gwen Tibay, by The Tibay Family
<b>Thursday, Feb 16</b>	8:00AM	Hugh Scott, by Wife, Pearl
<b>Friday, Feb 17</b>	8:00AM	George & Eileen Bezman, by James & Mary Woods
<b>Saturday, Feb 18</b>	5:00PM	John Natale, by Vinnie & Joanne
<b>Sunday, Feb 19</b>	8:00AM	Eleuteris Banaag, by Minda Villarica
	10:00AM	Marion Fischer, By St. Matthias Rosarians
	12:00PM	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  
John Blum  
Bishop Paul Bootkowski  
Anthony Brandi  
Barbara Butler  
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  
Kim Price  
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  
Mark Worthington  
Angie Yetyet

*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*

James H. Vance  
Rose T. Lee  
Louise Orłowski

# Reflect



## Smile with Your Family



**Bless my ex-sister.** Two sisters spent the day fighting. That evening they prepared for bed, still mad at each other. As usual, each knelt by the side of her bed for their prayers. "Dear God," the 8-year-old began, "Bless Daddy and Mommy, bless our cat and dog." Then she stopped. Her mother gently prodded, "Didn't you forget somebody?" She glared across the bed at her 6-year-old sister and added, "And, oh yes, God, bless my ex-sister." 😊

**You win the war:** My wife and I have a rule. We don't fight on Saturday nights. You know why? Because I am a Minister of a small church and I have to preach on Sunday morning. Now I don't want you to get the idea that we fight the other six nights of the week. Quite frankly, I gave her an unconditional surrender several years ago. Husbands, let me teach you a lesson that will save you a lot

of grief. When it comes to your wife, if you lose the battle, you win the war. 😊

**For the last twenty years,** I've received a Valentine's Day card from the same secret admirer. So, I was upset when I didn't get one this year. I'm already upset that my granny died two months ago, now this? 😊  
What Valentine's message can you find in a honeycomb? "Bee mine." 😊

How did the cashew share its feelings with the almond? "I'm nuts about you." 😊

What do you call someone with a cold on Valentine's Day? "Lovesick." 😊

Every Single's Favorite: Do I have a date for Valentine's Day? Yes, February 14th. 😊



## Parenting Tune-Up

**Black History Month.** The past few years have been tumultuous for race relations. Few people think of themselves as racist. But, do you or your children have friends of a different race? Have an honest discussion at your dinner table: What do they think of those who are different? Are they friends with them? Do they include them?

## Anger is an Unexploded Bomb!

Christopher Burns wrote an article, "Wars' Lethal Leftovers Threaten Europeans," in 1994 on the casualties of war, not the most current one with its Improvised Explosive Devices but of wars that officially ended seventy years ago in the case of World War II and ninety-seven years ago as regards World War I. How is that? "The bombs of World War II are still killing in Europe. They turn up, and sometimes blow up, at construction sites, in fishing nets, or on beaches decades after the guns fell silent. Hundreds of tons of explosives are recovered every year in France alone. Thirteen old bombs exploded in France in 2009, killing twelve people and wounding eleven, the Interior Ministry said. 'I've lost two of my colleagues,' said Yvon Bouvet, who heads a government team in the Champagne-Ardenne region that defuses explosives from both World War I and World War II.... 'Unexploded bombs become more dangerous with time,' Bouvet said. 'With corrosion inside, the weapon becomes more unstable, the detonator can be exposed.'"

**What is true of buried bombs is true of lingering anger. It explodes when we least expect it. That is why Jesus advises us to manage our anger in the Sermon on the Mount.**

## Marriage Tune-Up



Valentine's Day. Jesus continually urges us to go beyond the letter of the law. He interprets "You shall not kill" (Mt. 5) as "**Don't be angry.**" "You shall not commit adultery" might be interpreted as "**Show your spouse that they come first and you love him/her wholeheartedly.**" Go the extra mile for your beloved today. Find a way to stretch your love.

## Passion and Reason

The Greek philosopher, Plato, four hundred years before Christ, wrote of two horses in the human heart, Passion and Reason. Passion is the wild untamed horse with boundless strength and energy, but very hard to control and direct. Reason is the tamed horse, accustomed to the reins, disciplined in stride and responding to directions. A chariot hitched to a pair of Passions might go anywhere but would surely crash or overturn before long. However, a charioteer who selects a pair of Reasons will be too cautious and fearful to go anywhere worthwhile. But if Passion and Reason can be paired, then the powerful energy is harnessed and the journey of life can be enjoyed.



– The teaching of Jesus strongly affirms the need of rules, but rules are to be understood as a means to the end, which is a life of spiritual strength and commitment.

## Repair work

*“ . . . if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother and then come and offer your gift.”*

Matthew 5: 17-37

In the January 2023 issue of **America** Magazine, essayist and dad Joe Pagetta recounts a confrontation with his six-year-old daughter. With another daughter sick in her room with COVID, Dad asked the healthy daughter to put on mask for the sake of the other members of the household, including her 78-year-old grandmother. Dad couldn't find the mask she liked and she refused to wear the one Dad gave her. Standoff. Dad lost it, grabbed her by both arms, stiffly and screamed “Put on the friggin’ mask!” (Dad didn't say “friggin”). Dad then went into another room to calm down and gather himself.

Not long after, his daughter came in to apologize. Dad fell to his knees and hugged her. He was the one who was sorry for losing his cool and yelling, he assured her, sorry for not being more patient, sorry for taking his stress out on her. Pagetta shared the incident with Dr. Kathleen Seabolt, executive director of the Child and Family Center at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Seabolt responded, “You were rightly protecting a home from disease, a disease that has killed over three million Americans. You are allowed to make an effort to protect your family. It's our job as parents.” But she also said that Dad was right to make amends: “The repair could be, ‘I know we are both angry right now and I regret the tone of my voice. I regret the words I've chosen. I wish I had made better choices. And it's very important that we all cooperate together to keep Grandma well, to keep everybody healthy.’”

Pagetta was struck by Dr. Seabolt's use of the word “repair” as a key part of reconciliation. He writes: “If you ask for forgiveness from your daughters (or anyone else) and call upon God's grace and receive it (and from God, I believe, you always do), you must then decide to take action. To be more patient. To attempt to fix what has been broken.” Dr. Seabolt adds: “If we are trapped in a cycle of ‘I'm sorry,’ those words lose power because there's no repair attached to the words. If a child chooses to parrot language of apology without the proper feelings and process, then we have taught them a magic spell to make bad feelings go away and for them to be able to go on about their business. That is not the process we want.”

In today's Gospel, Jesus calls all of us who would follow him to be actively engaged in the “repair” work of reconciliation: mending frayed relationships, healing broken friendships, restoring peace to fractured families and communities. Such “repairs” requires humility, generosity of spirit and grace – grace that stressed-out dad Joe Pagetta came to realize is readily available from the God of reconciliation. In every relationship, in every set of circumstances, the faithful disciple of Jesus seeks to break the destructive rut of distrust and resentment by taking that formidable first step to “repair” the love and trust that has been broken between us and those we love.

## Love in all its beauty and pain

In a European village many years ago, a young man was courting the daughter of a rabbi.

“I love you,” the young man proclaimed. “Do you?” the woman asked. “I love you deeply,” he insisted. She paused for a moment. “Do you know what gives me pain, what hurts me, what makes me sad?” she asked. He was taken aback by her question. He stammered that he did not and could not possibly know what hurt her. “I am trying to tell you how much you mean to me and you ask meaningless questions!” “The question is not meaningless,” she said quietly but firmly. “For if you do not know what hurts me, how can you possibly say you love me?”

**We have been created in the image and likeness of the God who created us as an expression of his complete, unconditional love. Our reason for being is to manifest that love in the world God created. To follow Jesus is to be ministers of such love, to be agents of reconciliation, to be the means for God's love to be realized. Such love begins in our service to others, in lifting up their hopes and dreams as we work to realize our own, to find our happiness in the happiness of others. Christ's teachings on reconciliation and forgiveness challenge us to embrace an attitude of compassion that understands and acknowledges the hurt and pain that exists in the lives of everyone of us. Only in understanding the despair and disappointments of those we love — and of those we find difficult to love — can we begin to break the cycle of hatred, fear and vengeance that entraps us and plunges our world into war and violence.**



## Reflect

### Anger destroyed his life



Two great men were born in the year 1564 A.D. One man- Shakespeare lived to the age of fifty-two and became the greatest dramatist of the English language. The other- Christopher Marlowe perished midway in his life at the age of twenty-nine, because of his anger. Christopher wrote some of the best tragic plays at a very young age. One of his best plays is "The tragical life of Dr. Faustus." Had he lived longer he probably would have become greater than Shakespeare. He was a man given to anger. He picked up a quarrel with a man in a tavern. That man challenged him to a sword fight unto death. They both fought and Christopher was mortally wounded and later succumbed to his injuries. A great promise was terminated because of anger



**Jesus explains that the fifth commandment means respecting life in all its stages by honoring others in words and deeds. This means that we have to control our anger because it is the rawest, strongest and most destructive of human emotions. Describing three stages of anger and the punishment each deserves, Jesus advises his disciples not to get angry in such a way that they sin.**

**1) Anger in the heart ("brief stage of insanity" Cicero), has two forms: a) a sudden, blazing flame of anger which dies suddenly. b) a surge of anger which boils inside and lingers so that the heart seeks revenge and refuses to forgive or forget. Jesus prescribes trial and sentencing by the Village Court of Elders. 2) Anger in speech: Using words which are insulting ("raka"="fool"), or damaging to the reputation ("moros" meaning a person of loose morals). Jesus says that such an angry one should be sent to the Sanhedrin or Jewish religion's Supreme Court for trial and sentencing. 3) Anger in action: Sudden outbursts of uncontrollable anger often result in physical assault or abuse. Jesus says that such anger deserves hellfire as its punishment. In short, Jesus teaches that long-lasting anger is bad, contemptuous speech or destroying someone's reputation is worse and harming another physically is the worst.**

### Be Men and Women of integrity and Character

According to the teachings of the Jewish rabbis, the world stands fast on truth, justice and peace; hence, liars, slanderers, scoffers and hypocrites will not enter Heaven. The rabbis classified two types of oaths as offensive to God:

- 1) frivolous oaths using God's name to support a false statement because this violates the second commandment and
- 2) evasive oaths using words like *Heaven, Jerusalem, or my head* because God is everywhere, and He owns everything. Jesus interprets the Mosaic Law on oaths to mean that we should be righteous men and women of integrity and character. If one is honest in his or her words and deeds, there is no need for one to support his or her statements and transactions with oaths or swearing. *How forceful are honest words!* (Job 0:69). An oath is a solemn invocation of God (So help me, God!) to bear witness to the truth of what one asserts to be the case or to the sincerity of one's undertakings in regard to future actions. It is necessary and admissible to ask God's help in the discharge of an important social duty (e.g., President's oath of office), or while bearing witness in a court of law ("I will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth ... "So help me, God."). Jesus teaches, "Say yes when you mean yes and say no when you mean no" (Mt 5:37). That is, he invites us to live in truth in every instance and to conform our thinking, our words and our deeds to the truth.

### Never curse the Umpire!

Angelo Bartlett Giamatti was the President of Yale University, and later, the seventh Commissioner of Major League Baseball. Giamatti loved baseball. He felt that the structure of the game was a paradigm of the human journey in which all of us seek to break from the box, make a wide turn and get home safely. At his memorial service, Giamatti's son recalled endless hours in which his father (clad in a vest, a tie and a Red Sox cap) pitched them in to him. His son also recalled a word of advice, forcefully delivered after a Little League argument at first base (with father admonishing son): "Never curse the umpire. He's the only one who knows the rules." It was Giamatti's contention, you see, that the beauty of the game ... indeed, the very ballet of the game ... required someone who could define the difference between ball and strike, fair and foul, safe and out, and who could also articulate the rules that give the game its structure. For the rules are to baseball as the law is to life. They are not the game. But without them, the game has no meaning. Or, as a character exclaims in Woody Allen's excellent film *Crimes and Misdemeanors*: "Without the law, all is darkness." In today's Gospel, Jesus reinterprets the Mosaic laws giving them a new meaning.



Ash Wednesday  
— Lent Begins

February 22, 2023

# Drive-Thru Ash Wednesday Ministry



Dear Friends,

Besides the four Ash Wednesday Masses/service in the Church, we will continue our practice of the Drive-thru Ash distribution from 4:00 - 5:30 pm. At all the Masses last weekend, we already announced the invitation for volunteers and will give the same via other channels. If you are able to help distribute ashes on **Wednesday, February 22nd**, between the hours of 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM, please visit [www.stmatthias.net/ashwednesday](http://www.stmatthias.net/ashwednesday) to sign up. We would greatly appreciate your assistance, I'm sure many of you will help out as in the past. God bless. Fr. Abraham

## Pray



### TESTIMONY OF SOME OF OUR PARISHIONERS

Many of our parishioners enjoyed **Live Lent!** faith-sharing groups. Here are just three testimonies:

1. "I have never done this before and didn't know what to expect but it was great meeting new people that shared the same values."

2. "Our small group talked, listened and laughed so hard. It is my wish that such energy can be transferred to the larger St. Matthias community. To put it mildly our hearts were set on fire each time we met!!!"

3. "This was my first time participating in a small group program at St. Matthias and I loved it! I knew some in my group, but many I did not, and now I have more parish friends. There was no pressure to participate. I am looking forward to the next opportunity to join a small group, and highly recommend it to others."

If you have not been to any such faith-sharing groups, please join one! To sign up online:

<https://forms.gle/r79iDpUS3wCTNVNJ6>

## Learn

### BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT ST. MATTHIAS – FEBRUARY 2023



#### CELEBRATING THE MEMORY OF MR. JOHN ROBERT LEWIS

There are many notable people to celebrate in Black History Month but today we remember. **John Robert Lewis** was a civil rights activist who served as a United States Congressman representing Georgia's 5th district from 1987 until his death in 2020. He was born on February 21, 1940. Mr. Lewis was a son of sharecroppers and an apostle of nonviolence who was bloodied at Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 7, 1965, and across the Jim Crow South in the historic struggle for racial equality. John Lewis then carried a mantle of moral authority into Congress.

On the front lines of the bloody campaign to end Jim Crow laws, he suffered many beatings, a fractured skull and jailing. Mr. Lewis was a valiant stalwart of the civil rights movement and a speaker at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963.

Mr. Lewis's personal history paralleled that of the civil rights

movement. He was **among the original 13 Freedom Riders**, the Black and white activists who challenged segregated interstate travel in the South in 1961. He was a founder and early leader of the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee**, which coordinated lunch-counter sit-ins. He helped organize the March on Washington, where Dr. King was the main speaker, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

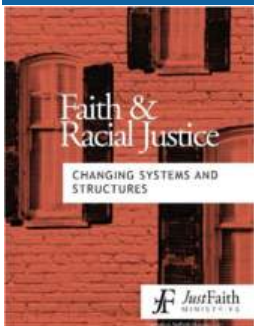
Mr. Lewis led demonstrations against racially segregated restrooms, hotels, restaurants, public parks and swimming pools, and he rose up against other indignities of second-class citizenship. At nearly every turn he was beaten and tormented by white mobs and law enforcement.

In the House of Representatives, Mr. Lewis was known for his relentless pursuit of justice, he was called "the conscience of the Congress" by his colleagues.

In 2011, President Obama awarded Mr. Lewis the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor. John Lewis died July 17, 2020.

*Submitted by Joan Pritchard*

## Learn



### Changing Systems and Structures.

Sign up now for the third and last module of the Faith and Racial Justice series –

**8 Sessions - Saturdays from February 25, 2023 (Retreat) until June 10, 2023**

February 25; March 4, 18; April 1, 22; May 6, 20; June 3, 10

(Makeup sessions available for missed sessions)

9:00 – 11:30 AM (Sessions on Zoom)

Contact program facilitators for more information or email: [matthiasracialjustice@gmail.com](mailto:matthiasracialjustice@gmail.com)

Neil Purcell

[neil.purcell.nj@gmail.com](mailto:neil.purcell.nj@gmail.com)

Kerry Millan

[kerrytheinterim@gmail.com](mailto:kerrytheinterim@gmail.com)

Phyllis Stone

[phylliswstone@aol.com](mailto:phylliswstone@aol.com)



The next Marriage Encounter Weekend for marriage enrichment will be held February 24-26, 2023. For more information contact Tom & Ruth DeFalco at 732-904-9636.

### Surviving Divorce

The Surviving Divorce program is a 12 week program for men and women seeking healing from separation or divorce. Attendees will meet once per week beginning on March 2, 2023. Call Ro Bersch at 908-313-5947 for more information.

### Make a Virtual Marriage Retreat!

Strengthen your marriage this National Marriage Week by joining a \*virtual\* marriage retreat! Each day for seven days, set aside time with your spouse to read the daily quote and reflection, then put that day's theme into practice in your marriage. You can participate in the retreat from anywhere in the world and on your own schedule. The retreat theme is: *Marriage... One Flesh, Given and Received*. Visit: <https://www.foryourmarriage.org/celebrate-national-marriage-week/> and click on 'At Home Couple's Retreat'.

## From the Pastoral Staff

In this week's Gospel Matthew continues the Sermon on the Mount with a three part instruction by Jesus on the Way of Life in the kingdom of heaven. Today's reading is part one and deals with the Law. Part two deals with worship and religious practice and contains the Lord's Prayer. Part three deals with trusting God and deeds of loving service to our neighbor.

When Matthew speaks of "the Law and the prophets" he means the whole Scripture. When the Messiah brings the fullness of the kingdom none of scripture will be done away with. Instead it will be fulfilled. Matthew's Jesus does not overturn the Law of Moses, nor does he set his followers free from the Law. He requires his followers to go beyond the Law by doing more than the Law requires.

"The Law condemned murder. Jesus condemns anger. The

Law condemned adultery. Jesus condemns even lustful looks. As Jewish Christians who had always been faithful to the Law Matthew's community need a way to understand the difference Jesus and the kingdom he brings have made" (*Sunday Connection*, Loyola Press). They affirmed that God had always been at work in history through "the Law and the prophets." But God's work goes beyond that to be embodied by the Messiah who reveals the definitive will of God. The written scriptures and their interpretation in tradition are surpassed by Jesus whose life and teaching are the definitive revelation of the will of God.



**Dee Nann**  
Faith Formation

## Parish Updates

If you are now solely using a cell phone, have changed your phone number or address, please call the parish office, so we can update your records. We would also like to update our parish data base with e-mail addresses. Email Kelly at: [kcounts@stmatthias.net](mailto:kcounts@stmatthias.net) to have your email address included or to update an email address. Thank you!

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



## Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023				Last Year's Total
	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 32 - Feb. 5, 2023	\$9,108.44	\$18,094.75	<b>\$27,203.19</b>	\$31,073.75
Week 33 - Feb. 12, 2023	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	\$27,060.25
Week 34 - Feb. 19, 2023	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	\$26,116.35
Week 35 - Feb. 26, 2023	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	\$18,800.14
			Month-to-date Total	Feb Total Last Yr
<b>Building Repair &amp; Replacement: \$2,931</b>			<b>\$27,203.19</b>	\$103,050.49
			Current Year-to-	Year-to-date as of
			<b>\$863,303.91</b>	\$896,976.57



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

Our diocese has been blessed in recent years with an increased number of vocations and, thanks be to God, we presently have 21 seminarians studying for the priesthood. A large portion of our seminarians' education is being funded by the Bishop's Annual Appeal, for which they are extremely grateful. Your gift also supports a wide array of diocesan programs that foster vocations and provide ongoing formation for those called to both ordained and lay leadership roles within the Church. Your generosity also ensures that our retired priests who have served so faithfully receive the care they deserve in their later years. Please be as generous as your means allow.



### YEAR-END TAX STATEMENT

Our Parishioners who are Parish Giving donors will soon be receiving the year-end statement from Parish Giving for tax purposes. This statement does not account for contributions made by check or envelope. Those of you who need such a statement for tax purposes, please email [kcoun@stmatthias.net](mailto:kcoun@stmatthias.net) with your parish number or call the parish office. We will gladly send it to you as we do each year.

### Stewardship Reflection Feb 12, 2023 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

***"For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." MATTHEW 5:20***

The Pharisees lived according to the letter of the law and they used this to elevate themselves above the other people. Jesus is clear – it's the love that you have in your heart, for God and others, that will get you to heaven. Simply following church rules to the letter and not out of love, does not necessarily put you on the path to heaven. Attending Sunday Mass and then gossiping about a fellow parishioner on the parking lot is an example of being a modern day Pharisee.

### Reflexiónese 12 de febrero de 2023 6<sup>do</sup> Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario

***"Porque les digo a ustedes, no entrarán en el reino de Dios a menos que practiquen la justicia mejor que los escribas y los fariseos". MATEO 5:20***

Los fariseos vivían de acuerdo con la letra de la ley y la usaban para elevarse a sí mismos por encima de los demás. Jesús es claro - es el amor que tienes en tu corazón, por Dios y por los demás, el que te llevará al cielo. Seguir simplemente las reglas de la Iglesia y no hacerlo por amor, no lo pone necesariamente en el camino al cielo. Atender a la Misa Dominical y luego criticar a un compañero de parroquia en el estacionamiento es un ejemplo de lo que es ser un fariseo moderno.

## Serve



### Phone Ministry to Our Home Bound Parishioners

If any of our homebound parishioners and their caregivers would like to receive a caring, friendly phone call periodically from one of our parishioners, please contact Sister Marie Therese at:

[msherwood@stmatthias.net](mailto:msherwood@stmatthias.net)



## Part-Time Evening General Maintenance Person

St. Matthias is looking for a **part-time evening general maintenance person**. This employee will be responsible for maintaining the safety and cleanliness of the church/school.

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

## Connect with Our Local Community



**Spirituality: Gardening**  
**Saturday, March 11, 2023**  
**10:00 AM - 11:30 AM**

**St. Francis Center for Renewal**  
395 Bridle Path Road,  
Bethlehem, PA, 18017

Learn how to start a garden from seed, whether you have a large space in your backyard or want to grow in pots on a patio. You'll see how easy it is to do and how it also saves money. Jen will share her favorite varieties of flowers and vegetables and reliable sources for seeds and other equipment to get you started.

**Facilitator:** Jen Topp

**Registration:** \$20 per person.

If you'd prefer to pay by check or register by phone, please call us at : 610-867-8890.



**Loyola Jesuit Center**  
161 James Street,  
Morristown, NJ  
973-539-0740

**03/10 –**  
**03/12 Co-Ed Weekend Retreat**

**Theme:**

Brother and Sister and Mother to Me.....  
God's Holy Family is wider than We Know

**Retreat Leaders:**

Linda Baratte and Christine Eberle

**03/24 – 03/26 Co-Ed Weekend Retreat**

**Theme:**

Journey of Sorrow, Journey of Love

**Retreat Leader:**

Susan Stabile

**Diocesan Youth Day**  
**2023**

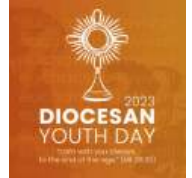
**March 12th from**  
**11:30am - 5pm**

**St. Thomas Aquinas High School**

**Theme: Eucharistic Revival!**

- The day will begin with check-in at 11:30 AM and begin promptly at 12 noon and run until 5:00 PM.
- All High School aged teens are welcome!
- Sunday Mass with Bishop Checchio.
- Featuring Keynote speaker, Fr. Malachy Joseph Napier, CFR a selected Eucharistic Preacher from the USCCB's National Eucharistic Revival.

**For more Information to register:**  
<https://www.diometuchen.org/yyam>



## Parish Leadership

**Parish Pastoral Council:**

**Co-Chairs:**

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

**Co-Secretaries:**

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

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

**Trustees:**

Pearl Scott  
Marge Richards

**Parish Finance Council:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



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**event dates**

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Tuesday, 10/11  
Tuesday, 10/18  
Tuesday, 10/25

**November 2022**

Tuesday, 11/01  
Tuesday, 11/08  
Tuesday, 11/15  
Tuesday, 11/29

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