



# ST. MATTHIAS CHURCH

*All are Welcome*

## 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](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

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

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Sr Marie Therese Sherwood, *OSF, Pastoral Assoc. for Social Concerns*, [msherwood](mailto:msherwood@stmatthias.net)

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## THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS SUNDAY, FEB 20, 2022- Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

### To Do This Week:

- ✓ Join us for the **Black History Mass** TODAY, Saturday, Feb. 19 at 5 PM. See page 8 for more events.
- ✓ Buy your tickets for next Saturday's **Night of Winners Basket Raffle!** Come in person or "attend" virtually. Details are on page 10.
- ✓ Sign Up for a **Live Lent Group**. Groups begin meeting next week. Details on page 7.
- ✓ Come to our new **Social Justice Ministry meeting** this Tuesday, Feb. 22 via zoom. Details are on page 9.
- ✓ Discern if you might be called to serve on the **Pastoral Council**. See page 9.



From Fr. Abraham —

### Any Electricians/Carpenters to Help the Parish?

We have been planning to upgrade our tech capability in the church. The goal is to have better participation during Mass with the lyrics and prayers more easily visible. Also we wish to improve our live-streaming capability.

Thanks to the goodwill of many, our **Giving Tuesday Spirit Tech Connect** campaign raised **\$15,910** towards our \$40,000 goal. We are very grateful for the generosity of our 77 donors!

At this time, we wish to begin Phase 1 of the project to purchase and install the TV monitors and accessories in the front of the church. We could save a lot if any parishioners who have skills in electricity/carpentry are willing to volunteer their time to do the wiring and carpentry work. If you can spare some time, please contact Fr. Abraham at [abraham@stmatthias.net](mailto:abraham@stmatthias.net) If you did not have the chance to donate earlier and would like to do so now, please go to: <https://secure.givelively.org/donate/st-matthias-church-school/givingtuesday-spiritual-tech-connect-campaign> Thank you.



### Did you receive a letter from our Bishop?

Please see **page 10** to learn more about the Bishop's Annual Appeal and why it is important to help so many who are in need at this difficult time. We ask everyone to participate in this Appeal in some way. On behalf of all being helped, thank you.

### Save the Date: Synod Listening Sessions at St. Matthias:

**March 3, 7 pm** (virtual) and **March 5, 10 am** (in-person)



If you shop on Amazon, please help us by starting at: [www.stmatthias.net/Amazon](http://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://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 Feb 20, 2022

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
12:00PM	Mass	Church
4:00PM	SMYLE Mtg.	Zoom

### Monday, Feb 21, 2022 President's Day—

SMS & Parish Office are closed

### St. Peter Damian, Bishop & Doctor of the Church

8:00AM No Daily Mass

### Tuesday, Feb 22, 2022 Feast of St. Peter the Apostle

8:00AM	Mass	Church
7:30PM	Social Justice Committee	See pg. 9 for contact information

### Wednesday, Feb 23, 2022 St. Polycarp, bishop &

Martyr

8:00AM	Mass	Church
9:30AM	Prayer Grp 1 Holy Spirit	Zoom
7:30PM	Folk Group Rehearsal	Church

### Thursday, Feb 24, 2022 St. Adela, Princess of

England

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

### Friday, Feb 25, 2022 St. Walburga, Abbess

8:00AM	Mass	Church
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### Saturday, Feb 26, 2022 St. Porphyry of Gaza, Bishop Live Lent Registration Ends

9:30AM	Liturgy Ministers Day of Reflection	John XXIII Rm
3:30PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Mass	Church
6:00PM	NOW Night of Winners Event	Virtual & Cafeteria

### Sunday Feb 27, 2022 Live Lent Groups Begin

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
10:30AM	RCIA	Cafeteria
12:00PM	Mass	Church

## From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends,

It is becoming increasingly common knowledge that the generations being raised up now are dissociating themselves from any religious group. We see this reflected in fewer sacraments being received, poor Mass attendance, and parish closures. In a Pew Research article the top reasons the “nones” cite for labeling themselves as “nones” include “I question a lot of religious teachings” (51-77%), “I don’t like the positions churches take on social/political issues” (47-54%), and “Religion is irrelevant to me” (26-63%).

Often parishioners have told me, I don’t know how to answer when my children or my co-workers ask me about the Bible or the why of certain Catholic practices. Well, we have answers, but we don’t know. That’s why our parish is offering many opportunities to equip ourselves for this mission. LIVE LENT! is one such. Here are feedbacks from some of our own parishioners who participated in an earlier season of Bible sharing in small groups:

*“I appreciate the awakening that takes place during faith sharing. Keep it going!!!!”*

*“It satisfied my hunger for spiritual nourishment.”*

*“A very friendly, intimate feeling. We shared our beliefs, struggles, and hopes for a more productive Lenten experience.”*

*“It was interesting to hear what others in my group thought about the reading, their views and opinions. I felt that I got more from that about the gospel than just listening to the gospel as Mass.”*

*“This made my Lenten journey much more meaningful and focused.”*

*“We get so much from each weekly gathering.”*

*“It strengthens us for the week.”*

*“We learn from the readings and each other.”*

*“Not having prep work/homework helps me to feel comfortable, to participate.”*

*“I learned so much more about the Scripture.”*

*“The fellowship was terrific.”*

*“Now I have a name for the people I knew just by face.”*

*“The Sunday Mass has become more meaningful to me.”*

*“I am able to relate to my family with more love and understanding.”*

How wonderful it will be if more of our parishioners can experience the same! That is why I am once again inviting us all to consider joining a small group this Lent. This week is the right time to sign up as the first session will begin next week. There is no expense either, since the Bible lessons will be sent online, though a printed copy can be obtained at a nominal cost.

This is a process of spiritual renewal and evangelization that invites people to develop a closer relationship with Christ, deepen their faith, grow in community, and reach out in service to others. Don’t you wish to be part of this noble goal? Try it for this Lent, and you will be surprised at the spiritual benefits that will make you happier and a better person. You will be proud of yourself for deciding to learn more about the Word of God this Lent.

To sign up online, go to: <https://forms.gle/FYvnjMbqD8yGmZYB8>

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal



## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** Jas 3:13-18; Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15; Mk 9:14-29

**Tuesday:** 1 Pt 5:1-4; Ps 23:1-3a, 4, 5, 6; Mt 16:13-19

**Wednesday:** Jas 4:13-17; Ps 49:2-3, 6-7, 8-10, 11; Mk 9:38-40

**Thursday:** Jas 5:1-6; Ps 49:14-15ab, 15cd-16, 17-18, 19-20; Mk 9:41-50

**Friday:** Jas 5:9-12; Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8-9, 11-12; Mk 10:1-12

**Saturday:** Jas 5:13-20; Ps 141:1-2, 3 and 8; Mk 10:13-16

**Sunday:** Sir 27:4-7; Ps 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16; 1 Cor 15:54-58; Lk 6:39-45

## Mass Intentions for the Week

<b>Saturday, Feb 19</b>	5:00PM	John Natale, by Joanne & Vinnie
<b>Sunday, Feb 20</b>	8:00AM	Joseph Ganim, by Wife, Carol
	10:00AM	Lisa Wehner, by The Jacques Family
	12:00PM	Eleuterio Banaag, by Luzminda Villarica
	(5:30PM)	Intention of Parishioners
<b>Monday, Feb 21</b>	8:00AM	No Mass
<b>Tuesday, Feb 22</b>	8:00AM	Sally Hughes, by The Family
<b>Wednesday, Feb 23</b>	8:00AM	Dory De Guzman, by Cecilia Lee
<b>Thursday, Feb 24</b>	8:00AM	Lathan Salvi, by The Enad Family
<b>Friday, Feb 25</b>	8:00AM	Sally Hughes, by The Family
<b>Saturday, Feb 26</b>	5:00PM	Birthday Blessings—Nina Ripley, by The Family
<b>Sunday, Feb 27</b>	8:00AM	Birthday Blessings for Fatimah Stone, by Phyllis Stone
	10:00AM	Angela Frigiola, by The Enad Family
	12:00PM	Andrea Banaag, by Luzminda Villarica
	(5:30PM)	Intention of Parishioners

## Pray for those who are sick...

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

Carolyn Banghart

Maria Barreiro

Gladys Battle

Karl Bierley

Virginia Briggs

Marie Brody

Thomas Burns

Tara Capatosto

Ellen Catalina

Tom Current

Joseph DeFrancesco

Cenon DeGuzman

Mary Ellen Delaney

Alaina Derecola

Surya & Juliany Dharma

Marlene DiMaggio

Jim Dolan

Mary Dolan

William Dolphin

John Farkas

Claudia Gemgnani

Emma Gergely

Rose Gessner

Mary Gidaro

Marie Godet

Sloopy Hoffman

Baby Isla-Rose Huffman

Steven Kayden

Al & Rose Larangeira

Erlina Liem

The Litakis Family

Al Maglio

Sue Maglio-Alese

Beatrice May

Margaret Menendez

Carol Millemann

Sabrina Moloney

Dave Moynihan

Bernadine Pasternak

Jim Pettit

Christina Pietrowiak

Ruth Piscadolo

Jaxon Rivera

Maria Schwenzer

Lena Sciotto

Sr. Mary Amata Shina, OSF

Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF

Catherine Sloomaker

Dennis Stuewe

Jeff Tami

Alma Valdez

Jeaninne Walker

Mark T. Worthington

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...

— “His mercy endures forever.” Chronicles

Joan Lavelle, mother of Robert Lavelle

# Reflect



## Smile with Your Family



Like the ones you enjoyed reading last Sunday, here are some more of such letters, taken from the *national archives* of the letters of pure hearted kids to their pastors showing how pure they are in heart:

*Dear Pastor, I think a lot more people would come to your church if you moved it to Disneyland.* Loreen. Age 3. Tacoma.

*Dear Pastor, Please say a prayer for our Little League team. We need God's help or a new pitcher. Thank you,* Alexander. Age 10, Raleigh.

*Dear Pastor, Who does God pray to? Is there a God for God? Sincerely,* Christopher. Age 3, Titusville.

The preacher and the doctor: There's a story told of a husband and wife both of whom were doctors - one a doctor of theology and the other a doctor of medicine. When their doorbell was rung and the maid answered, the inquirer would often ask for "the doctor". The maid's interesting reply was: "Do you want the one who preaches or the one who practices?"

### Why Insistence on Small Groups?

That is a reasonable question as we promote "LIVE LENT!" in our parish. There are many reasons. Here's one: **The small groups are Biblical:**

Jesus chose his small group – the disciples. (Mark 3: 14-15)

The early church followed Jesus' example. They gathered regularly in their homes for small group fellowship (Acts 2: 42).

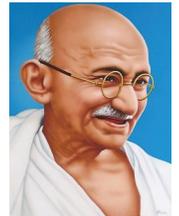
The Apostle John stressed group fellowship. (1 John 1:7)

The Greek word John used for fellowship, "koinonia," means much more than a kind of social interaction occurring in many fellowship halls or at church potluck suppers. It is a very intimate, life-sharing type of association. Koinonia is what Jesus shared with his disciples.

**So, why not sign up for our LIVE LENT!  
Small Group today itself?**



### Adopt an Orphaned Muslim Child in your Hindu Family.



In his autobiography, "The Story of My Experiences with Truth," Mahatma Gandhi mentions the "Sermon on the Mount" as one of the main religious works that inspired him to search for ways of bringing about political freedom for India by non violent resistance to oppression. He writes: "I came to see that the Sermon on the Mount was the whole of Christianity for one who wanted to live a Christian life. It is that sermon that has endeared Jesus to me." In 1947, when British India was divided into Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan, Mahatma Gandhi went on a hunger strike to end the communal violence which had erupted between Hindu and Moslem fanatics in the Indo-Pakistan Border States. During this time, a Hindu fanatic came to him and confessed, "I will surely go to hell and no one can save me." Gandhi asked the man why he thought he was doomed to hell. The man replied that he was a Hindu, and that Muslims had killed his child during a riot. In revenge, he had slaughtered a Muslim child and his parents, but felt very guilty afterwards. Gandhi said, "I know one way to save you from going to hell. "Find a Muslim child who has lost his parents, take him home, bring him up and educate him so that he grows up as a Muslim in your Hindu family. Then you won't go to hell." When Mohandas Gandhi was gunned down in 1948, his last gesture was to press his palms together and raise it to his lips in the Hindu sign of forgiveness.

**Invitation to grace-filled behavior: What makes Christianity distinct from any other religion is the quality known as grace, i.e., God's own life working in us, so that we are able to treat others, not as they deserve but with love, kindness and mercy. God is good to the unjust as well as to the just. Hence our love for others, even those who are ungrateful and selfish towards us, must be marked by the same kindness and mercy which God has shown to us. His love conquers our hurts, fears, prejudices and grief. Only the cross of Jesus Christ can free us from the tyranny of malice, hatred, revenge, and resentment, and give us the courage to return good for evil.**

### Forgiveness quotes

"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong." - **Mahatma Gandhi**

"To forgive is the highest, most beautiful form of love. In return, you will receive untold peace and happiness." - **Robert Muller**

"Forgiveness is the final form of love." - **Reinhold Niebuhr**

"When you forgive, you in no way change the past - but you sure do change the future." - **Bernard Meltzer**

When a deep injury is done to us, we never heal until we forgive." - **Nelson Mandela**

## Forgiveness did what Justice could not do!



Do you remember the movie, “Dead Man Walking” (1995)? It was based on the book of the same name published in 1993, depicting the counseling experiences of Sister Helen Prejean, a Sister of St.

Joseph, who worked in prison ministry in Louisiana and was a long-time campaigner against the death penalty in the United States. The story is about her relationship with a criminal named Robert Willie and with one of his victims, Debbie Morris. Willie and a friend of his were convicted of going on an eight-day crime spree in which they kidnapped three eighteen-year-olds. They molested and murdered one girl, sexually assaulted another and beat up a third. Debbie's boyfriend was tortured, shot and paralyzed. Debbie Morris survived and Willie was executed. Because of those traumatic events, Debbie Morris was in agony for years and could not forgive Robert Willie for his crimes. For eighteen years after the incident, her life was filled with anxiety. She didn't have an hour in which she was free of torment. She was filled with anger and hatred for everything and everybody. She hated her mother for letting her go out that night; she hated God for letting this happen to her; and needless to say, she hated Robert Willie.

Sister Helen counseled her, and finally, after eighteen years, Debbie Morris found the strength to forgive Robert Willie. Debbie is now married, has two children, and is doing very well. She wrote in an article entitled “Forgiving the Dead Man Walking”: “By forgiving Robert Willie, I in no way absolve him of the responsibility for what he did. But the refusal to forgive him meant that I held on to my pain, my shame, and my self-pity.

**Justice didn't do a thing to heal me. Forgiveness did.”**

**When we hear today's gospel we are tempted to ask: “Is Jesus serious about his teaching on forgiveness? Does Jesus expect us to subject ourselves to physical abuse and actually enjoy it? Is he saying that to defend oneself against physical attack is a sin? What does he mean when he tells us to “turn the other cheek?” Debbie Morris would answer, “Justice didn't heal me. But forgiveness did.” Jesus is completely serious when he tells us to love our enemies and forgive them, showing them that God's justice lies in His mercy. That's what he tells us in today's gospel.**

## “The Marines could blast him to kingdom come!”

A little girl came home from Sunday School and asked her father if she could send a note to Osama Bin Laden. “Why him?” asked her startled father. “Because,” said the little girl, “if Mr. Bin Laden got a nice note from a little American girl, maybe he'd think that we're not all bad and he might start liking us a little. And then maybe he'd write a note back and come out of his cave and talk to people about our differences.” “Suzie,” said the proud father, “that's a wonderful idea.” “Yes,” said Suzie, “and once he's out of the cave, the Marines could blast him to kingdom come.”!!!

**Where did Suzie get that idea? Not from Sunday School, one would hope. Christianity is not about revenge. At every Mass we pray the “Our Father”, asking God to forgive us as we forgive others. Our challenge is to overcome our natural inclination to hate. To meet that challenge we need to ask God for the strength to forgive other. Each of us needs to ask: do I have anyone in my life I call an enemy? Is there anyone who actually hates me? Are there people who would really curse me? Is there anyone in my life who mistreats me--a boss, a teacher, a parent, a co-worker, a family member, a former spouse? These things hurt us, and they are often difficult to forgive. However, we must forgive, because only forgiveness truly heals us. If we remember how God has forgiven us, it will help us forgive others. For those who have hurt us, Jesus tells us our response should be love: “Forgive and you will be forgiven.” Let us start forgiving right now by curbing the sharp tongue of criticism, suppressing the revenge instinct and tolerating the irritating behavior of a neighbor.**

## “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands!”

There was once a shepherd boy who became a legendary soldier. But, after a brief time of service, he made a very powerful enemy. The shepherd boy was named David. The powerful enemy was a King of Israel, named Saul. You remember the story. The crowds chanted, “Saul has killed his thousands; David has killed his ten thousands.” (1 Samuel 18:7) And Saul was consumed with envy and hatred. He chased David all over the wilderness, seeking to take his life. On one occasion, in the Desert of Ziph, Saul took three thousand soldiers with him for the express purpose of hunting David down and killing him. It was on this mission that, one night while Saul was sleeping, David slipped into his tent under the cover of dark. There lay David's enemy asleep with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. A soldier who had accompanied David on this clandestine mission said to him, “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now let me pin him to the ground with one thrust of my spear . . .”

**But David would have none of it. In his eyes, Saul was God's anointed. So David took the spear and water jug near Saul's head, and they left. Then David crossed over to the other side and stood**

Continued on next page

## “Today God has delivered your enemy

Continued from previous page

on top of the hill some distance away; there was a wide space between them. “Here is the king’s spear,” David answered. “Let one of your young men come over and get it. The Lord rewards every man for his righteousness and faithfulness. The Lord delivered you into my hands today, but I would not lay a hand on the Lord’s anointed.” Interesting insight into David’s character. David was not always merciful to his enemies, but at least on this occasion, David’s faith in God was more important than either his desire for vengeance or his concern for his own safety, so he spared Saul’s life. How shall we treat our enemy?

## Fatwa against Salman Rushdie and Barbie dolls!

You may remember when writer Salman Rushdie first gained the public eye because he had a bounty on his head. Why? For writing words critical of the Prophet, even though he is a Muslim himself. It was a harsh reminder that you can be killed in some parts of the world just for asking questions or expressing doubts. Of course, there was a time when that was true in the Christian world, too, but we conveniently forget that. It was amusing to read that Islamic fundamentalists in Kuwait once issued a fatwa against Barbie dolls. “This she-devil has polished nails and wears skirts above the knee,” said Kuwait’s College of Islamic Sharia. “The fatwa against Barbie commences immediately.” That seemed a little extreme. It’s not the first time, of course, the gulf had banned Western products. Saudi Arabia and Iran had barred satellite dishes—for the sinful images they import. Some fifty years ago, Saudi Arabia’s senior religious authority declared the earth was flat and outlawed globes.

It is very difficult for us to relate to such a religion. And yet, relate to it we must. For, if we do not, if we hate people simply because of their religion, we become exactly like the people who hate us so much. If we return evil for evil, what separates us from sinners, asks Jesus.

**“Forgive and you will be forgiven. Bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you” This message might have sounded very strange to the Jews, who were familiar with a God who was merciful to his own people and vengeful to their enemies, as pictured in Psalms 18, 72 and 92. But Jesus repeats his teaching on forgiveness, both in the prayer he taught his disciples “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,” and in his final commandment to his apostles, “Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another.” Another good reason for us to forgive our enemies is, “so**

**that everyone will know that we are disciples of the Most High.” That is, Christian forgiveness can be a form of evangelization. Jesus does not advise his followers to overlook evils, wars, economic disparity, and exploitation of the vulnerable. Instead, we are called to forgive, to be merciful and not to retaliate. But we cannot achieve this level of love and forgiveness by ourselves. We need the power of God working through us by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.**

## Juda Ben Hur, you have become a Massala!”

Some of you will remember an epic Hollywood motion picture titled *Ben Hur*, starring Charlton Heston. You may remember it for the exciting chariot race at the end. At the time *Ben Hur* was the most expensive Hollywood movie ever made. In the movie, based on a Lew Wallace book, an old friend named Massala has become Juda Ben Hur’s enemy. Because of Massala’s evil doing, Ben Hur is captured and forced into service down in the galley of a slave ship. Meanwhile, his mother and sister are sent off to prison. Ben Hur loses contact with them and later is told that they are dead. Juda Ben Hur, returns to Israel intent on one thing—revenge. Because of Massala, he has lost everything. And now he lives for one thing, to avenge himself upon Massala. This passion consumes Ben Hur to such an extent that his sweetheart, Esther, looking into his tortured eyes exclaims, “Juda Ben Hur, you have become a Massala.”

That’s what hatred does to us. It is impossible to have the Spirit of Christ within us and at the same time to have a spirit of hatred for any other human being.

**The Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Christian ethics consists, not in merely refraining from evil, but in actively doing good, not only to those who are friends, but to those who hate us or do evil against us. In other words, Jesus expects us to rise above our human instincts and imitate the goodness and generosity of God. The observance of the golden rule makes us like God whose love and mercy embrace saints and sinners alike. At the same time the Golden Rule does not require that we allow others to take advantage of us.**

## Catholic School 2022-2023 Tuition Assistance - Online Application Process Open

Families interested in applying for tuition assistance to attend an eligible Diocese of Metuchen elementary or high school may apply online now through FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment at <https://online.factsmgt.com/aid>. Online applications must be completed (including all required documentation) by no later than March 31, 2022. Applications are available in English and Spanish. Families that need assistance completing the online application or need access to a computer to apply should contact their school.

# From the Pastoral Staff



Today's Gospel speaks to something we are all familiar with, but unfortunately is not always practiced in today's society. It's the "golden rule" ... **Do to others what you would have them do to you.**

That's exactly what Jesus says in today's Gospel "Do unto others as you would have them do to you."

**This concept was not new to Jesus and the people of His time.**

In the Old Testament in the book of Tobit we find:

"Do to no one what you yourself dislike. Give to the hungry some of your bread, And to the naked, some of your clothes. Seek counsel from every wise man. At all times bless the Lord God, and ask Him to make your paths straight and to grant success to all your endeavors and plans."

So we can see that this golden rule, so to speak, has been around for a long time. I think that when we think of this golden rule, we most times think of it on the terms of forgiveness for someone who has done something or said something to us that was hurtful. That's why Jesus in today's Gospel tells us to turn the other cheek. But it goes deeper than that. That's why the Book of Tobit speaks to feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. We are asked to put ourselves in that situation and ask ourselves how we would want to be treated.

If everyone were to practice the Golden Rule, think of how different the world would be. People need to step back and ask, when faced with a situation that's not a pleasant situation, how would I feel if I were in the other person's shoes?

My sisters and brothers, we are a little more than a week away from the begin-

ning of Lent. This season of Lent is the time for us to look inside ourselves and to see how we are doing spiritually. Have we been following the Golden Rule?

I always say that it's fine to give something up for Lent. But to me it's more about "doing" than not doing. More prayers.. Maybe daily Mass... Helping someone we know who is in need. Maybe it's time to join a small faith group. My group has been together for three years and it's helped my spirituality immensely.

If you "do" something this Lent, the Resurrection will be more meaningful.

So remember. Before you react to a difficult situation with another person, try putting yourself in their shoes.

Remember the Golden Rule!

Peace of Christ,  
Deacon Russ

# Pray



## Make Lent 2022 the Best Lent Ever! Participate in a St. Matthias "Live Lent" Small Group

Watch our two videos from past participants at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShtSHq2mpYk> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEJLL6jhiqw>

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

We have approximately 20 groups that meet on various days/times of the week. If you are new to this experience, please sign up online at: <https://forms.gle/FYvnjMbqD8yGmZYB8>

**Continuing members** do not need to sign up -- simply connect with your group facilitator. Facilitators will be contacting group members who were part of their group this past fall or last Lent. Each group likely will be meeting on Zoom on the same date/time. **Groups will begin the week of February 27!** **New members, please sign-up early!** Most groups will be using, "Around the Lenten Circle: Small Group Sessions for Lent 2022" by Ann Naffziger. It is an e-resource. Questions? Please contact Dee Nann at the parish office at 732-828-1400 or [dnann@stmatthias.net](mailto:dnann@stmatthias.net).



## Liturgical Ministers Morning of Reflection Saturday, February 26th, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm John XXIII Room

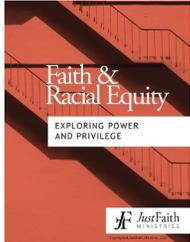
This year's pre-Lenten morning of reflection for liturgical ministers is open to anyone and will feature Dr. Patrick Manning, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology and the Chair of the Department of Pastoral Theology at Immaculate Conception School of Theology at Seton Hall University. Following a talk by Dr. Manning our own Terry Seamon will lead a group through reflection and discussion on what Jesus is inviting us to be part of, post-pandemic. For more information contact Phyllis Stone in the Parish Office. [pstone@stmatthias.net](mailto:pstone@stmatthias.net).



## Altar Servers Wanted!

Are you a student in grade 5 or higher? Would you like to play a prominent role at Mass each week? We are looking for students that would like to join the Altar Servers Ministry. If you are interested in joining this ministry, please sign up by visiting: [www.stmatthias.net/liturgical/](http://www.stmatthias.net/liturgical/)

**St. Matthias Racial Justice Initiative—Begins THIS SATURDAY, February 19**



Do you want to learn about and discuss racism in our Church and in our community? You can start with “Open Wide Our Hearts” The Enduring Call to Love”, the 2018 Pastoral Letter from the US Catholic Bishops,

[https://www.usccb.org/resources/open-wide-our-hearts\\_o.pdf](https://www.usccb.org/resources/open-wide-our-hearts_o.pdf).

We extend an invitation to start learning along with the St. Matthias Racial Justice Initiative as presented through the lens of the Christian tradition from

JustFaith Ministries’ *Faith & Racial Equity*. For more information on the program click here, <https://justfaith.org/faith-and-racial-equity/>.

Participant space is limited and registration is required through Sign Up Genius. Go to: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a054fa4ab2faaff2-faith>

The program schedule (subject to adjustment) is as follows:

**Opening Retreat (via Zoom ) Saturday, February 19, 2022, 9:00 AM - Noon**

**Sessions 1-8 (2/26, 3/12, 3/26, 4/9, 4/23, 5/14, 5/28, 6/11,**

**9:00 - 11:30 AM (via Zoom for now) Immersion Experience -TBD**

Program is free. Cost of books/materials (2-3 books) is not free; however, copies are available for loan from the Parish Office or you can purchase your own new or used online.

Contact parish facilitators —Neil Purcell, Kerry Millan, Janice Regan or Christine Grippo for more information at [matthiasracialjustice@gmail.com](mailto:matthiasracialjustice@gmail.com), or Phyllis Stone (Pres. of SMDP Society) in the Parish Office, (732) 828-1400, ext 127.

**SMDP Society Black History Month Symposium on Critical Race Theory and Catholic Education**

“CRITICAL RACE THEORY: What is it? What it's not. What does it mean for Christian education?” Featuring Parishioner Sandra M. Donnay, Ph.D, Founder: Racial Equity Initiative (Moderator) and Reverend Danté R. Quick, Ph.D., Senior Pastor of 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist of Lincoln Gardens (Guest) **February 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM via Zoom** - Join Zoom Meeting <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/9702883550> Meeting ID: 970 288 3550



I recently watched a documentary about Mary Lou

Williams, an influential African American jazz pianist who played for packed dances around the country alongside well-known jazz artists.

By 1936, at age 25, Williams was already known for her skilled artistry, and was invited by bandleaders including Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman and Louis Armstrong to recreate their hits, as well as produce her own compositions.

I was astounded when I learned that Williams, who was a devout Catholic, wrote a devotional composition in honor of St. Martin de Porres when he was canonized by the Catholic Church in 1962. Williams first performed the

composition at Saint Francis Xavier Church in New York in November of that year and recorded the song in October 1963.

Here are the lyrics to Williams’ choral masterpiece,

**Black Christ of the Andes:**

**“St. Martin de Porres, his shepherd's staff a dusty broom**

**St. Martin de Porres, the poor made a shrine of his tomb**

**St. Martin de Porres, he gentled creatures tame and wild**

**St. Martin de Porres, he sheltered each unsheltered child**

**This man of love, born of the flesh, yet of God**

**This humble man healed the sick, raised the dead, his hand is quick**

**To feed beggars and sinners, the starving homeless and the stray**

**Oh Black Christ of the Andes, come feed and cure us now we**

**pray**

**Spare, oh lord**

**Spare my people**

**Lest you be angered with me, forever**

**(Lest you be angered with me, forever)**

**This man, this man**

**Of love, born of the flesh, yet of God**

**This humble man healed the sick, raised the dead, his hand is quick**

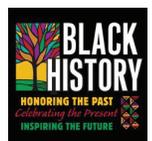
**St. Martin de Porres, he gentled creatures tame and wild**  
**St. Martin de Porres, he sheltered each unsheltered child.”**

I had not known about Mary Lou Williams’ career prior to watching this documentary. When I heard her song about St. Martin de Porres, I took it as a sign that I should write about her for this issue of the Saint Matthias Church bulletin, in honor of Black History Month, and in honor of the Saint Martin de Porres Socie-

ty, of which I am a member at Saint Matthias Church.

The students in my religion class here at SMS are currently researching Black Catholic saints and preparing Google slide presentations about their lives, commitment to our Lord, and their works of mercy. Students in my social studies class are researching a wide variety of people and events integral to the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. It is important for our young people to come to terms with the past, navigate the present as proud Americans, and work toward a peaceful and inclusive future for us all. It’s what St. Martin de Porres, the patron saint of racial harmony, would want us to do.

Sheila Tartaglia



## Serve

### Join Us for the First St Matthias Social Justice Ministry Meeting!



Come to the first meeting of our new **Social Justice Ministry** on **Tuesday, Feb. 22 at 7 pm** via zoom: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/81968510428>

The goal of this ministry will be three- fold: **education, discussion** and **action**. Education is for us to fully understand the totality of an issue. Discussion is for our reflection and discernment, knowing that we have much to learn from each other's' experiences and wisdom. Action is for working towards change for a more loving world in our parish, our community and our world.

To learn more, contact Rose Peng, [rosepeng@optonline.net](mailto:rosepeng@optonline.net) or Lorraine Farr at [lvfarr7@gmail.com](mailto:lvfarr7@gmail.com).

### Pastoral Council Seeking New Members

The Parish Pastoral Council is looking for new members to replace outgoing members for a 3 year term. Members of the PPC must have experience serving in at least one other ministry in the parish. **The PPC serves to advise the Pastor about parish matters, bringing the concerns of parishioners to his attention.**

The current council has overseen a task force to return to in-person Masses, encouraged the Racial Justice Initiative, established a Parish Vocations Ministry as well as reestablished the Social Justice Ministry - among other initiatives. We would like to invite interested parishioners to our March 15<sup>th</sup> evening zoom meeting to observe our meeting to help you think about your possible calling to this parish ministry. Please contact Claudine Langrin: [ClaudMLangrin@gmail.com](mailto:ClaudMLangrin@gmail.com), MaryBeth Vetter Purcell: [marybeth.vetter@gmail.com](mailto:marybeth.vetter@gmail.com), Fr. Abraham or any PPC member for more information.

## Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022				Last Year's Total
	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
<b>Week 32 - Feb. 6, 2022</b>	\$12,318.00	\$18,755.75	<b>\$31,073.75</b>	\$30,959.75
<b>Week 33 - Feb. 13, 2022</b>	\$6,373.00	\$20,687.25	<b>\$27,060.25</b>	\$26,794.25
<b>Week 34 - Feb. 20, 2022</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	\$16,824.25
<b>Week 35 - Feb. 27, 2022</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	<b>\$0.00</b>	\$28,144.25
<b>Building Repair &amp; Replacement Fund =</b>			<b>Month-to-date Total</b>	<b>Feb Total Last Yr</b>
			<b>\$58,134.00</b>	\$102,722.50
	<b>\$1,174.40 (In-Pew)-- 2/6/22</b>		<b>Current Year-to-date Total</b>	<b>Year-to-date as of Feb 28,</b>
			<b>\$852,060.08</b>	\$870,700.95

### Stewardship Reflection Feb 20, 2022 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

**“But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend without expecting anything back...” (LUKE 6:35)**

Easier said than done, right? But, if we are to imitate Christ, most of us need to practice mercy and compassion more frequently. Start with the little daily annoyances that we experience, the unkind word or hateful glance we receive. Instead of plotting revenge on that person, try saying a quick prayer for that person. Praying for our enemies doesn't change them, it changes us. Mercy and compassion will keep us on the path to holiness.

### Reflexiónese — 20 de febrero de 2022 - 7º Domingo del Tiempo Ordinario

**“Ustedes, por el contrario, amen a sus enemigos, hagan el bien y presten sin esperar nada a cambio...” (LUCAS 6:35)**

Es más fácil decirlo que hacerlo, ¿no es así? Sin embargo, si estamos destinados a imitar a Cristo, la mayoría de nosotros necesita practicar misericordia y compasión más frecuentemente. Comience con las pequeñas inconveniencias diarias que experimentamos, las palabras poco amables o las miradas ofensivas que recibimos. En lugar de maquinando venganza contra esa persona, tratemos de decir una oración por esa persona. Rezar por nuestros enemigos no los cambia a ellos, sino a nosotros. La misericordia y la compasión nos mantendrán en el camino de la santidad.

## Connect



**Night of Winners 2022— Viva St. Matthias! Saturday, February 26, 2022**

**Buy your tickets TODAY at: <https://forms.gle/A4zvy7dFR1AXQaMm9>**



This year's event has two options: **In-Person and Virtual**. You must be 18 years or older to participate. Only 200 tickets will be sold for in-person, so register **TODAY!** The in-person event begins at **6pm**. Doors open at 5:30pm. Everyone must wear a mask when they are not seated at their table.

The **Virtual (You Tube Live Stream)** event will start at **8 pm** on Saturday. Virtual participants must be available (or

designate a representative) to put their tickets in the basket bins in the School Cafeteria on Saturday, 02/26/22 from 9am-4pm. All persons entering the building must wear a mask at all times. The baskets will be on display in the cafeteria. Additional Basket Raffle Tickets and Super Cash 50/50 Tickets will also be for sale during the ticket drop time. Questions? Contact Melissa Garlatti - [stmatthiasnow@gmail.com](mailto:stmatthiasnow@gmail.com)



## \*\*\* Special Attention \*\*\*



### 2022 Bishop's Annual Appeal Celebrating Forty Years— Continuing to Fan the Flame of Faith into Service

You may have already received a letter from Bishop Checchio, announcing the 2022 Bishop's Annual Appeal. Watch the new video at: <https://vimeo.com/675480561/3f09e907ao>

Our parish can share in a successful Appeal by earning a rebate of 50% of the amount collected over our goal of \$172,000.

Through your support of the Bishop's Annual Appeal you help those in our diocese whose needs are the greatest - the poor, the homeless, and those struggling with illness or grief. Among other needed pastoral ministries, your gift also supports the formation of seminarians and enhances the work of the Vicariate for Evangelization and Communication. The many pastoral, educational and charitable ministries of the Diocese of Metuchen would not be possible without a generous contribution from every household. Please be as generous as your means allow.



For more info, please visit: <https://diometuchen.org/baa>

## Parish Leadership

### Parish Pastoral Council:

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

### Co-Chairs:

Claudine Langrin

[ClaudMLangrin@gmail.com](mailto:ClaudMLangrin@gmail.com) and

Mary Beth Vetter-Purcell

[marybeth.vetter@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](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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