



**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](http://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  
[youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ](https://www.youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ)

**St. Matthias School (SMS):**

170 JFK Boulevard, Somerset, NJ 08873  
 732-828-1402; [www.stmatthias.info](http://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**

Deacon Russell Demkovitz, [rdemkovitz](mailto:rdemkovitz@stmatthias.net)  
 Ana V Kelly, *Marketing & Development*, [akelly](mailto:akelly@stmatthias.net)  
 Dolores R. Nann, *Faith Formation*, [dnann](mailto:dnann@stmatthias.net)  
 Mary Beth Oria, Business Administrator, [moriam](mailto:moriam@stmatthias.net)  
 Deacon John Radvanski, [deaconjohn](mailto:deaconjohn@stmatthias.net)  
 Joan Best Seamon, *Music Ministry* [jseamon](mailto:jseamon@stmatthias.net)  
 Sr Marie Therese Sherwood, *OSF, Social Concerns*,  
[msherwood](mailto:msherwood@stmatthias.net)  
 Phyllis Stone, *Liturgy/RCIA and Administrative*  
*Assistant to the Pastor*, [pstone](mailto:pstone@stmatthias.net)

**St. Matthias School ([add@stmatthiasnj.org](mailto:add@stmatthiasnj.org))**

Elena Malinconico, Principal, [emalinconico](mailto:emalinconico@stmatthiasnj.org)  
 Joseph Gidaro, Vice Principal, [jgidaro](mailto:jgidaro@stmatthiasnj.org)

**Parish Office Staff**

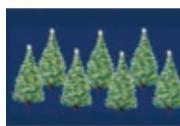
Kelly Counts, *Day Receptionist*  
 Nathalie Godet, *Formation/Parish Support Sec.*  
 Leslie Guillen, *Bulletin Editor*  
 Amy Hanna, *Parish Support Secretary*  
 Vinnie Natale, *Bookkeeper*  
 Trish Stumper, *Parish Support Secretary*  
 Mike Lanyi, *Sacristan*

**Maintenance Staff**

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

**THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS**  
**SUNDAY, JAN 10, 2021 –**  
**Baptism of the Lord**

Help Us Take  
 Down our  
 Christmas  
 Trees— **THIS**

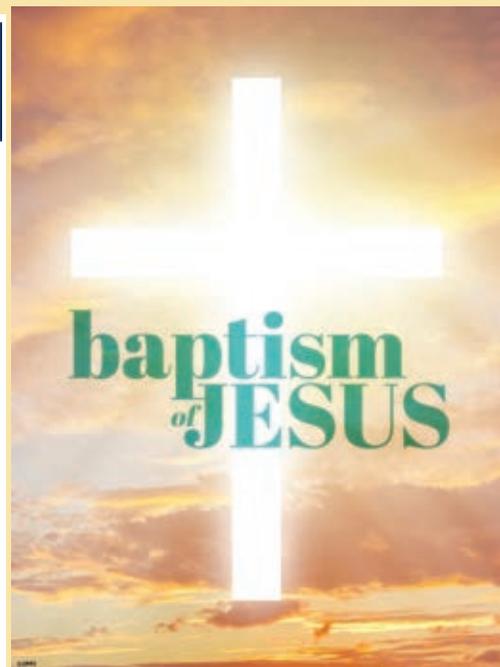


**Saturday (January 9) from 10 am to 3 pm.** We again welcome volunteers to meet us by the trees, We need to take down the lights and pack them up, remove the trees and all posts/hardware. Come for as long as you can; wear a mask, etc. Questions? Contact Fr. Joe at [jcurry@stmatthias.net](mailto:jcurry@stmatthias.net)

**Youth (12-18) SMYLE Meeting—**  
 Next Sun., Jan. 17. See page 7.

**Children's' Choir Practice Returns—**  
 Thurs., Jan 14. 3rd & 4th gr—  
 3:30PM & 5th-8th gr –4:15PM

**Foundation for Faith Education  
 Collection—next Sat. & Sun.**



**Finance Council Recruiting Additional Members**

Do you have expertise in finance? Are you looking for a meaningful way to volunteer some of your time? Please see the invitation from Fr. Abraham on page 9.

More information about our Finance Council, including the list of current members, is available on our website. Go to: <https://www.stmatthias.net/team> and then scroll down to the Finance Council (after the photos).

**Light of the World Christmas Season Reflections**

The Diocese of Metuchen has put together a series of "Light of the World" reflections to help us continue keeping the spirit of Christmas alive. Priests from around the diocese have been invited to record their reflection on video. Watch the video reflections by **Fr. Joe on January 2** and by **Fr. Abraham on January 3** by going to our website, [www.stmatthias.net](http://www.stmatthias.net), and clicking on the links under "Latest News".

**Diocesan Pro-Vita Awards  
 Go to Two St. Matthias Parishioners!**



Congratulations to Fran Johnson and Frank McCann who are receiving this year's diocesan wide Pro-Vita Awards! Out of all of the parishes in our diocese, the two awardees selected are both from St. Matthias! See pages 9 & 10.

## 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, Jan 10, 2021

10:00AM	Mass	Church
10:30AM	Communion outside front doors	
12:00PM	Mass	Church
12:30PM	Communion outside front doors	
2:00PM	RCIA session	via ZOOM

### Monday, Jan 11, 2021

8:00AM	Mass –Novena after Mass	Church
6:15PM	HSA Exec. Bd. Mtg.	

### Tuesday, Jan 12, 2021

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
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### Wednesday, Jan 13, 2021

8:00AM	Mass	Church
7:00PM	PRROP Mtg.	Online
7:00PM	RCIA Sessions	Zoom

### Thursday, Jan 14, 2021

8:00AM	Mass	Church
3:30PM	Children's Choir 3rd & 4th gr.	Church
4:15PM	Children's Choir 5th-8th gr.	Church

### Friday, Jan 15, 2021

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
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### Saturday, Jan 16, 2021 Foundation for Faith Education Special Collection

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

### Sunday, Jan 17, 2021 Foundation for Faith Education Special Collection

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	
1:00PM	Hot Cocoa/Cookie Pickup by Youth (SMYLE) - behind the school till 2	
2:00PM	RCIA session	via ZOOM
6:30PM	SMYLE Youth (12-18)	via ZOOM

#### 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 **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

### LIFE GIVING WATER

Some years back while vacationing through France, I came across a revered site believed to be where, centuries ago, a holy man was visited by a stag (male deer) with a red and blue cross between his antlers at a fount of spring water in the region of Valois. For geography buffs, Valois is located northeast of Paris in the direction of Reims. According to the account dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, this holy man named Felix was seeking a sign from God as to whether he was to found a religious order or not. Felix prayed that God would show him what he should do. He took the visit by the stag with the cross, drinking at the spring, as God's answer that he should indeed gather men together and begin a new religious order. Decades later, Felix eventually became a saint making this fount (or in French *source*) even more important to the religious and the local community. I was certainly inspired by this facet of history and honored to be able to see this centuries-old spring, as well as having a cold refreshing drink of the pure water on a hot summer's day.

Have you noticed how often we take water for granted? We simply turn on a tap and there it is! No pumping from a well, no walking long distances to a communal site, no waiting for a delivery, etc. Each day, water is at our disposal. Many have proposed our need to be more conservative with our use of water for future generations' necessities.

In recent years, we are drinking more and more water because scientists have confirmed that water is one of the most essential nutrients for the human body every single day. Have you noticed how a gallon jug has replaced the usual quart or pint of water with people exercising at a gym? When eating out, the majority of glasses on the diners' tables is water. Likewise, it is wholesome to see the number of students in our SMS cafeteria who choose water with their lunch.

"Thus says the LORD: All you who are thirsty come to the water!" (Is 55:1) On this Sunday of the Baptism of our Lord, we indeed are thirsty. Our thirst for the Lord and His spiritual assistance over the last year have been fundamental in trying to deal with everything that has come our way: Covid -19, death, unemployment, financial distress, loneliness, separation, shelter and sustenance, etc. We should always be thirsty for Jesus, our Life Giving Water. He fortifies us with His grace and strength. The holy water (along with the cross, chrism, light and white garment) used as a symbol of our initiation into the Church urges us to go to the larger community sharing the love and peace of Christ as found in Sacred Scripture. As we begin this new year of hope, His love and peace are vital. Let us consistently remember that we can always go to our Life Giving Water!

Joseph C. Gidaro  
Vice Principal



## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** Heb 1:1-6; Ps 97:1, 2b, 6, 7c, 9; Mk 1:14-20

**Tuesday:** Heb 2:5-12; Ps 8:2ab, 5, 6-9; Mk 1:21-28

**Wednesday:** Heb 2:14-18; Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8-9; Mk 1:29-39

**Thursday:** Heb 3:7-14; Ps 95:6-7c, 8-9, 10-11; Mk 1:40-45

**Friday:** Heb 4:1-5, 11; Ps 78:3, 4bc, 6c-7, 8; Mk 2:1-12

**Saturday:** Heb 4:12-16; Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15; Mk 2:13-17

**Sunday:** 1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19; Ps 40:2, 4, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10; 1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20; Jn 1:35-42

## Mass Intentions for the Week\*

<b>Saturday, Jan 9</b>	5:00PM	Paul & Maureen Doyle Endres, by Isabelle & John Baker
<b>Sunday, Jan 10</b>	10:00AM	Darrie Christmas, by The Welcome Ministry
	12:00PM	Intention of Parishioners
<b>Monday, Jan 11</b>	8:00AM	Bert Maglio, by Mom, Dad, Sue, & Pete
<b>Tuesday, Jan 12</b>	8:00AM	Oliva Encalada, by The Gavilanes Family
<b>Wednesday, Jan 13</b>	8:00AM	Spiritual Intention for Ghislaine Stephen, by Yanick Andre
<b>Thursday, Jan 14</b>	5:00PM	Paul Hughes, by The Family
<b>Friday, Jan 15</b>	8:00AM	Birthday Blessings for Sr. Patrice, by Vinnie, Ethel & Mary
<b>Saturday, Jan 16</b>	5:00PM	Tom Devlin, by Ann
<b>Sunday, Jan 17</b>	10:00AM	Intention of Parishioners
	12:00PM	Augustin Vidal, by Menchie & Family

## Pray for those who are sick...

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

Elbren, Sr. & Natalia  
 Agdeppo  
 Rosemary Albaugh  
 Robert Bachman  
 Lourdes Banaag  
 Edward Bauer  
 Cecilia Bongga Alcantara  
 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  
 Lourdes Eads  
 Anne Fortune  
 Emma Gergely  
 Rose Gessner  
 Mary Gidaro  
 Katherine Giustino  
 John Gross  
 Michael Hagerty  
 Slooppy Hoffman  
 Allison Karakowski  
 Michael Kirugi  
 Milicent Kraft  
 Taylor LaCort  
 Al & Rose Larangeira  
 William Lecorchick  
 Alice Leong  
 Pat Leposa  
 The Litrakis Family  
 Alexander Maceren  
 Kelly Magat  
 Al Maglio

Sue Maglio-Alese  
 Patrick Mahoney  
 Shirley Mahoney  
 Christine Matthews  
 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  
 Christina Pietrowiak  
 Annie Powderly  
 Anthony & Andrew Referente  
 Kathleen & Mannix Referente  
 Samantha Renaud  
 Chris Retz  
 Aubree Rezac  
 Diane Rice  
 Datus 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  
 Carmencita Ventura  
 Eulalia Villanueva  
 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...

Raquel Fischbach  
 Alfred Jago  
 Emma R. Gilroy

- "His mercy endures forever." Chronicles

# Sunday Reflections



## Smile with Your Family



**Baptism of a cat:** Johnny's Mother looked out the window and noticed him "playing church" with their cat. He had the cat sitting quietly and he was preaching to it. She smiled and went about her work. A while later she heard loud meowing and hissing and ran back to the open window to see Johnny baptizing the cat in a tub of water. She called out, "Johnny, stop that! The cat is afraid of water!" Johnny looked up at her and said, "He should have thought about that before he joined my church." ☺

**God help the fish:** Sam Houston was the first president of the Republic of Texas. It's said he was a rather nasty fellow with a checkered past. Later in life Houston made a commitment to Christ and was baptized in a river. The preacher said to him, "Sam, your sins are washed away." Houston replied, "God help the fish." ☺

**What will Jesus do?** A man walked into a gift shop that sold religious items. Near the cash register he saw a display of caps with "WWJD" printed. He was puzzled over what the letters could mean, so he asked the clerk. The clerk replied that the letters stood for What Would Jesus Do, and was meant to inspire people to not make rash decisions, but rather to imagine what Jesus would do in the same situation. The man thought for a moment and then replied, "Well, I'm pretty sure Jesus wouldn't pay \$17.95 for one of these caps." ☺



### Parenting Tune-Up

Explain to your kids why Jesus was baptized, even though he was sinless. Show them pictures/videos of their own baptism and discuss how they are the beloved sons and daughters of God.

### Marriage Tune-Up



Recall to mind that even before you called your spouse, "My beloved," God had already done so at the Baptism – making and calling your spouse God's own beloved son/daughter.

### Importance of the Baptism of Jesus



The baptism of Jesus by John was a very important event in the life of Jesus.

First it was a **moment of identification** with us sinners. Sinless, Jesus received the baptism of repentance to identify himself with his people

who realized for the first time that they were sinners. (As given in the anecdotes, St. Damien, Blessed Mother Teresa, Gandhi, and Mandela identified with the people whom they served).

Second, it was a **moment of conviction** about his **identity and mission**: that He is the Son of God and His mission was to **preach the Good News** of God's love and salvation **and to atone for our sins** by becoming the "suffering servant." God the Father's words, "This is my beloved Son," taken from Psalm 2:17, gave **Jesus the identity of God's Son**, and the words "with whom I am well pleased," from Isaiah 42:1 (referring to the 'suffering servant'), pointed to Jesus' mission of atoning for the sins of the world by His suffering and death on the cross.

Third, it was a **moment of equipment**. The Holy Spirit equipped Jesus by descending on him in the form of dove, giving him the **power of preaching and healing**.

Fourth, it was a **moment of decision** to begin public ministry at the most opportune time after receiving the **approval** of his Heavenly Father as His *beloved Son*.

### "This is my Beloved Daughter/Son"

Rev. Maxie Dunnam, a United Methodist Church minister, Bible commentator and writer, says:



"Edward Farrell, a friend of mine, is a Catholic priest who serves an Inner City Parish in Detroit. He's written some marvelous books. One I would especially recommend is entitled *Prayer Is a Hunger*. Ed is a part of a small group with whom I meet each January. I've told you about this group. We call it the Ecumenical Institute of Spirituality. It's an important group for me. Though we meet only for three days once a year, sharing our spiritual pilgrimages with one another, seeking to focus our minds and hearts on some growing edge, it's an important part of my life. Ed is a part of it too. He's one of the most genuinely humble persons I know. Serving some of God's forgotten people in one of Detroit's most depressed areas, he is quietly profound.

I never will forget the insight he provided me about this text. He said that Jesus went to the cross so that we too could hear the same word Jesus heard at his baptism - so that you and I can hear, "This is my beloved daughter/this is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased." Have you thought about it that way? Jesus' paid the price so that for you and me, the heavens could open, and we could know the reality of God's Spirit as a living power and presence, in our lives. Jesus wanted us to know the reality of Good News in the dark days of hopelessness and despair. The Voice which declared Jesus God's beloved Son is still speaking in our souls, "You are Mine. You are unique and special. I am pleased with you. I love you. I love you so much that I gave My beloved Son for you. You are my beloved son, you are my beloved daughter."

# Sunday Reflections

## Thomas Merton's Depression and how He...!



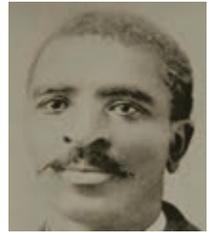
Thomas Merton once described his experience of sinking into insanity as a young man. He was a very bright university student, but he had abandoned his studies in favor of nightclubs and pornography. One night he retired to a hotel room. As he lay in bed, the window appeared to expand until it reached the floor. He heard a mocking voice in his mind saying, "What if you threw yourself out of that window?" The young man wrote: "Now my life was dominated by something I had never known before: fear. It was humiliating, this strange self-conscious watchfulness. It was a humiliation I had deserved more than I knew. I had refused to pay attention to the moral laws upon which all vitality and sanity depend." Well, this young man did begin to pay attention to the moral law. He began to put his life in order - and to experience inner peace. Merton eventually entered the Catholic Church and went on to become one of the most famous monks of the twentieth century. He found the mission of his life.

*Jesus' baptism reminds us of our mission:*

- *to experience the presence of God within us, to acknowledge our own dignity as God's children, and to appreciate the Divine Presence in others by honoring them, loving them and serving them in all humility;*
- *to live as the children of God in thought, word and action so that our Heavenly Father may say to each one of us what He said to Jesus: "You are My beloved son/daughter with whom I am well pleased." It means that we are to let His thoughts direct our thoughts, His mind control our mind, His concerns be our concerns. In the church we all share the same intimate connection with Christ; we are all brothers and sisters in Christ;*
- *to lead a holy and transparent Christian life and not to desecrate our bodies (the temples of the Holy Spirit and members of Jesus' Body) by impurity, injustice, intolerance, jealousy or hatred;*
- *to accept both the good and the bad experiences of life as the gifts of a loving Heavenly Father for our growth in holiness;*
- *to grow daily in intimacy with God by personal and family prayers, by reading the Word of God, by participating in the Holy Mass, and by frequenting the Sacrament of Reconciliation*
- *to be co-creators with God in building up the "Kingdom of God" on earth, a Kingdom of compassion, justice and love, and to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. In other words, He has called us to help others to see, through the love that we show and the help that we give, that God loves them, that He invites them to also be His sons and daughters and that He wants to be their helper and strength through all the troubles that life in this world can bring.*

## The Identity of the Peanut Scientist

Fr. Bill Bausch describes in one of his books George Washington Carver, the great black agricultural scientist who did a lot of research work on the commercial and medical uses of the lowly peanut. He built a great industry through his scientific endeavors. In January, 1921, he was brought to Washington, D.C., to the *Ways and Means Committee* to explain his work on the peanut. As a black man, he was last on the list and so, after three days of waiting, he finally walked up the aisle to speak, ignoring the racial comments and ridicule. Later he wrote in his autobiography, "Whatever they said of me, I knew that I was a child of God, and so I said to myself inwardly, 'Almighty God, let me carry out Your will.'" He got to the podium and was told that he had twenty minutes to speak. Carver opened up his display case and began to explain his project. So engaging was his discussion that those twenty minutes went all too quickly, and the chairman rose and asked for an extension so he could continue his presentation, which he did for an hour and three-quarters. They voted him four more extensions so he spoke for several hours. At the end of his talk they all stood up and gave him a long round of applause. And all that happened because he knew who, and Whose, he was and because he refused to be defined by the labels of his culture.



*Today's Gospel seems to suggest that Jesus received from heaven a fresh flash of realization of Who, and Whose, He really was (His identity) and of what He was supposed to do (His mission), on the day of his baptism in the river Jordan. The baptism of Jesus reminds us of our identity and mission. First, it reminds us of who we are and Whose we are. By Baptism we become the adoptive sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus, members of his Church, heirs of Heaven and temples of the Holy Spirit. We become incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ, and made sharers in the priesthood of Christ [CCC 1279]. Hence, "Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit and the door which gives access to the other Sacraments" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1213). Most of us dipped the fingers of our right hands into the holy water font and blessed ourselves when we came into church today. Why? This blessing is supposed to remind us of our Baptism. And so when I bless myself with Holy Water, I should be thinking of the fact that I am a child of God; that I have been redeemed by the Cross of Christ; that I have been made a member of God's family and that I have been washed, forgiven, cleansed and purified by the Blood of the Lamb.*

### St. Paul on Baptism

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. - Galatians 3:27-28

## God's Press Conference

When likable Lou Holtz was announced as the new head football coach at the University of Notre Dame, he was touted as one who would restore the school's football program to its tradition of excellence. Whenever a new leader appears on the scene, whether it is the new coach of a team or the new president of a corporation, a press conference is usually held to proclaim that leader's qualifications and potential. Such press conferences usually create some excitement about the leader's identity, and arouse our expectations with glowing promises about what this leader will accomplish. Today's event of our Lord's baptism is something like this. It's as if God Himself called a press conference to reveal His Son Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah and to give us a preview of what His mission would accomplish.

*Does the baptism of Jesus remind us of our own Baptism? This is the day for us to remember the graces we have received in Baptism and to renew our Baptismal promises: On*

*the day of our baptism, as Pope St. John Paul II explains, "We were anointed with the Oil of Catechumens, the sign of Christ's gentle strength, to fight against evil. Blessed water was poured over us, an effective sign of interior purification through the gift of the Holy Spirit. We were then anointed with Chrism to show that we were thus consecrated in the image of Jesus, the Father's Anointed One. The candle lighted from the Paschal Candle was a symbol of the light of Faith which our parents and godparents must have continually safeguarded and nourished with the life-giving grace of the Spirit." This is also a day for us to renew our Baptismal promises, consecrating ourselves to the Holy Trinity and "rejecting Satan and all his empty promises," which our profane world is constantly offering us through its mass-media of communication. Let us ask Our Lord today to make us faithful to our Baptismal promises. Let us thank Him for the privilege of being joined to His mission of preaching the "Good News" by our transparent Christian lives of love, mercy, service and forgiveness.*

### The Power of the Spirit at Work During this Pandemic

The Spirit of God is often described as the power of God. The world's definition of power is usually associated with control, wealth, and status.

The power of God in our lives is not the same power as defined by the world. The Spirit of God brings us God's love and elements of His peace – especially during these difficult "Pandemic Days".

If you would like to "inquire" about the power of the Spirit of God, Jesus, or our Catholic faith family, come to an RCIA Inquiry Session.

All who are unbaptized, baptized into another Christian denomination, or baptized Catholic but have never received BOTH sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist are invited. For more information, please contact Phyllis Stone, [pstone@stmatthias.net](mailto:pstone@stmatthias.net).



### Watershed Moment!

Because of a devastating childhood illness at nineteen months, Helen Keller (1880-1968) was left both blind and deaf. Her life was rightly written up as a "miracle story" and became a play called *The Miracle Worker* (1957) with Anne Bancroft starring in the Broadway production (1959). But the "miracle" Helen Keller experienced was not any return of hearing or vision. The "miracle" she received was the miracle of her committed, loving family, and of her relentlessly optimistic and patient teacher Anne Sullivan. When Helen was seven years old, trapped in a world where she could only communicate through a few hand signals with the family cook, her parents arranged for a twenty-year old, visually impaired teacher to come and work with their daughter. Using American Sign Language, Anne Sullivan spent months "spelling" words into Helen's hands. Everything Helen touched, everything she ate, every person she encountered, was "spelled out" into her hand. At first Helen Keller

didn't get it. These random motions being pressed into her palm did not connect with experiences she felt. But Sullivan refused to give up. She kept spelling words. She kept giving "tactile-verbal" references for everything Helen encountered. Finally there was a "watershed" moment, which was indeed water-powered. Helen's breakthrough moment was as she was having water pumped over her hands and Anne Sullivan kept spelling the word for "water" over and over into her palm. Suddenly Helen "got it." Suddenly she realized those gestures meant something real and tangible. They were naming what she was experiencing. The world of communication, reading, literature, human interaction were all made possible to one person through the gift of another person. The "miracle" Helen's teacher Anne Sullivan worked was the miracle of patience. She simply kept on and kept at it, showing Helen there were "words" for "things," and there was true meaning behind all Helen's experiences.

# Celebrating Our Faith: Liturgy



We will resume our in- church Children's Choir Rehearsals  
NEXT WEEK- Thursday, January 14.

Our 3rd and 4th graders will sing from 3:30-4:00 and our 5th-8th graders will sing from 4:15-4:45.

January is always a good time for new members to join us, so if your children have friends who would enjoy being in our choir, spread the word. We will rehearse safely, distantly and with **JOY!**

We will be learning beautiful music for Lent and Easter, as well as other fun music that we don't usually have time to learn together. There are silver linings to this pandemic and I am going to find every single one of them!

Thank you for all of your kind prayers and good wishes. I was not well right before Christmas, but am good as new now- so watch out! Your children and I and our choir parents have lots of music we want to make together in 2021.

See you **NEXT THURSDAY - JANUARY 14.** ..... Mrs. Seamon. Questions? Email: [jseamon@stmatthias.net](mailto:jseamon@stmatthias.net)

# Discovering God: Formation



## St. Matthias School (SMS) Annual Fund 2020-2021

The Parish and School have launched the SMS Annual Fund for 2020-2021. Please read the letter from Fr. Abraham and Ms. Elena Malinconico on our website at [www.stmatthias.net/SMSAnnualFund](http://www.stmatthias.net/SMSAnnualFund).

Our Catholic School is a vital and treasured ministry of our Parish Community. If you would like to help support this ministry, you may donate by check, made out to "St. Matthias School", and with "Annual Fund" written in the memo line. Checks may be dropped off in the collection basket on Sunday, or mailed to St. Matthias Church, 168 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Somerset, NJ 08873. You may also donate to the SMS Annual Fund through [www.ParishGiving.org](http://www.ParishGiving.org). Thank you!



## St. Matthias Youth Living Evangelization = SMYLE

### Calling all Youth

**Ages 12-18!!!!**

Join us for our first SMYLE zoom meeting!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4919124654>

**Sunday, January 17 from 6:30-7:30 pm**

The meeting will include Games, a tasty treat, and discussion.

**Topic: Does My Life Matter?**

Hot Cocoa and Cookie pick-up for all participants on Sunday afternoon, January 17 from 1:00-2:00 behind St. Matthias School!

### Calling All Parents!!!!

Join us for our first parent SMYLE zoom meeting!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4919124654>

**Wednesday, January 20 from 7:00-8:00pm**

**Topic:**

**Not all conversations are the same...  
How do I begin difficult conversations with my children?**

### Collection for Unity Square-New Brunswick January 23 and 24, 2021

Unity Square is a community organizing and social concerns initiative of Catholic Charities, Diocese of Metuchen, that works to empower community members and catalyze change in the poorest residential neighborhood of New Brunswick, NJ. In so doing, Unity Square addresses a diverse set of issues, including economic development, employment, civic participation, crime and safety, immigrants' rights, and tenants' rights.

**SMYLE will be collecting Dunkin cards and personal hygiene items (toothbrushes, toothpaste, tissue packs, hand sanitizer) in the breezeway after all the masses. Bring the items in plastic grocery bags.**

*Please help those in need!!!!*

# Being Good Stewards

## Stewardship Reflection Jan 10, 2021 Baptism of the Lord

*"And a voice came from the heavens, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'" - Mark 1:11*

Through our baptism, we too, are daughters and sons of God. We are disciples of Jesus. As true disciples we are called to actively participate in our Catholic faith, not just be mere bystanders. This means working in collaboration with the Holy Spirit and discerning how we are being asked to use our gifts. Using our gifts for the benefit of others and not just for our own interests and comfort.

## Reflexiones — 10 de enero de 2021 Bautizo del Señor

*"y una voz vino del cielo, 'Eres mi Hijo amado; en ti me complacezo.'" - Marcos 1:11*

A través de nuestro bautismo, también nosotros somos hijos de Dios. Somos discípulos de Jesús. Como verdaderos discípulos somos llamados a participar activamente en nuestra fe Católica, no solo a ser simples espectadores. Esto significa trabajar en colaboración con el Espíritu Santo y discernir como se nos pide utilizar nuestros dones. Significa utilizar nuestros dones para el beneficio de otros y no solo para nuestro propio interés y comodidad.

## 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Night of Winners To support St. Matthias School Saturday, February 13, 2021

The success of this event is due in large part to the generous donations that we receive from our parishioners and school families.

Any new, unused items, in their original packaging are welcome to be dropped off in the Parish or School Office during normal business hours.

The deadline for donations is January 22, 2021.

Not sure what we might be looking for? Look no further than the list below for ideas/suggestions or visit our Amazon Wish List to donate with just a few clicks!

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/dl/invite/85UrXJn?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/dl/invite/85UrXJn?ref=wl_share)

Thank you in advance for your generosity and kindness!  
Please note that all donations are tax-deductible.

Gift Certificates/Gift Cards  
Jewelry  
Bottles of Wine/Liquor  
Housewares  
Appliances  
Electronics (TV's, iPads, Kindles, etc.)  
American Girl Dolls  
Collectibles  
Barware  
Sporting Equipment  
Gaming Stations  
Pet Items  
Beauty Items  
Vacation Home Rentals

Any questions about donations can be directed to Melissa Garlatti –  
[melissa.garlatti@gmail.com](mailto:melissa.garlatti@gmail.com)

## Please Obtain Gift Cards Online to Help Our School AT NO COST TO YOU

We have over 750 gift cards currently available online.

No need to stop by the office, nor to touch anything. Instead, when you go shopping or to a restaurant, buy the gift card on your phone, and then pay for your items by showing the cashier your phone. The cashier will scan the gift card on your phone. And St. Matthias School will receive a percentage of the gift card price, at no cost to you. Here are the steps:

1. Go to your phone's App store and download "RaiseRight Fundraising" (If you are on a computer, go [www.raiserright.com](http://www.raiserright.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, [melissamilerrizzo@gmail.com](mailto:melissamilerrizzo@gmail.com).

## Being Good Stewards



### Consider Joining the Parish Finance Council

Our new Finance Council here at St. Matthias began its first meeting in April 2019. They have been meeting every month and examining all of our financial matters and have communicated their reports many times to our parishioners. In our last meeting it was suggested that we invite new members to join the Council to keep it going on a rotating basis, allowing for change as well as continuity. Hence if you have financial or business background, please consider volunteering to serve our community through the Parish Finance Council. Kindly contact me at [abraham@stmatthias.net](mailto:abraham@stmatthias.net)

### Letter from Nick Grippo, Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council - January 6, 2021

Dear Friends and Fellow Parishioners,

Happy New Year. I hope you had a blessed, healthy, and happy Advent and Christmas season. I am writing to you as the Chair of our Pastoral Council about a matter of great importance to the financial health of our Parish. Life certainly was unusual and difficult in 2020, but new possibilities also have emerged. New ways to use technology to enhance connectedness (i.e., "Zoom" meetings), facilitate learning, and reduce travel are just a few examples. In our faith lives, the transition to participating in Mass virtually has been such a blessing. Since so many of us have the comfort and convenience of experiencing mass in our homes or even from our cars, why not take the same opportunity to commit to St. Matthias's online giving in 2021 to make sure you are not allowing the pandemic to disrupt your contributions to our weekly mass collections.

Needless to say, our collective responsibility to the financial stability of our Parish has been shaken as a result of the pandemic and the loss of key events like our carnival. Like

many parishes, we find ourselves working hard to recover from the challenges of 2020 and to minimize the impact of the pandemic on our Parish community. One way to assist in those efforts is online giving. I am optimistic that when you consider the ease and convenience of online giving - whether you participate in mass in person, from home, or remotely from other locations - you will feel comfortable and fulfilled knowing that you are helping the Parish continue its wonderful work and mission.

Please join me and many of our other parishioners; give within your means and current ability. The process to enroll is very simple. Here is the link to the section of the Parish website with more information: [www.stmatthias.net/give](http://www.stmatthias.net/give) and then click on "Parish Giving".

Let's start 2021 with a new commitment to online giving. Have a blessed and healthy New Year!

Nick Grippo  
Chair, Parish Pastoral Council

Weekly Collection information will be included in next week's bulletin.

## Caring for Others

### Diocesan Pro-Vita Awards Go to Two St. Matthias Parishioners!



Congratulations to **Fran Johnson** and **Frank McCann** who are receiving this year's diocesan wide Pro-Vita Awards!

The Mass and Awards Ceremony — the Annual Diocesan Respect Life Mass & Pro-Vita Awards — will be held on on **Friday, January 22 at 5 p.m.** at the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi, Metuchen. Bishop James F. Checchio will be the celebrant.

Parishioners from St. Matthias are especially welcome to attend the Mass in-person at the Cathedral. **Seating is limited so registration is required.** Register by visiting: [www.diometuchen.org/humanlifeanddignity](http://www.diometuchen.org/humanlifeanddignity).

The Mass will also be live-streamed by the Cathedral. For more information, email [human.life.and.dignity@diometuchen.org](mailto:human.life.and.dignity@diometuchen.org)



# Connecting with Our Local Community

## St. Francis Center for Renewal

[www.StFrancisCtr.org](http://www.StFrancisCtr.org)

610.867.8890 fax: 610.865.1122

395 Bridle Path Road, Bethlehem, PA 18017

### WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

January 18 to January 25, 2021

Daily at 11:30AM - Noon

Freewill Offering



## Public Policy Issues -- Be Informed

As Catholics, we have an obligation to consider public policy issues in light of the Gospel and the moral and social teaching of the Church. To provide the faithful of the Diocese of Metuchen with information and resources about issues affecting public policy and to highlight our lifelong responsibility as Catholics to form our own consciences in accord with the Church's teaching, the diocese has launched a new webpage: <https://diometuchen.org/issues-and-action>.

There you can sign up to receive action alerts directly from the diocese, or sign up to receive alerts directly from the New Jersey Catholic Conference and the USCCB. Visitors to the page can also take action on current pending legislation and can see the latest news affecting public policy in our state, nation and world.

## A Virtual Night of Broadway Show Tunes Live!

A fundraiser for Temple Beth-El!! An online Broadway concert with Bart Shatto, a Broadway performer, on **January 16th at 7:00PM**

Half of what we collect will be donated to 1 of 2 charities, either the Franklin Food Bank, or the Actors Fund supporting out of work Broadway. People can choose which charity they want when they purchase their tickets.

Thank you and God bless you and yours. The link is: <https://tbeonline.weebly.com/bart.html>

## Pre-Register NOW to Receive a COVID Vaccine

The State of New Jersey has now created a website where you can Pre-Register to receive the Vaccine (at no cost). You will then be notified when you are eligible to receive the vaccine. Go to the following website and follow the prompts:

<https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/vaccine>

## Mount Saint Mary House of Prayer

1651 US Hwy. 22, Watchung, NJ 07069  
908-753-2091

[www.msmhope.org](http://www.msmhope.org)

**THOMAS AQUINAS: DISCIPLE AND SAINT via ZOOM presented by Mt. St. Mary House of Prayer**



Most know St. Thomas Aquinas as a Doctor of the Church and eminent scholar. Do we ever ponder why he's called Saint? Not for his work so much as his spirit and life as a disciple of Jesus! That's what we will think and pray about on this eve of his Feast. **Wed., Jan. 27, 7--9 p.m.** (\$20-\$30 as you are able)  
Presenter: Honora Werner, OP

## Parish Leadership

### Parish Pastoral Council:

**Chair:** Nick Grippo  
[nickgrippo@gmail.com](mailto:nickgrippo@gmail.com)

**Co-Chair:** Lisa Robinson  
[lar0504@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto:@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 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.

### Bulletin Article Requests

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



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[www.diometuchen.org/cemeteries](http://www.diometuchen.org/cemeteries)

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