



**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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## THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS

### SUNDAY, JAN 2, 2022— The Epiphany of the Lord

#### A New Day

Daylight appears  
 Massive evergreens  
 Form a canopy over  
 Tear stained earth.  
 A new day is born.  
 Filled with hope,  
 Dreams, challenges  
 To be met.  
 Covered under  
 A blanket of Love  
 Peace prevails  
 Across the land.  
 Around the globe  
 Brothers, Sisters embrace  
 The color of their skin  
 No longer stands between  
 them.

Homeless brothers, sisters  
 No longer a blight  
 On City streets  
 Are cared for by strangers.

No more bullying,  
 Name calling,  
 Intolerance, random  
 shootings  
 NO MORE HATRED!!!!  
 This is my hope,  
 My dream,  
 Together we can  
 Make the dream a reality.

For this I pray!!!  
 -- Pat Leposa



#### Volunteers Needed on Saturday, January 8!

Thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to bring our Christmas tree display to life. It has been wonderful and truly appreciated by the local community.

Unfortunately, all things have to come to an end. We will be taking down the trees and storing all the lights and cords for next year, **THIS Saturday, January 8, 2021 from 10:00 am through 3:00pm** (as needed). Please come help us next Saturday. Details are on page 9.



**Last chance to Visit  
Our Nativity  
and Tree Display —  
6 pm till Midnight every  
night through January 6.**



**amazon.com**

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://www.youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ)

### The Church is open for individual prayer

Mon-Fri from 7:30 am to dusk  
Sat from 9 am to 6pm, and  
Sun from 7:30 am to 1 pm,  
unless another service is taking place.

### Sunday Jan 2, 2022 Epiphany of the Lord

<b>Together in Charity Collection</b>	at all Masses
8:00AM Mass	Church
10:00AM Mass	Church
10:30AM RCIA	John XXIII Rm
12:00PM Epiphany Mass	Church
1:00PM Franklin High School Madrigals	Church

### Monday, Jan 3, 2022 The Most Holy Name of Jesus SMS Resumes

8:00AM Mass	Church
8:30AM Miraculous Medal Novena	Church
6:30PM HSA Board Mtg.	Zoom

### Tuesday, Jan 4, 2022 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

8:00AM Daily Mass	Church
6:30PM GIFT	Church, clsrms, John XXIII Rm
7:30PM SVDP Mtg.	de Porres Rm

### Wednesday, Jan 5, 2022 St. John Neumann, Bishop

8:00AM Mass	Church
6:30PM GIFT	Church, clsrms, John XXIII Rm

### Thursday, Jan 6, 2022 St. Andre Bessette, Religious

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

### Friday, Jan 7, 2022 St. Raymond Penafort, Priest

8:00AM Mass	Church
8:30AM First Friday Holy Hour	Church
10:00AM SMS First Friday Mass	Church
10:30AM Spring Hills Nursing Home Mass	off site

### Saturday, Jan 8, 2022

#### 10:00 AM Tree Takedown—Volunteers Needed!

3:30PM Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM Mass	Church

### Sunday Jan 9, 2022 Baptism of the Lord

8:00AM Mass	Church
10:00AM Mass	Church
12:00PM Mass	Church
2:00PM GIFT	Church, clsrms, John XXIII Rm



## From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends, Happy New Year!

Did you begin the New Year in the right spirit? St. Paul gives an excellent piece of advice he practiced himself: *“forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 3:13). Basically, Paul is telling us to be forward-looking at the possibilities that we have in the call of God in Christ Jesus. This is something that we can apply at the beginning of this New Year.

“Forgetting what lies behind” is an invitation to not dwell on the past failures, hurts and wrong choices but to learn from them in the light that Jesus brings into our lives. No doubt, our desire is to be better persons, to live better lives, to make more healthy choices and to live with all in harmony and peace. “Straining forward to what lies ahead” is the promise of the fulfillment of our longings in Jesus. As we begin this First Sunday of the New Year together, let us remember that it truly is a New Beginning for all of us here in the Catholic Community of St. Matthias where Jesus is the center. What is our New Year gift to Jesus? We have the answer in the 19<sup>th</sup> century English carol, Christina Rossetti’s *A Christmas Carol*, which begins, “In the bleak midwinter.” The carol sums up, in its last stanza, the nature of “giving to the Christ Child.”

*What can I give him, poor as I am?*

*If I were a shepherd, I could give a Lamb.*

*If I were a wise man, I could do my part.*

*What I can I give Him? Give Him my heart!”*

Today’s feast of the Epiphany reminds us of the manifestation of the Christ Child to the whole world. Luke’s gospel in a special way stresses this universal salvific plan of God who came to save everyone. There is place for everyone in the family of God – no matter how different a person is. “Unity in Diversity” is another way of stating who we are as Christians. Today’s 12 noon Mass is a celebration of our diversity as the Catholic Community of St. Matthias.

I plan to take my vacation this month and God willing, I hope to reach home (in the southern state of Kerala, India), this coming Sunday. I commend myself to your prayers. Many of you know that I could not attend my father’s funeral last January. My hope is to be with my mother and family to celebrate his first death anniversary on January 11. I am so very happy that Msgr. Brennan who has vast pastoral experience and wisdom is with us and will oversee all the parish needs. At the moment, he is having a short but well-deserved vacation to Ireland to be with his sister and other family members.

May the Blessings of Baby Jesus stay with us and with our dear ones for the whole of 2022 and beyond!

Your brother in Christ,  
Fr. Abraham Orapankal



## Readings for the Week

**Monday:** 1 Jn 3:22 — 4:6; Ps 2:7bc-8, 10-12a; Mt 4:12-17, 23-25

**Tuesday:** 1 Jn 4:7-10; Ps 72:1-2, 3-4, 7-8; Mk 6:34-44

**Wednesday:** 1 Jn 4:11-18; Ps 72:1-2, 10, 12-13; Mk 6:45-52

**Thursday:** 1 Jn 4:19 — 5:4; Ps 72:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17; Lk 4:14-22

**Friday:** 1 Jn 5:5-13; Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20; Lk 5:12-16

**Saturday:** 1 Jn 5:14-21; Ps 149:1-2, 3-4, 5-6a, 9b; Jn 3:22-30

**Sunday:** Is 42:1-4, 6-7 or Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 or Ps 104:1b-2, 3-4, 24-25, 27-28, 29-30; Acts 10:34-38 or Ti 2:11-14; 3:4-7; Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

## Mass Intentions for the Week

<b>Saturday, Jan 1</b>	10:00AM	Louis Natasi, by Frances & Children
<b>Sunday, Jan 2</b>	8:00AM	Frank Catalina, by John & Maureen Schroeder
	10:00AM	Max Regan, by Deacon Russ & Monica
	12:00PM	Russell Mulholland, by John & Family
	(5:30PM)	Intention of Parishioners
	(5:30PM)	Intention of Parishioners
<b>Monday, Jan 3</b>	8:00AM	Remia Alomia, by The Capuno Family
<b>Tuesday, Jan 4</b>	8:00AM	Richard E. Blind, by Tom Aussem
<b>Wednesday, Jan 5</b>	8:00AM	Margaret McGarry & Kathleen Barger, by Sr. Marie Therese
<b>Thursday, Jan 6</b>	8:00AM	Wasil Lesik, by The Jones Family
<b>Friday, Jan 7</b>	5:00PM	Teresita Lacap, by The Family
<b>Saturday, Jan 8</b>	10:00AM	Health & Blessings for Victoria Villareal Moreno, by The Moreno Family
<b>Sunday, Jan 9</b>	8:00AM	William J. Gleason, by Sharon & Tom Gleason
	10:00AM	Health & Blessings for Paula Wegg, by Marilyn Wegg & Family
	12:00PM	Elizabeth Maruca, by Nephew/Godson, Joe Gidaro
	(5:30PM)	Intention of Parishioners

## Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office or email Kelly Counts at [kcounts@stmatthias.net](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. *New people on our prayer list are noted in blue.*

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

## Pray for those who have died...

— “His mercy endures forever.” Chronicles

Maria Forte, mother of Dianne Suraci

## Reflect



### Smile with Your Family



A husband asked his wife, "Why would God give the wise men a star to guide them?" She replied, "Because God knows men are too proud to ask for directions." 😊

A man who had too much to drink decides to walk home on New Year's Eve. A policeman stopped the man and asked where he was going. "I'm on my way to a lecture," the man replied. The cop scoffed, "Who gives lectures on New Year's Eve?" The man answered: "My wife." 😊

#### New Year Resolutions:

My New Year's resolution is to stop procrastinating. But I'll wait until tomorrow to start. 😊

I was going to quit all my bad habits for the new year ..... but then I remembered that nobody likes a quitter. 😊

My New Year's resolution is to stop hanging out with people who ask me about my New Year's resolutions. 😊

My New Year resolution was to read more, so I put the subtitles on my TV. 😊

I don't know why people flock to Times Square on New Year's Eve. They always drop the ball. 😊

### One "Wise Man's" Epiphany!

**"Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." Matthew 2: 1-12**

Writer and spiritual director Kathleen Hirsch tells of a friend's "epiphany": He was bright and hard-working and blessed with incredible opportunities at a young age. He worked on Wall Street, and later moved on to become the principal in a small financial services company. When that didn't survive an aggressive wave of consolidation, he became president of a prestigious job-training program. At some point, he ran into conflict with his board, but there was another position waiting. He designed innovative programs, won national awards. But in an unexpected, final turn, he was fired.

He struggled for a time as a consultant, then found himself working at Starbuck's. The new man on the team, this meant working split shifts, weekends, and holidays. He and his wife sold their house and moved into an apartment. Their social set vanished. Soon all that was left were his dogs and a weekly paycheck for making lattes for the people who once worked for him.

It was a time of realization, an "epiphany" of sorts: "My ego had gotten in the way," he told a friend later. "I'd stopped listening. The only thing I was focused on was my need to be successful." So he continued to

make coffee, read - and attend Mass. He slowly and painfully dismantled his pride. He waited and watched. One day, the phone rang. It was as if someone had turned a light on in his life. He saw a path being offered him. More important, it was a path that would allow him to bring his gifts to a place where they were most needed.

Last Christmas was his first one in his new job: coordinating upwards of 15,000 volunteers to serve the hungry in his city. No fancy titles, no tinsel and champagne holiday parties, no large bonuses. On Christmas Day, he went to Mass, did some yoga, and served plates of food to people he had come to love. This is the Christmas he wanted: to be in touch with the real.

**We all experience such "epiphanies" in our lives: moments of revelation and understanding, discoveries of possibility and potential, a new awareness of the love of God in our lives. In times both of great joy and accomplishment and of turmoil and disappointment, the love of God is manifested to us in the most hidden kindnesses, in the barely visible light of everyday compassion. In this New Year, may we follow the star of God's reconciliation and justice, enabling us to behold Emmanuel - "God in our midst" - in every experience of charity, consolation and forgiveness, whether given or received.**

### A Fourth Wise Man?

There's a story called "The Other Wise Man" by Henry van Dyke. It's about a fourth person who is supposed to accompany the other three wise men on their journey to search for the newborn King. The name of the person is Artaban. As Artaban prepares for the journey, he takes with him a bag of precious stones to give to the baby King. On this way to join the other three wise men, Artaban stops to help a poor person. The delay is just enough to make him miss his rendezvous with the others. Artaban never does catch up with them. He constantly runs into people who need help. And he always stops to help them. Eventually, Artaban gives away all his precious stones. As the story ends, Artaban is old and poor. He has never realized his dream to meet the King of Kings. But the story doesn't end here. One day Artaban is in Jerusalem. Authorities are about to execute a criminal. When Artaban sees the criminal, his heart skips a beat. Something tells

Continued on next page

## Reflect

### A fourth wise man? (con't.)

him this is the King of Kings for whom he has been searching all his life. **Artaban is heartbroken when he sees he can do nothing to help the King. Then something remarkable happens. Artaban hears the King's voice say to him: "Don't be broken-hearted, Artaban. You've been helping me all your life. When I was hungry, you gave me food. When I was thirsty, you gave me drink. When I was naked, you clothed me. When I was a stranger, you took me in."**



### **"Because you never know what's going to happen next."**

A survey was made among school children asking the question why they enjoyed reading Harry Potter novels and watching Harry Potter movies. The most common answer was, "Because you never know what's going to happen next." This sense of suspense and surprise prompt us to watch the seven episodes of the Star War movies. The same desire for epiphany with the thrill and suspense awaiting them prompt adults to watch James Bond films and encouraged the great explorers like Marco Polo and Christopher Columbus to make risky and adventurous journeys. It is the same curiosity which led the magi to follow the star of Bethlehem. An element of suspense marked every moment in the journey of the Magi, who never knew what road the Spirit of God was going to take them down next.

**Today's readings invite us to have the same curiosity of explorers and movie fans so that we may discover the "epiphany" or manifestation or self-revelation of our God in everyone and every event, everywhere. Like the Magi, we are also invited to offer Jesus our gifts on this feast of Epiphany. (a) The first gift might be friendship with God. After all, the whole point of Christmas is that God's Son became one of us to redeem us and call us friends. God wants our friendship in the form of wholehearted love and devotion. (b) A second gift might be friendship with others. This kind of friendship can be costly. The price it exacts is vulnerability and openness to others. The good news, however, is that, in offering friendship to others, we will receive back many blessings. (c) A third gift might be the gift of reconciliation. This gift repairs damaged relationships. It requires honesty, humility, understanding, forgiveness and patience. (d) The fourth gift of this season is the gift of peace: seeking God's peace in our own lives through prayer, the Sacramental life and daily meditation on the Word of God. It is out of humble gratitude that we give Him from the heart our gifts of worship, prayer, singing, possessions, and time.**

**As we give our insignificant, little gifts to God, the good news is that God accepts them! Like the Magi offering their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, we offer what we have, from the heart, in response to what that Child has given to us - Himself.**

### Horoscope Mania!

As we enter into the New Year, many believe and feel comforted to know that the stars are in our favor. This is based on the belief that this is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius. "When the



moon is in the seventh house and Jupiter aligns with Mars, then peace will guide the planets and love will spear the stars. "That's what the astrologers have been telling us, and it is not difficult to be impressed by the fact that an estimated fifty million North Americans consult the "Horoscope" in their newspapers, or online and that books on astrology have been selling by hundreds of thousands every year. Among young people, astrology is very much an "in" thing -- unfortunately, in some cases, as a kind of substitute for religion, which they have rejected.

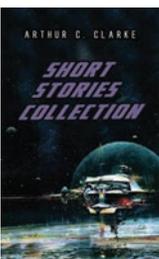
As it is in all forms of prediction, astrology can be troublesome because so often it is ambiguous and is very hard to interpret. A man was telling his friend that an astrologer had said to him, "Your wife's second husband will be rich, brilliant and handsome." And the friend asked, "Didn't it upset you to hear that kind of prediction?" "Yes, it did upset me very much," the man answered. "I didn't know my wife had been married before." For some people, apparently, the star signs can mean what they want them to mean.

**But it is interesting to note that people are interpreting the star signs to mean we are moving into a new era of brotherhood, peace and love. This should be of the utmost importance to us Christians because our most reliable source for information concerning the world's destiny -- The New Testament-is saying the same thing. And, incredibly, it begins telling us the story of a baby's birth. "We observed His star at its rising and have come to pay Him homage." On this first Sunday of the New Year, if we have discovered the living presence of God deep in the core of our being then we will not have missed Jesus' star at its rising, and we will know how to pay Him true homage. With God at the center of our lives we will bear homage to the newborn Babe through our gifts of heartfelt compassion, patient understanding and genuine concern for others. Our greatest gift to the world in this New Year or any other year is the gift of self. This is the homage we pay Him: to love another as Jesus has loved us.**

## A Woman among the Magi?

Rev. Benedict Thomas Viviano ([https://www.stlbeacon.org/#!/content/17405/viviano\\_writes\\_about\\_a\\_woman\\_magi](https://www.stlbeacon.org/#!/content/17405/viviano_writes_about_a_woman_magi)) a renowned Gospel of Matthew professor, Dominican friar and priest, has a new Biblical theory that may change nativity scenes across the globe: according to him, there was one Wise Woman (or more) among the Wise Men. His original theory was published in 2011 in *Studies of Matthew* by Leuven University Press. It's "perfectly plausible" that Matthew would have understood the magi as some sort of Eastern sages, he said. "On the other hand, the masculine plural magoi does not close the question of gender. "The main reason to think of the presence of one or more women among the magi is the background story of the queen of Sheba, with her quest for Israelite royal wisdom, her reverent awe, and her three gifts fit for a king," Viviano suggested. His second reason to suspect the presence of the feminine is the Israelite tradition of personifying wisdom as a woman, he said (Proverbs 8:22-30; 9:1-6; Book of Sirach, 24). Viviano's third argument for his female magi cause is that Matthew's Gospel later characterizes Jesus as embodying wisdom, which Jewish literature considers female and even terms Lady Wisdom. The passages he refers to are Matthew, Chapter 11:19 and 25-30. What difference it would have made if there was a woman among the magi? A women's magazine says: They would have come before the birth of Jesus, brought provisions for the child and his mother and the woman would have served as a midwife!

## The Star of Bethlehem



In Arthur C. Clarke's short story "The Star", we read about a Jesuit astrophysicist who makes a space trip with other scientists to a distant galaxy called the Phoenix Nebula. There they chance upon a solitary planet still orbiting the remnant of a central sun, which had exploded thousands of years ago. The explorers land their spacecraft on this planet and examine the scorched surface caused by that cosmic detonation.

They discover a melted-down monolithic marker at the entrance of a great vault in which they find the carefully stored treasures and records of an advanced civilization. On their return trip to earth in our own galaxy, the Jesuit astrophysicist calculates the exact time when the light from this cosmic explosion in the Phoenix Nebula reached earth. It was the date of Christ's birth when the light from that fire was seen as a bright new star appearing in the East. But now that he had solved an ancient mystery, he had a greater mystery to grapple with. How could a loving God allow a whole planet of intelligent being to be given a galactic conflagration, so that the symbol of their passing might shine above Bethlehem at his Son's birth?

***This science-fiction story about the star of Bethlehem has its source in today's Gospel. Mathew's narration of the Magi uses the star as its central symbol. From its rising in the East to its coming to a standstill over Bethlehem, the star leads and guides the astrologers.***

## Bones of the Three Wise Men?

If you ever visit Cologne (Köln) Cathedral in Germany, you can walk around the sanctuary and behind the main altar there is a large reliquary which is said to contain the bones or at least the skulls of the three wise men.



"How did they get to Cologne?" you might ask. The wise men's bones are said to have been found in Persia and then brought to Constantinople by St. Helena who was the mother of the emperor Constantine who was the first Roman Emperor to convert to Christianity. According to legend, the "relics of the Magi" were originally situated at Constantinople but brought to Milan in an oxcart by Eustorgius I, to whom they were entrusted by Emperor Constantine in 314. Eight centuries later, in 1164, the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa took the relics of the Magi and gave them to the Archbishop of Cologne, Rainald of Dassel. Parts of the Shrine were designed by the famous medieval goldsmith Nicholas of Verdun. The Shrine is shaped like a basilica with two sarcophagi standing next to each other, with the third sarcophagus resting on their roof ridges.

It is approximately 43 inches wide, 60 inches high, and 87 inches long. The decoration of the structure is rich with filigree and enamel and is covered with over 1000 jewels and beads. The basic structure is made of wood, with gold and silver overlay. The shrine was finally opened in 1864. Today, the Shrine rises above the medieval high altar, making this area the main focus of the Cologne Gothic Cathedral, which was built as a stone reliquary for this precious shrine.

'We Three Kings of Orient Are' is a popular carol that we all sing during the season, especially at Epiphany. Dating from 1857, this carol was composed by American clergyman and hymnodist, John Henry Hopkins Jr. The carol tells the story of Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection – and the melody alternates between regal, minor-sounding Aeolian mode verses, in which the Three Wise Men announce what gifts they're presenting to the son of God, and a major chorus joyfully proclaiming the beauty of the star guiding their way to the manger.

## From the Pastoral Staff

On this Feast of the Epiphany, we continue our celebration of the 12 Days of Christmas.

As Director of our St. Matthias Children's Choir, I always encourage our choir members to write their own songs. They often perform them at our choir rehearsal in a segment of our choir rehearsal called ★ Choir Stars. ★

Sometimes, the children make up new words to existing songs, like "It's the Most Stressful Time of the Year" or "The Wrapping Paper Song" sung to the melody of "I'm a Little Teapot.

Our beloved Assistant Children's Choir Director **Angela Frigiola**, who went home to God this past summer, wrote a new version of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" in 2012 that our Children's Choir really enjoyed singing.

In Angela's honor, I present to you the famous "**Mrs. Frigiola's 12 Days of Christmas**":

1. On the first day of Christmas, we think of all these things, **the birth of the Baby Jesus.**
2. On the second day of Christmas, we think of all these things, **2 Shepherds Watching** and the birth...
3. On the third day of Christmas, we think of all these things, **3 Wise Men walking, ...**

4. On the fourth day of Christmas, we think of all these things, **4 Angels singing...**
5. On the fifth day of Christmas, we think of all these things, **MARY AND JOSEPH!** 4 Angels singing, 3 Wise men, 2 Shepherds watching, and the birth of the Baby Jesus.



Angela continued on as follows, but always left #12 open for the children to make up their own verse.

6. **Alleluias**
7. **Drummers Drumming**
8. **Children Dancing**
9. **Trees all twinkling**
10. **Opening our presents**
11. **Thanks for our Family**
12. **?**

Thanks, dear Angela, for bringing our Children's Choir so much joy at Christmas. ♥

And if any of you write a new Christmas song this season, be sure to send it my way. Merry Christmas!

Joan Best Seamon  
Pastoral Associate for Liturgical Music

## Pray



### ST. MATTHIAS CHRISTMAS SEASON MASS SCHEDULE (in church)

**Epiphany of the Lord - Sunday, January 2nd—**

8:00 Mass, 10:00 Mass, 12:00 Mass in church

**Franklin HS Madrigals - 1:00 pm in church**



## Learn

### 5 Tips from Pope Francis for "a Better Kind of Politics"

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In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis calls for "a better kind of politics, one truly at the service of the common good" (no. 154). Essential to a better kind of politics is the ability to foster a social love among people through dialogue across perspectives, inspiring "new ways of approaching the problems of today's world, of profoundly renewing structures, social organizations and legal systems from within" (no. 183). What is

"a better kind of politics"? It means working across differences to listen to one another and connect around shared values, resulting in creative solutions for the common good.

Here are 5 "musts" from Pope Francis that are essential for a "better kind of politics" in both our Church and society.

#### 1. We are a human family

We must recover "the sense of belong-

ing to a single human family." After all, "we are all in the same boat" (no. 30). This is in stark contrast to the tendency, which has become commonplace, to disengage from difficult conversations and see only our own interests and perspectives. Pope Francis challenges us: "Isolation and withdrawal into one's own interests are never the way to restore hope and bring about renewal" (no. 30). Instead of "the inclination

(cont'd on next page)

## 5 Tips from Pope Francis for “a Better Kind of Politics” (cont’d from previous page)

to be concerned only with myself, my group, my own petty interests” (no. 166) we have to commit to overcoming “every individualistic mindset” and instead “seek the good of all people” including those we may see as different from us (no. 182).

### 2. We must commit to approaching others with love.

Even those with whom we disagree are children of God. Sadly, such an approach has become countercultural. We have become used to efforts aimed more to “discredit and insult opponents from the outset than to open a respectful dialogue aimed at achieving agreement on a deeper level” (no. 201). This is a situation in which we must be prophetic, modeling by example a respectful approach that honors others as made in God’s image. This involves stepping outside ourselves, listening with empathy, and seeking to truly understand another person’s experience.

### 3. We must identify common values based on truth.

Social love, Pope Francis says, has to be “accompanied by a commitment to the truth” (no. 184) informed by both faith and reason (no. 185). An essential starting place for dialogue is to identify common values rooted in truth and justice, such as the dignity of the human person, or a commitment to fundamental human rights and integral human development. Identifying these common convictions can unite us despite our differences and lead to creative thinking and new solutions.

### 4. We must learn how to unmask the various ways that the truth is manipulated.

We must learn how to unmask the vari-

ous ways that the truth is manipulated, distorted and concealed in public and private discourse” (no. 208), and to unmask media sources that are actually “powerful special interests that seek to tilt public opinion unfairly in their favor” (no. 201). An important starting point in preparing our hearts for dialogue is to consider from what sources I get my information. Are these sources reputable and longstanding? Are they neutral sources or connected with a particular political party or bias? Is it possible that I or others are being manipulated by persons or groups who have their own interests in mind? How



can I check claims that I hear against multiple sources to ensure their accuracy before I share that information with others?

### 5. We must get comfortable with being a polyhedron.

Pope Francis uses the image of the polyhedron (a three-dimensional shape that has many faces) to “represent a society where differences coexist, complementing, enriching and reciprocally illuminating one another, even amid disagreements and reservations” (no. 215). “Authentic social dialogue,” he writes, “involves the ability to respect the other’s point of view and to admit that it may include legitimate convictions and concerns,” that others “have a contribution to make,” and that we can both “be frank and open about our beliefs, while continuing to discuss, to

seek points of contact, and above all, to work and struggle together” (no. 203). In his book, *Let Us Dream*, Pope Francis writes that polarization results when we erroneously perceive disagreement as contradiction instead of contraposition. With the former, we create separate “camps” where there is one winner and one loser. With the latter, differences exist but they are capable of interacting in a “fruitful, creative tension” (p. 79). In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis writes that we must seek to identify “shared goals that transcend their differences and can thus engage in a common endeavor” (no. 157). We must be willing to dialogue with open hearts and get comfortable with creative tension as we hold simultaneous points of view that don’t fit neatly together but which can yield solutions focused on the common good (no. 190).

Building a better kind of politics through social charity will not be a quick, nor easy process. It won’t be glamorous. Pope Francis writes, “Unlike disagreement and conflict,

persistent and courageous dialogue does not make headlines, but quietly helps the world to live much better than we imagine” (no. 198). But if we approach our engagement with these guidelines in mind, and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can arrive together at “a new kind of politics” that produces much fruit to help achieve a common good where all can thrive. How can we respond to this challenging invitation? One action that every Catholic can take is to visit [CivilizeIt.org](http://CivilizeIt.org) to take a pledge based on Pope Francis’ invitation in *Fratelli Tutti*. This webpage also includes numerous resources, including prayers, an examination of conscience, an individual/communal reflection guide, action steps, and much more. Visit [CivilizeIt.org](http://CivilizeIt.org) today to get involved!

## Serve

### Volunteers Needed on Saturday, January 8 from 10 am to 3 pm to Take Down the Trees



**We need your help!!!** We will have a team working inside in the cafeteria and another team working by the trees.

Outdoor volunteers will carefully cut the zip ties holding the lights and placards, remove the plastic wrap from the connections/extension cords, carefully remove the lights and transport them to the cafeteria, cut the ties holding the trees, carry the trees to the edge of the parking lot, remove the extension cords and take them to the garage, remove the poles and place them by the parking lot. Indoor volunteers will test the lights, store the good ones in containers, and separate the others to be repaired,



If you are free, you are welcome to join us for as long as you can. Wear masks, etc. For more information, please contact Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, [mpburke-grospin@stmatthias.net](mailto:mpburke-grospin@stmatthias.net) to let her know you are coming.

## Give (and Receive!)

### Stewardship Reflection Dec 26, 2021 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

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

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

Today’s **“Together in Charity”** special collection is for Catholic Charities’ Parish Emergency Assistance Fund.

### Reflexiónese — 26 de diciembre de 2021

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

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

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

**Please Note:** This bulletin was printed before Christmas. The updated weekend collection information will be included in the Jan. 9 bulletin.

## Connect



### CAREGIVER/CARE SUPPORT MINISTRY ZOOM MEETING

We'd like to invite parishioners who are caring for ill loved ones, or are coping with chronic illness themselves, and in need of spiritual and emotional support, to join us for discussion and prayer via Zoom.  
**SATURDAY, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022; 10am - 11 noon**

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

# Connect

## Job Opening:

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

# Local Community

## Loyola Retreat Center



Loyola Retreat Center in Morristown is offering two different weekend retreats in the next few weeks. Start the New Year with a retreat!

### January 28 to 30, 2022 Weekend Retreat

“The Spiritual Decision: The Beginning of True Discipleship”

Retreat Directors: Kirk Reynolds, SJ and Marie Santana

<https://www.loyola.org/event/january-27-30-weekend-retreat/>

### February 4 to 6, 2022 Weekend Retreat

“Freedom & Awareness”

Retreat Directors: Kirk Reynolds, SJ and Marie Santana

<https://www.loyola.org/event/february-4-6-weekend-retreat/>

## Alzheimer’s Early Stage Support Group Forming

The Alzheimer's Association and St. Matthias Catholic Church are co-hosting an **Early Stage Support Group** series for people living with Alzheimer's and Dementia and their care partners. The group will meet **every second Wednesday** of the month in the de Porres room in the Parish Office. **Our first meeting is January 12th from 2pm-4pm.**

The Group provides a safe and supportive environment and offers dementia-related education, emotional support and connections with resources so that the group members may enhance their lives in the midst of the journey. Early-Stage groups offer social, educational and/or support components and are facilitated by trained volunteers.

For more information visit [alz.org/NJ](http://alz.org/NJ). To register: [alz.org/CRF](http://alz.org/CRF) or call 24/7 Helpline 800-272-3900.

# Parish Leadership

<b>Parish Pastoral Council:</b> <b>Co-Chairs:</b> Claudine Langrin <a href="mailto:ClaudMLangrin@gmail.com">ClaudMLangrin@gmail.com</a> and Mary Beth Vetter-Purcell <a href="mailto:marybeth.vetter@gmail.com">marybeth.vetter@gmail.com</a>	<b>Co-Secretaries:</b> 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  <b>Trustees:</b> Isaac Peng Marge Richards	<b>Parish Finance Council:</b> Joe Porter, Chair <b>FinanceCouncil</b> <a href="mailto:FinanceCouncil@stmatthias.net">@stmatthias.net</a> Barry Dusault Gwen Orłowski Audrey Francis Kester Hector	Joan Pritchard Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Ex-Officio Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio
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# 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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