



St. Matthias Parish Office:

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

Mass Schedule (in person):

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

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)
 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*

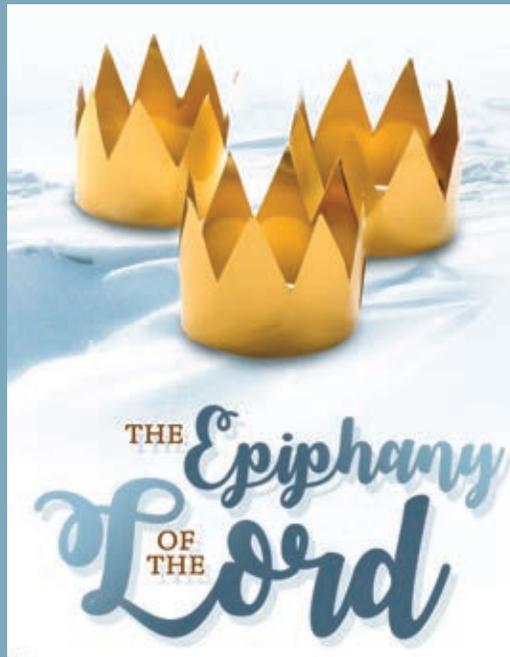
THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS
SUNDAY, JAN 3, 2021 –
Epiphany of the Lord

Read Pope Francis World Day of Peace Message for Jan. 1, titled "A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace." See an excerpt on page 7.

View the Video of our "Spread the Light" Christmas Tree Display on our YouTube channel, or click on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6h7p4a43bdU>

Help Us Take Down the Christmas Trees — Saturday, Jan. 9, from 10 am till 3 pm. See details on page 8.

Together in Charity Special Collection— **THIS** weekend. There is a special Ivory envelope in your packet for this collection.



Looking for a Great School for Your Child or Grandchild?

Learn more about our wonderful PreK3—8th grade school! St. Matthias School is open **in-person, full days, five days a week**. Our dedicated faculty excels at educating the next generation of leaders in a faith-filled, caring environment.



We are now accepting applications for 2021/2022. Whether you are interested in exploring how our school might be an ideal fit for your child next year, or exploring a mid-year transfer, contact Ms. Elena Malinconico, Principal, at 732-828-1402.



Last Chance to Visit our "Spread the Light" Christmas Trees You only have a few evenings left (till 1/6) to enjoy this beautiful display! Don't miss the video on our YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6h7p4a43bdU>

Volunteers Needed on January 9!

Thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to bring our "Spread the Light" Christmas tree memorial to life. It has been wonderful!

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, on **Saturday, January 9, 2021 from 10:00 am through 3:00pm**. Details on page 8.

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 3, 2021 **Together in Charity 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

Monday, Jan 4, 2021 **School Reopens**

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

Tuesday, Jan 5, 2021

8:00AM Daily Mass Church
7:00PM SVDP via ZOOM

Wednesday, Jan 6, 2021

8:00AM Mass Church

Thursday, Jan 7, 2021

5:00PM Vigil Mass—Solemnity of Mary Church

Friday, Jan 8, 2021

8:00AM Daily Mass Church

Saturday, Jan 9, 2021

10:00AM Volunteers take down trees Upper
till 3 PM field
3:30-4:30PM Confessions Church
5:00PM Mass Church

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

Bulletin Article Requests:

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

From the Pastor & the Pastoral Staff



Dear St. Matthias Family,

Unlike most New Year's, most of us enter 2021, not thinking about all the things we want to change, but all the things we would like to return to! 2020 has been a year that has challenged us to the very core of our being and has caused some of us great pain. We long for even the craziness of life before COVID, and above all, we long for some peace!

The challenge for the New Year is where are we going to look for this peace? Who or what are we going to follow?

The temptation is to place all our trust in a person, or an ideology or a news source. These are tempting, because they tell us what to do, or who to trust, or what to believe. These seem so clear and easy because they seem to have all the answers. My experience is, however, that they almost always disappoint and never bring you to peace.

The wise men, on the other hand, put their trust in a God they did not fully understand or know. They followed a very challenging path and asked many questions and had many struggles, and I am sure they knew losses. This God guided them, not with quick and easy answers, but with a direction that helped to bond them together. Through all this, they met this God in a very simple, yet powerful and life changing way. They found a peace greater than they could have hoped for!

As we begin our journey into 2021, may we, like the wise men, choose the path that calls us to challenge, ask and grow, not in a way that divides us, but in a way that brings us together as we all look for the "God of our Longing", who is the only one who give us true peace!

May God bless and be with us in this New Year journey!

Servus,

Fr. Joe



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 55:1-11; Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 or Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6; Acts 10:34-38 or 1 Jn 5:1-9; Mk 1:7-11

Mass Intentions for the Week*

Friday, Jan 1	10:00AM	Virginia Best Huether, by The Seamon Family
Saturday, Jan 2	5:00PM	Louis Nastasi, by Fran, children & grandchildren
Sunday, Jan 3	8:00AM	Virginia Best Huether, by The Seamon Family
	10:00AM	Anthony Volpe, by Barry & Virginia Stern
	12:00PM	Remia Alomia, by The Capuno Family
Monday, Jan 4	8:00AM	Marion Duggan Markos, by The Kelly Family
Tuesday, Jan 5	8:00AM	Sr. Vlasta Maria, by The OSF Community
Wednesday, Jan 6	8:00AM	Sr. Concepta Marie, by The OSF Community
Thursday, Jan 7	5:00PM	Sr. Leonilla, by The OSF Community
Friday, Jan 8	8:00AM	Quirino Soria, Sr. & Felipa & Noreen Soria, by Junie Soria
Saturday, Jan 9	5:00PM	Paul & Maureen Doyle Endres, by Isabelle & John Baker
Sunday, Jan 10	10:00AM	Darrie Christmas, by The Welcome Ministry
	12:00PM	Intention of Parishioners

Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please **email Kelly Counts** at 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
Cecillia 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
Mary Eads
Raquel Fischbach
Anne Fortune
Emma Gergely
Rose Gessner
Mary Gidaro
Katherine Giustino
John Gross
Michael Hagerty
Sloopy Hoffman
Allison Karakowski
Michael Kirugi
Millicent Kraft
Taylor LaCort
Al & Rose Larangeira
William Lecorchick
Pat Leposa

The Litrakis Family
Alexander Maceren
Kelly Magat
Al Maglio
Sue Maglio-Alese
Patrick 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
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
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...

- "His mercy endures forever." *Chronicles*

Sunday Reflections



Smile with Your Family



New Year Resolutions: *I was going to quit all my bad habits for the New Year, but then I remembered that nobody likes a quitter. ☺*

On New Year's Eve, Marilyn stood up in the local pub and said that it was time to get ready. At the stroke of midnight, she wanted every husband to be standing next to the one person who made his life worth living. Well, it was kind of embarrassing. As the clock struck, the bartender was almost crushed to death. ☺

John, at a New Year's party, turns to his friend, Dave, and asks for a smoke. "I thought you made a New Year's resolution not to smoke anymore," Dave says. "I'm in the process of quitting," replies John with a grin. "I am in the middle of phase one." "Phase one?" asks David. "Yeah," laughs John, "I've quit buying." ☺

My resolution was to read more so I put the subtitles on my TV. ☺

This New Year's I'm going to make a resolution I can keep: no dieting all year long. ☺

May all your troubles be as short as the New Year resolutions? ☺

Parenting Tune-Up



This year Epiphany is on January 3, when Christians celebrate the three wise men's (magi) search for God. Legend has it that they followed a star. Look up at the sky with your child tonight. Hopefully you will see stars. Teach them how a special star guided the travelers to the Manger. Tell them to listen to the guidance of the "Star of David" who is Jesus himself.

Marriage Tune-Up

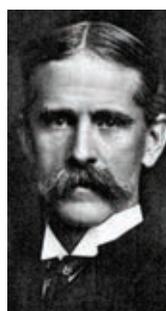


Do not turn your spouse off by letting lists rule your life! It's the season of New Year's Resolutions. This can be good, but it can also turn your focus away from your beloved to self-improvement. Today, make ONE specific Resolution to deepen your love.

7 Ups for the New Year!

- 1) **WAKE UP**--Begin the day thanking the Lord. It is His day. Rejoice in it.
- 2) **LOOK-UP**--Open your eyes to the Lord Jesus. Ask for his strength and blessings for the day through the anointing of his Holy Spirit. After all, he is your only Savior.
- 3) **DRESS-UP**--Put on a smile. It improves your looks. It says something about your attitude. It enables Jesus living within you to smile at others.
- 4) **SHUT-UP**--Watch your tongue. Don't gossip. Don't be judgmental. Say nice things. Learn to listen to others with love. Be sympathetic.
- 5) **STAND-UP**--Take a stand for what you believe. Resist evil. Do good. Have the courage of your Christian convictions by practicing what you believe.
- 6) **REACH-UP**--Spend time in prayer by talking to God with your adorations, confessions, thanksgivings and supplications to the Lord and by listening to Him by attentively reading the Bible and by applying its message to your life.
- 7) **LIFT-UP**--Be available to help those in need--serving, supporting, and sharing. Try to find Jesus in others and serve him who lives in others.

Was There a Fourth Wise Man?!?



In 1895, Henry van Dyke wrote the story, "The Other Wise Man," telling of a fourth wise man called Artaban. Our hero is not mentioned in the Gospel because he missed the caravan. He got to Bethlehem too late to see the Baby Jesus. But Artaban did make it in time to save one of the Holy Innocents by bribing a soldier. For 33 years Artaban searched for Jesus. He did not find Jesus, but all the while the Fourth wise man fed the hungry and helped the poor. Then one day in Jerusalem Artaban saw the "King of the Jews" being crucified. He started to offer a pearl as ransom. But then he saw a girl being sold into slavery to pay family debts. Artaban gave his pearl to buy freedom for the girl. Suddenly the earth quaked as Jesus died on the cross and a stone struck Artaban. Dying, he heard a Voice saying: "When you helped the least of my children, you helped me. Meet me in Heaven!" Artaban, the fourth Wise Man, had been making God present in his community for years by helping others. God asks each of us on the feast of Epiphany to be a fourth Wise Man by becoming God's epiphanies, making His love present in the world around us by our acts of love and kindness.

Sunday Reflections

Epiphany: Faith in the Journey!

... magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw its star at its rising and have come to do him homage." Matthew 2: 1-12

At the age of 13, her world darkened. Her happiness disappeared; she no longer found joy in her classes where she excelled or in playing her beloved clarinet; she was becoming more and more withdrawn. By the time her family and friends realized she was struggling, she was very sick. At school, counselors and therapists confronted her about her detachment; her friends collectively decided that she was not worth their concern. Everything and everyone she turned to for love and acceptance were missing when she most needed it. Something "broke" inside of her. She didn't care if she lived or died.

So, desperate for a change, she transferred to another school - a Catholic high school. She was the daughter of a non-practicing Methodist and a non-practicing Presbyterian. They left the decision of church and religion to her and her siblings - as long as they identified as "some sort of Christian." She didn't know whether she believed in God or not. "I found I was searching for something that refused to make itself known," she remembers. "If God existed, I concluded, God was not interested in my soul. God did not include me, but my too-cool-for-religion friends did. That is, until they didn't." At her new school, signs of God were pretty much everywhere she looked. That first day she felt like an invader. She wasn't interested in a new beginning; she simply wanted to put in her time. She wasn't interested in new friends, either. She was far from convinced that she would succeed in this new school - she just knew that her last school left her defeated.

But that's when the unexpected happened. "It took time and patience, but new friends found me. They did not give up on the moody and disconnected new student. Nothing was easy, but I was taught how to assimilate. It was a new form of love I had not yet known..."

"I was 18 years old when I was baptized into the Catholic Church. The first person I was introduced to on my first day of class stood next to me at the baptismal font as my chosen godmother. Since then, I have decided that my faith lies in my journey. I do not fear a lack of acceptance because I know God has a plan in motion. With God, I am no longer an outsider looking in. With God, I have found my missing community. [From "Through the Motions: My patient journey with depression" by Nicole Bazis, *America*, November 28, 2016.]

Today's solemnity of the Epiphany centers on the journey that every one of us travels, the journey that is ultimately a search for God: finding God in our life's meaning, finding God in belonging to family and community; finding God in the satisfaction of doing good. As the magi experienced, God sets "stars" ahead of us - for this student, the star was a group of teachers and classmates who would not let her be lost to the darkness of her depression. The understanding and support of family and friends, the forgiveness we extend and receive, the meaning we come in know in giving and serving those in need, are all "epiphanies" of God's presence in our own Bethlehems. In the new year before us, may our hearts and spirits behold these many epiphanies in which we re-discover the love of "Emmanuel" - God in our midst!

Promote Culture of Life!

The March for Life theme for 2021 is "Together Strong: Life Unites." The 48th annual [March for Life](#) will take place on **January 29th, 2021**. The march occurs every year on or near the anniversary of Roe v. Wade as a protest of the Supreme Court's 1973 ruling in that case, which mandated legal abortion nationwide.

Star and the Wise Men!

There is a beautiful old tradition about the star in the East. The story says that when the star had finished its task of directing the wise men to the baby, it fell from the sky and dropped down into the city well of Bethlehem. According to some legend, that star is there to this day, and can sometimes still be seen by those whose hearts are pure and clean. It's a pretty story. It kind of makes you feel warm inside. There are other legends about this story of the wise men from the east. For instance, how many wise men were there? In the old days in the east, they believed that there were 12 men who made the journey, but now most everyone agrees there were three. One old legend even tells us the names of the three. Melchior was the oldest of the group, with a full beard. He gave the baby the gift of gold. Balthazar also had a beard, but was not as old as Melchior. He presented the gift of myrrh. The youngest of the three was Casper, who had no beard yet, but did present the gift of frankincense to the baby. Yet another legend goes on to tell us that, after seeing the baby, the three continued traveling as far as Spain, telling the world the good news about what they had seen. These stories bring the wise men a little more to life, and add some color to the meaning of Christmas.

They can also get in the way. The problem with legends is that sometimes they add color to stories that don't need any additional color. In fact, sometimes legends are so colorful, they are unbelievable, and can end up making the entire story unbelievable as well -- kind of like that star falling in the well. It makes you wonder. I am not out to ban legends, but I do think it might be worthwhile to hear the story one more time, the way it was told the first time....



Sunday Reflections

Cancer, Heart Disease and Family Relationships

A few years ago, a study was undertaken to find the U.S. city with the lowest incidence of cancer and heart disease. The winner was Rosetto, Pennsylvania. Soon experts descended upon the city expecting to see a town populated by non-smokers, people who ate the correct food, took regular exercise and kept close track of their cholesterol. To their great surprise, however, the researchers discovered that none of the above was true. They found instead that the city's good health was tied to the close family bonds that prevailed within the community. This suggests that there is much to be said for a close and loving family relationship.



The wise men found the Son of God in a family. They found this family was poor with not even a decent place to give birth to this long-awaited savior. This family accepted their privations, stayed united in their love for each other and their protective care for the new born.

"The Light She lit in my Life is Still Burning!"

Mother Teresa once visited a poor man in Melbourne, Australia. He was living in a basement room which was in a terrible state of neglect. There was no light in the room. He did not seem to have a friend in the world. She started to clean and tidy the room. At first he protested, "Leave it alone. It is alright as it is." But she went ahead anyway. As she cleaned, she chatted with him. Under a pile of rubbish she found an oil lamp covered with dust. She cleaned it and discovered that it was beautiful. And she said to him, "You have got a beautiful lamp here. How come you never light it?" "Why should I light it?" "No one ever comes to see me." "Will you promise to light it if one of my sisters comes to see you?" "Yes," he replied. "If I hear a human voice, I will light the lamp."



Two of Mother Teresa's sisters began to visit him regularly. Things gradually improved for him. Every time the sisters came to visit him, he had the lamp lit. Then one day he said to them: "Sisters, I will be able to manage myself from now on. Do me a favour. Tell the first sister who came to see me that the light she lit in my life is still burning." The light that God lit to announce the coming of His son is still burning. The Magi followed the path of the great light and reached the cradle of Jesus. For the last twenty centuries many have followed the footprints of the Magi. Today, Jesus stands before us declaring, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Like the Magi, Let's Offer Gifts to Jesus!

The wise men presented Baby Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. These may be thought of as prophesying Jesus' future. Gold was a gift for Kings; frankincense (an ancient air purifier and perfume), was offered to God in Temple worship (Ex. 30:37); and myrrh (an oriental remedy for intestinal worms in infants), was used by the High Priest as an anointing oil (Ex. 30:23), and to prepare bodies for burial. These gifts were not only expensive but portable. Perhaps Joseph sold the gifts to finance the Holy Family's trip to Egypt. The gifts might have been God's way of providing for the journey that lay ahead.

Like the Magi, let us 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 devo-

tion. (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.

Celebrating Our Faith: Liturgy

Together in Charity Collection **this** Weekend

On **January 2 & 3**, the annual "Together in charity collection will take place. The proceeds of this collection help to fund Catholic Charities' Parish Assistance Program which provides 24 hour/7-days-a-week assistance to parishes faced with individuals and families with serious and urgent financial, housing or medical needs. In 2020, over 48% of the parishes in the Diocese availed themselves of this program. Please give generously to this collection and contribute to making this a blessed new year for a family or individual in crisis. You may donate through ParishGiving.org or write a check to "St. Matthias Church" and include "Together in Charity" in the memo line. Use Ivory envelope in your packet.

Celebrating Our Faith: Liturgy



Wouldn't You Just Like to Take a Journey?

Sometimes this time of year gets dreary. Remnants of tinsel cling to discarded Christmas trees at curbsides and we are reminded that nothing in this life lasts forever. Masks, confinement, Covid restrictions – we are starting to get weary. There were those in Jesus' early life who were able to see God's revelation, through him, and then act upon it. The contrast today is dramatic. One response is to ignore the signs and to depend on human power. The other is to journey into unknown

territory and to follow unfamiliar routes. We in this Catholic faith community, invite you to journey with us into the unknown, to discover more about God's revelation, through Jesus Christ. Anyone who is unbaptized, baptized into another Christian denomination, or baptized Catholic but has never received BOTH sacraments of Confirmation AND Eucharist are invited to an RCIA Inquiry Session. For more information, please contact Phyllis Stone, pstone@stmatthias.net.

Oplatki Christmas Wafers

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



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 page 9 or at www.stmatthias.net/SMSAnnualFund. The letter is also being distributed via the St. Matthias Family Connect (SMFC) e-letter. Thank you!

Substitute Teachers Needed for SMS

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



Catholic School 2021-2022 Tuition Assistance

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, 2021**. 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 the School office at 732-828-1402.



Excerpt from Pope Francis' World Day of Peace Message (January 1, 2021) "A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace"

The entire message can be read at: www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco_20201208_messaggio-54giornatamondiale-pace2021.html
(If you are reading this bulletin online, just click on the above link — no need retype it.)

"The culture of care thus calls for a common, supportive and inclusive commitment to protecting and promoting the dignity and good of all, a willingness to show care and compassion, to work for reconciliation and healing, and to advance mutual respect and acceptance. As such, it represents a privileged path to peace. 'In many parts of the world, there is a need for paths of peace to heal open wounds. There is also a need for peacemakers, men and women prepared to work boldly and creatively to initiate processes of healing and renewed encounter'. [25]

"At a time like this, when the barque of humanity, tossed by the storm of the current crisis, struggles to advance towards a calmer and more serene horizon, the "rudder" of human dignity and the "compass" of fundamental social principles can enable us together to steer a sure course."

Being Good Stewards



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

We have over 750 gift cards currently available online. 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.raiseright.com and follow the prompts.)
2. Click on "Join a Program"
3. Enter the following Enrollment Code to help St. Matthias School: **A68921F9388**
4. Then follow the prompts, skipping the optional boxes.

Remember to use **RaiseRight** every time you shop. Also, invite friends/family/neighbors to purchase these gift cards. Questions? Contact Melissa Rizzo, melissamillerrizzo@gmail.com.

Weekly Collection Information

Since these bulletins are printed before the Christmas holiday, we will be include the December weekly collection information in the January 10 bulletin.

16th 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

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

Gift Certificates/Gift Cards
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Appliances
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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

Stewardship Reflection Jan 3, 2021 Epiphany of the Lord

"..they fell down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh..." - Matthew 2:11

Notice the order of events in the Magi's visit. First, they knelt before Jesus and prayed to Him. Then they presented Him with their gifts. We, too, must take time to pray before we present our gifts to the Lord. We never know what God may be asking us to share!

Reflexiones — 3 de enero de 2021 Epifanía del Señor

".. postrándose ante Él lo adoraron. Entonces, abrieron sus tesoros y le ofrecieron como regalo oro, incienso y mirra..." - Mateo 2:11

Fijese en el orden de los eventos en la visita de los Magos. Primero, se arrodillaron ante Jesús y oraron. Entonces le presentaron sus regalos. Nosotros también debemos tomar un momento para orar antes de presentarle nuestros regalos al Señor. ¡Nunca sabemos lo que Dios nos está pidiendo compartir!

Building Community

Volunteers Needed on January 9 from 10 am to 3 pm to Take down the Trees

This will involve: Removing the lights and placing them in containers; taking down the trees and placing them along the parking lot; taking up the electrical cords; taking up the poles and placing them along the parking lot; and bringing the light and cord containers to the parish office/garage. We will be again looking for people from 6th grade and older to help. If you are free, you are welcome to join us for as long as you can. Wear masks, etc. For more information, please contact Fr. Joe, jcurry@stmatthias.net.

St. Matthias School (SMS) Annual Fund Letter



The Catholic Community of St. Matthias
168 John F. Kennedy Blvd.
Somerset, NJ 08873



Dear Friends,

December 14, 2020

As the days grow shorter and we find ourselves midway through Advent, we want to thank you for your collaboration to do what others believed to be impossible. We opened our school doors with all grades in-person, full days, five days a week. In addition, we have been able to offer the option of virtual learning for those unable to attend in-person. None of this would have been possible without your help. We are proud of our students and of our school families for all that you do on an ongoing basis. We are stronger together because of you.

At this time of year, we invite you to participate in the **School's Annual Fund for 2020-2021**. The Annual Fund is critical to our continued success and growth, because we are a private, Catholic school, and we rely on tuition and voluntary contributions to support the school's general operating expenses as well as ongoing improvements. The Annual Fund provides the largest source of "unrestricted" funds for current use in the areas that the school needs it most -- from academic initiatives to arts and athletic supplies, to professional development for our faculty, to building and grounds maintenance, to community service activities. The pandemic has placed an extra burden on our budget as we have had to reassess, pivot and adapt our technology, teaching, and maintenance procedures these past 10 months and will need to continue to do so for the coming months.

This Advent Season we are filled with both Gratitude and Hope: Gratitude for you and the many blessings we see all around us, and Hope for the coming of our Lord who brings all things to fruition.

To donate to the Annual Fund, you may write a check to "St. Matthias School Annual Fund" or donate online through ParishGiving.

May the Christmas Blessing be with you and your family through the New Year 2020-2021.

Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Pastor

Ms. Elena Malinconico
Principal



St. Matthias School 2020-2021 Annual Fund

Make your gift by check (mail to: 168 John F. Kennedy Blvd, Somerset, NJ 08873, or place in the collection basket) or donate online at www.ParishGiving.org. Please make checks payable to "St. Matthias School Annual Fund."

Yes, I accept your invitation to support St. Matthias School and its students through a tax-deductible gift.

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other: _____

Name: (first and last): _____

Street Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Double your impact! Ask your employer about a Matching Gift! **Thank you!**

Connecting with Our Local Community

Diocesan Respect Life Mass & Pro-Vita Awards

Join us for the Annual Diocesan Respect Life Mass & Pro-Vita Awards 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. **Seating is limited so registration is required.** Register by visiting: www.diometuchen.org/humanlifeanddignity. The Mass will also be live-streamed. For more information, email human.life.and.dignity@diometuchen.org

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 actors. 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>

Light of the World: Keeping Christmas Alive

The birth of Jesus Christ brings great joy and light, even amidst the difficult times in which we are all living. To celebrate the birth of our Savior, priests from around the Diocese of Metuchen will share their personal reflections on how we can celebrate the miracle of His birth and keep Christmas alive throughout the entirety of this joyous season. **Both Fr. Abraham and Fr. Joe will offer video reflections!** For more information or to sign-up to receive these reflections, which will be delivered straight to your email inbox every day throughout the Christmas season, visit lightingheartsonfire.org.

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.

Mount Saint Mary House of Prayer

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

www.msmhope.org

What Happened to Little Christmas – and why does it Matter?

Via Zoom

Traditionally, each year the feast of Epiphany was celebrated on Jan 6. As children, we knew it was a feast to celebrate the coming of the Magi. Deepen your understanding of this rich feast, relish its gifts and discover what it can mean to your faith today. Evening includes prayer, presentation, and faith-sharing.

Wed., Jan. 6, 7--9 p.m. (\$20-\$30 as you are able)
Presenter: Eileen P. Smith, RSM



Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council:

Chair: Nick Grippo
nickgrippo@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Lisa Robinson
lar0504@comcast.net

Secretary:
Tom Aussem

Co-Secretary:

Denise Brown
Lorraine Farr
Anne Marie Francis
Claudine Langrin
Garrett Linderth
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 8th grade school rooted in faith, inspired by love, and dedicated to academic excellence. Before and After School Care Programs are available. Come visit! Contact 732-828-1402 to schedule a tour.

Bulletin Article Requests

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



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