



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

St. Matthias School (SMS):

170 JFK Boulevard, Somerset, NJ 08873
 732-828-1402; www.stmatthias.info

For all Parish emails, add TM stmatthias.net
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Parochial Vicar: Rev. Msgr. Joseph Curry, [jcurry](mailto:jcurry@stmatthias.net)

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Maintenance Staff

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

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS
SUNDAY, MAR 14, 2021 –
Fourth Sunday of Lent

Daylight Savings Time has begun.
 Spring forward!

8 AM Sunday Mass –all of March

Stations of the Cross — Friday.

Bring items for service project to all masses THIS Weekend. See pg. 8

Bring Old Sneakers THIS Weekend. See page 9.

Any parishioner feel disconnected? The Pastoral Council is starting a new outreach to connect parishioners. See page 10.



Happy Feast of St. Patrick on Marcy 17!

On the feast of St. Patrick, the church focuses on the missionary nature of the life of St. Patrick who converted the Irish population to Catholicism in his 33 years of apostolate there. The Irish rightly brought his legacy to places they have settled. Patrick was a humble, pious, gentle man, whose love and total devotion to and trust in God should be a shining example to each of us. So complete was his trust in God, and of the importance of his mission, he feared nothing -not even death. Let us make his prayer our own: "The Breastplate," Patrick's poem of faith and trust in God: **"Christ be within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ inquired, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger."**

Happy Feast of St. Joseph on March 19!

The Feast of St. Joseph is a solemnity in the Liturgical calendar of the Church. In this Year of St. Joseph, declared by Pope Francis, the feast takes on added significance. The solemnity in the church is certainly followed by the solemnity at the dinner table too! It is well known that the Italians (and Sicilians) claim St. Joseph as their own and are known for many traditions such as the St. Joseph Altar or St. Joseph Table. Joseph is the patron saint of the Universal Church, families, fathers, expectant mothers (pregnant women), travelers, immigrants, house sellers and buyers, craftsmen, engineers, and working people in general. Joseph is also the patron saint of the dying because, assuming he died before Jesus' public life, he died with Jesus and Mary close to him, the way we all would like to leave this earth.



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.)

Women's History Month

Sunday, Mar 14, 2021 **4th Sunday of Lent**

Daylight Saving Time Begins

Sunday LiveLent Groups via Zoom

Bring ServiceWorX items for donation to all Masses to Cry Room

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:30AM	Communion outside front doors	
10:00AM	Mass	Church
10:30AM	Communion outside front doors	
10:30AM	RCIA Session	Zoom
12:00PM	Mass	Church
12:30PM	Communion outside front doors	
2:00PM	RCIA Sessions	Zoom

Monday, Mar 15, 2021

Monday LiveLent Groups via Zoom

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
6:30PM	Dee's Small Grp.	Zoom

Tuesday, Mar 16, 2021

Tuesday LiveLent Groups via Zoom

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
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Wednesday, Mar 17, 2021 **St. Patrick's Day**

Wednesday LiveLent Groups via Zoom

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
7:00PM	RCIA Sessions	Zoom
7:00PM	GIFT Live on Zoom Class	Zoom

Thursday, Mar 18, 2021

Thursday LiveLent Groups via Zoom

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

Friday, Mar 19, 2021 **St. Joseph's Day**

Friday LiveLent Groups via Zoom

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
7:00PM	Stations of the Cross	YouTube & Church

Saturday, Mar 20, 2021 **5th Sunday of Lent**

Saturday LiveLent Groups via Zoom

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

Sunday, Mar 21, 2021 **5th Sunday of Lent**

Sunday LiveLent Groups via Zoom

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:30AM	Communion outside front doors	
10:00AM	Mass	Church
10:30AM	Communion outside front doors	
10:30AM	RCIA Session	Zoom
12:00PM	Mass	Church
12:30PM	Communion outside front doors	
2:00PM	RCIA Sessions	Zoom



From the Pastor & the Pastoral Staff

Today is the 4th Sunday of Lent, already a year to the day of our last fully attended in-person Mass at St. Matthias before the Covid lockdown of 2020. I don't think that any of us thought we would still be social distancing, wearing masks, avoiding crowds and watching Mass on TV a whole year later.



Our scriptures today are so rich, but personally, I think today's Psalm 137 says it all about how we are feeling right now. Psalm 137 is a communal lament, "Let my tongue be silenced if I ever forget you." It is an intensely emotional cry about the heart-rending experience of the Babylonian exile.

Sometimes lately, I feel like we have been in exile; don't you? We weep when we remember what we are missing, and we do not want to ever forget the joy of being together and especially of singing together.

But, a whole year later, we somehow learned how to "sing a song of the Lord, in a foreign land," in a large part thanks to a whole new ministry.

Our pandemic liturgy has inspired and requires a new ministry of technology. Every week, we rely on a new group of parish volunteers to prepare and show our PowerPoints in church so that we can all participate simply and prayerfully in our prayers and hymns.

Our PowerPoints are prepared by parishioner **Jean Nicoletti**, a folk group member and a former teacher at St. Matthias School. Jean types all the words to our prayers and songs and organizes them into a power point. Helping her is **Lilah Silar**, a college student and Sunday 10:00 Choir member. Lilah helps find artwork, and puts the finishing touch on our presentations. And she shows it at the 10:00 Mass -- that's who is sitting in the Music Area!

At the 5:00 Mass, we have had a rotating crew of **Lisa and Jeff Robinson, Teresa and Bruce Cuddeback, Pat and Dee Dillon, Aiden and Zach Szabo and Pat Kaufhold** who provide our tech support.

At the 12:00 Mass is **Joseph Vergel**, a high school senior who faithfully comes every week to show our Power Point; and substituting whenever he is needed, high school freshman **Matt Telyzca**.

I never, ever, thought we would be able to do this every single week, but our wonderful volunteers have made it possible. The Holy Spirit is moving and shaking us to new ways of being church that I never thought were possible. O me of little faith!!!

Would you like to help? It's easy, it's safe and it gives you a good reason to take the first step back to in-person Mass. If you know a high school student who needs service hours, this is a great opportunity to stay connected to St. Matthias.

Call or e-mail me at the St. Matthias Music Office, 732-828-1400, jseamon@stmatthias.net. I'll be glad to get you in on the schedule and help you to help us, ...which will help you!

Joan Best Seamon

Pastoral Associate for Liturgical Music



Readings for the Week

Monday: Is 65:17-21; Ps 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12a, 13b; Jn 4:43-54

Tuesday: Ez 47:1-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Jn 5:1-16

Wednesday: Is 49:8-15; Ps 145:8-9, 13cd-14, 17-18; Jn 5:17-30

Thursday: Ex 32:7-14; Ps 106:19-20, 21-22, 23; Jn 5:31-47

Friday: 2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; PS 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29; Rom 4:13:16-18, 22; Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Lk 2:41-51a

Saturday: Jer 11:18-20; Ps 7:2-3, 9bc-10, 11-12; Jn 7:40-53

Sunday: Jer 31:31-34; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15; Heb 5:7-9; Jn 12:20-33

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, Mar 13	5:00PM	Joseph Moran, by Joe, Virginia & Eileen
Sunday, Mar 14	8:00AM	Kathy Hibbard, by The Weeden Family
	10:00AM	Brazil Vidal, by Menchie & family
	12:00PM	Emmanuel Latorre, by Edna Yumang
	5:30PM	Intention of Parishioners
Monday, Mar 15	8:00AM	Mathai Joseph Orapankal, by The Rosary Altar Society
Tuesday, Mar 16	8:00AM	Steven C.M. King, by Mom & brother Brian
Wednesday, Mar 17	8:00AM	Birthday Blessings for Alma Valdez, by The Family
Thursday, Mar 18	8:00AM	Spiritual Intention for Heather Pardo, by Gale M. Dillman
Friday, Mar 19	8:00AM	Joseph Ganim, by wife, Carol
Saturday, Mar 20	5:00PM	Victoriano Martinez, by Mary Anjou
Sunday, Mar 21	8:00AM	Mary Beth Oria, by Sr. Marie Therese & Sr. Maria
	10:00AM	Leonarda Borysewicz, by granddaughter, Irene
	12:00PM	Mary Beth Oria, by St. Matthias Parish Staff
	5:30PM	Intention of Parishioners

Sunday Mass Intentions Mass Intentions for the 8AM Mass will be combined with that at the 10AM Mass, and the 5:30PM intention will be combined with that at 12PM.

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 Agdeppa	Josephine Geenty	Linda Misuraca	Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF
Kristy Alexander	Emma Gergely	Dave Moynihan	Encarnacion (Gina) So
Robert Bachman	Rose Gessner	John Mulholland	Alessandro Spagnolo
Barbara Branham	Mary Gidaro	Baby Ezran Natural	Dennis Stuewe
Marie Brody	Emma Himey	Patricia Nese	Fred & Carolyn Vanmiddlesworth
Baby Isla-Rose Callahan	Michael Kirugi	Julianne Opydike	Carmencita Ventura
Sadie Callender	Taylor LaCort	Jim Pettit	Eulalia Villanueva
Tara Capatosto	Al & Rose Larangeira	Christina Pietrowiak	Mark T. Worthington
Ellen Catalina	William Lecorchick	Anthony & Andrew Referente	Kenneth Yacavino
Frank Catalina	Alice Leong	Kathleen & Mannix Referente	Everyone who is ill with Covid-19
Wes Coddington	Pat Leposa	Samantha Renaud	...and for all who are homebound,
Adoracion & Cenon DeGuzman	The Litrakis Family	Chris Retz	elderly, in nursing care, or living with
Mary Ellen Delaney	Al Maglio	Aubree Rezac	chronic illness
Alaina Derecola	Sue Maglio-Alese	Diane Rice	
Nancy Diaz	Shirley Mahoney	Nina Ripley	
Jim Dolan	Gladys Mari	Ann Ritchick	
Mary Dolan	Margaret Menendez	Datius Rutashobya	
William Dolphin	Elizabeth Miller	Maria Schwenzer	
Dorothy Domenici	Gail Miranda	Sr. Mary Amata Shina, OSF	

Pray for those who have died...

Steve McGovern

—“His mercy endures forever.” Chronicles

From Pope Francis

Reflection from Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter ~ *Patris Corde* ~ Tender and loving father

Joseph saw Jesus grow daily “in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favour”. As the Lord had done with Israel, so Joseph did with Jesus: he taught him to walk, taking him by the hand; he was for him like a father who raises an infant to his cheeks, bending down to him and feeding him.

In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God: “As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.”

In the synagogue, during the praying of the Psalms, Joseph would surely have heard again and again that the God of Israel is a God of tender love, who is good to all, whose “compassion is over all that he has made” .

The history of salvation is worked out “in hope against hope” through our weaknesses. All too often, we think that God works only through our better parts, yet most of his plans are realized in and despite our frailty. Thus Saint Paul

could say: “To keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me: ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness’” Since this is part of the entire economy of salvation, we must learn to look upon our weaknesses with tender mercy.

The evil one makes us see and condemn our frailty, whereas the Spirit brings it to light with tender love. Tenderness is the best way to touch the frailty within us. Pointing fingers and judging others are frequently signs of an inability to accept our own weaknesses, our own frailty. Only tender love will save us from the snares of the accuser. That is why it is so important to encounter God’s mercy, especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where we experience his truth and tenderness. Paradoxically, the evil one can also speak the truth to us, yet he

does so only to condemn us. We know that God’s truth does not condemn, but instead welcomes, embraces, sustains and forgives us. That truth always presents itself to us like the merciful father in Jesus’ parable. It comes out to meet us, restores our dignity, sets us back on our feet and rejoices for us, for, as the father says: “This my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found”

Even through Joseph’s fears, God’s will, his history and his plan were at work. Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture.

Full text at:

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco-lettera-ap_20201208_patris-corde.html

Reflect — Smile 😊

What is A.A.A.D.D.?

It is Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder. This is how it manifests: I decide to water my garden. As I turn on the hose in the driveway, I look over at my car and decide it needs washing. As I start toward the garage, I notice mail on the porch table that I brought up from the mail box earlier. I decide to go through the mail before washing the car. I lay my car keys on the table, put the junk mail in the garbage can under the table, and notice that the can is full. So I decide to put the bills back on the table and take out the garbage first.

But then I think, since I'm going to be near the mailbox when I take out the garbage anyway, I may as well pay the

bills first. I take my checkbook off the table and see that there is only one check left. My extra checks are in my desk in the study, so I go inside the house to my desk where I find the can of Coke I'd been drinking. I'm going to look for my checks, but first I need to push the Coke aside so that I don't accidentally knock it over. The Coke is getting warm, and I decide to put it in the refrigerator to keep it cold.

As I head toward the kitchen with the Coke, a vase of flowers on the counter catches my eye—they need water. I put the Coke on the counter and discover my reading glasses that I've been searching for all morning. I decide I'd better put them back on my desk, but first I'm

going to water the flowers. I set the glasses back down on the counter, fill a container with water and suddenly spot the TV remote. Someone left it on the kitchen table.

I realize that tonight when we go to watch TV, I'll be looking for the remote, but I won't remember that it's on the kitchen table, so I decide to put it back in the den where it belongs, but first I'll water the flowers. I pour some water on the flowers, but quite a bit of it spills on the floor. So I set the remote back on the table, get some towels and wipe up the spill. Then I head down the hall trying to remember what I was planning to do.

At the end of the day: the car isn't washed, the bills aren't

paid, there is a warm can of Coke sitting on the counter, the flowers don't have enough water, there is still only 1 check in my checkbook, I can't find the remote, I can't find my glasses, and I don't remember what I did with the car keys. Then, when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm really baffled because I know I was busy all day, and I'm really tired. I realize this is a serious problem, and I'll try to get some help for it, but first I'll check my e-mail....

Do me a favor. Forward this message to everyone you know, because I don't remember whether I've sent it to you before....

Don't laugh -- if this isn't you yet; your days are coming!!

Nicodemus in Art and History

One of Rembrandt's most famous etchings portrays the scene. The limp, dead body of Jesus was slowly taken down from the cross. Joseph of Arimathea, dressed as the person that he was, in all his finery, stands close by. In the darkness, further away, veiled in shadow as only Rembrandt could do it, with his face lined in sorrow, is Nicodemus. He is holding in his hands the linen cloth in which Jesus' body would be buried. The Gospel says that Nicodemus also brought with him a mixture of spices, myrrh and aloes, "about a hundred pounds". One wonders what Nicodemus must have been thinking as he stood there, waiting for the body of Christ to be taken down from the cross. Obviously, much was going on in his life -- this wealthy man, bringing fine linen and a bountiful amount of expensive spices to anoint the body of one who had died as a common criminal. Was he still mystified as he had been when Jesus told him that he must be born again? Was he still puzzled by the response of Jesus when he pressed his question about how one could be born again? Jesus' answer had been totally unsatisfying for his rational mind: "The Spirit blows where it wills -- you feel it, and you hear the sound of it -- but you don't know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."



Difference between Heaven and Hell!

Once a certain saint asked God to show her the difference between heaven and hell. So God asked an angel to take her first to hell. There she saw men and women seated around a large table with all kinds of delicious food. But none of them were eating. They were all sad and yawning. The saint asked one of them, "Why are you not eating?" And he showed her his hand. A long fork about 4 feet long was strapped to their hands such that every time they tried to eat they only threw the food on the ground. "What a pity" said the saint. Then the angel took her to heaven. There the saint was surprised to find an almost identical setting as in hell: men and women sitting around a large table with all sorts of delicious food, and with four-foot forks strapped to their arms. But unlike hell the people in heaven were happy and laughing. "What!" said the saint to one of them, "How come you are happy in this condition?" "You see," said the man in heaven, "Here we feed one another."

Can we say this of our families, our neighborhood, our church, our world? If we can say that, then we are not far from the kingdom of heaven.

Be a Sport and Take the BMW!!



". . . God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him." John 3: 14-21

A couple went on their dream vacation to Hawaii. The husband, an organized and frugal man, had reserved compact rental cars on each of the four islands. On arriving on the Big Island and presenting their reservation to the car rental desk, they were told that the economy car they had reserved was not available. The wife steeled herself as her husband's face reddened in preparation for battle. But the clerk did not seem to notice. "I'm sorry, sir," he said, "Will you accept an upgrade substitute for the same price?" Barely mollified, her husband put their bags in a beautiful white sports car and they drove off.

The same thing happened throughout their holiday. They would turn in their car and fly to the next island, only to be told that the budget car they had been promised was not available and offered a same-price substitution. It was amazing, she said later. For the price of a small compact, they had been given a Mazda MR-10, a Lincoln Town Car, and finally a Mercedes - all with the sincerest apologies of the rental agencies. The vacation was absolutely wonderful and on the flight home, she turned to her husband to thank him for all he had done to arrange such a memorable time. "Yes," he said, "it was really nice. It's just too bad they never had the right car for us." He was absolutely serious.

This poor guy is so rigid in his perspective and demanding in his expectations that he can't see or appreciate the good things right in front of him. In today's Gospel, Jesus challenges us to see God beyond our limited and narrow perspective: to see the love of God all around us in the love of family and friends, in the beauty and bounty of all creation, in every act of justice and mercy we witness. Jesus reveals a much bigger God than we can imagine: a God who does not condemn but loves, who does not punish but lifts up, who does not destroy but reconciles. This is the God we meet in the person of Jesus - God who is loving Father, compassionate Physician, wise and generous Friend - and in whom we discover our identity as children of God and participants with God in the work of re-creation.

Why is Today Known as Laetare Sunday?

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is called *Lætare* (Rejoice) Sunday, from the first words of the day's liturgy [the *Introuit*]. Since this Sunday occurs in the middle of Lent, as *Gaudete* Sunday is celebrated midway through Advent, *Lætare* Sunday reminds us of the Event we look forward to at the end of the penitential season. As on *Gaudete* Sunday, rose-colored vestments may replace violet, with flowers on the altar. These outward signs symbolize the Church's joy in anticipation of the Resurrection, a joy which cannot be contained even in Lent, though we still refrain from Alleluias and the singing of the Gloria until the magnificence of the Easter Vigil.

Reflect

Mother Teresa's Advice

Mother Teresa was interviewed on American television years ago. She said, "It is very, very important, that the families teach their children to pray and pray with them." Then she added, "And we have enough reason to trust God, because when we look at the cross, we understand how much Jesus loved us. It is wonderful to be able to come to Jesus! That's why God made Him – to be our bread of life, to give us life! And with His life comes new life! New energy! New peace! New joy! New everything! And I think that's what brings glory to God, also, and it brings peace." Then she said, "I've seen families suffer so much, and when they've been brought to Jesus, it changes their whole lives." I have also seen lives changed by the power of the cross. Have you? Today's Gospel gives a parallel between the bronze serpent erected by Moses to heal the Israelites bitten by snakes and Jesus raised on the cross to save mankind.



What is it about the uplifted serpent? John refers to an Old Testament story given in Numbers 21:4-9. On their journey through the wilderness, the people of Israel murmured and complained, regretting that they had ever left Egypt. To punish them, God sent a plague of deadly serpents. When the people repented and cried for mercy, God instructed Moses to make an image of a serpent in bronze and to hold it up in the midst of the camp so that those who looked upon the serpent might be healed through the power of God. In today's Gospel lesson, Nicodemus learns that, like Moses' bronze serpent, Jesus, too, must be "lifted up" (a contemporary euphemism for being crucified), and that the act of His being "lifted up" will similarly bring about salvation. This is the first of three references in John's Gospel to Jesus being "lifted up" (cf. 8:28, 12:32-34). Specifically, this reference foreshadows the crucifixion of Jesus who carried with him the burden of the sins of the world. When humans turn their thoughts to their crucified Savior and believe in him, they too will find eternal life. Jesus was lifted up twice: on the Cross and at his Ascension into Heaven. Just as the cross was the way to glory for Jesus, so it is for us. We can, if we like, refuse the cross that every Christian is called to bear. It is an unalterable law of human life, however, that without the cross, there is no crown.



John 3:16 as Lifeline!

A number of years ago, these two verses, John 3:16 and John 3:17, took on extra-special meaning for many Bible readers. You may recall the episode. It involved our astronaut program. Space engineers were designing space suits for the command module pilot and the lunar module pilot. A part of the design of each space suit was an umbilical cord, consisting of a long flexible tubing. The purpose of the umbilical cord was to supply oxygen to the astronauts when they "walked" in space or passed from one module to another. The suit receptacle into which the command pilot's cord fit was called J 3:16. Designer Frank Denton said he named the two suit receptacles after the two gospel passages: John 3:16 and John 3:17. Just as J 3:16 and J 3:17 supply the astronauts with what they need to survive in their journey from one module to another, so John 3:16 and John 3:17 supply us with what we need to survive in our journey from earth to heaven.



The Gospel of the Gospels: John 3:16 is probably the best loved verse in the Bible and it has been called "everybody's text" and the "Gospel of the Gospels." "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life." This is the summary of the Gospel message of salvation through Christ Jesus. This text is the very essence of the Gospel. It tells us that the initiative in all salvation is God's love for man. As St. Augustine puts it: "God loves each one of us as if there were only one of us to love." It also explains to us the universality of the love of God. God's motive is love and God's objective is salvation. Those who actually receive eternal life must believe in the Son.

Remember 'Coming Home' the Movie?

John Voigt and Jane Fonda play the lead roles in the movie *Coming Home*, which is about an American soldier crippled for life because of the Vietnam War. The film focuses on the psychological as well as the physical ordeals of this paraplegic – how he struggles with the help of a woman to accept his handicap, reconstruct his dreams, and create a future for himself. This Vietnam War vet's situation is very similar to that of the Jews in the first reading of today which shows us how the people's infidelities caused them to lose the Temple and their homeland, and how God arranged, through the pagan king of Persia, to return them to their homeland and to help them rebuild His Temple there.



God often sends people to help us through a crisis: parents and children often intervene to assist each other; a true friend comes through when no one else will; sometimes it is a pastor, a teacher or a parishioner who bails us out. Like the Jews in exile or like that Vietnam vet in *Coming Home* we endure small deaths in many ways. Nonetheless, we can find new life because of our faith in the Lord Jesus.

Reflect

Emergency Night Call!

One of the things that pastors, doctors, fire-fighters, and police have in common is that they all receive occasional night calls. And most pastors would agree that some of our most significant opportunities to help people have come in response to night-time calls, usually of an emergency nature. However, not all of our night calls are that significant. Dr. Robert Ozmont of First United Methodist Church in Atlanta received a call one night about 2:00 AM. He did not know the lady who called; she had found his number in the yellow pages. She had a problem. By any objective measure it was not an emergency; certainly it could have waited until morning. Nevertheless, Dr. Ozmont tried to offer what advice he could. Then he asked, "Ma'am, do you belong to a church in Atlanta?" "Yes," she replied. "I am a member of Calvary Presbyterian." "Why," asked Dr. Ozmont, "didn't you call your pastor

about your problem?" "I thought about that," she said, "but my pastor works so hard that I just hated to bother him in the middle of the night."

The Gospel of John tells us about a night-time call Jesus received from a prestigious Jew named Nicodemus. He was a wealthy Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin. He meets Jesus by night and begins a long religious discussion. But Jesus interrupts him, stating that rebirth by water and the Spirit is an essential condition for entering the Kingdom of God. Jesus explains to him that Nicodemus must believe Jesus' words because he is the Son of God. Jesus further explains God's plan of salvation by referring to the story of Moses and the bronze serpent. He also reveals the Good News that God will show His love for mankind by subjecting His own Son to suffering and death.

Connect

Need Help Scheduling Your Covid Vaccine?

If you are eligible, but need help with booking an appointment, parishioner Maribeth Llaguno is willing to help. Contact her at: mabeth70@yahoo.com



Pastoral Council Outreach — Help Us Connect with Each Other!

Are you aware of some parishioners who might be feeling disconnected from the St Matthias Parish Family? Do you feel they may welcome a call from a fellow parishioner? With covid-19 continuing into 2021, some may feel estranged if attending Mass in person is not a comfortable option for them or if viewing Mass online or reading the bulletin requires technical equipment or knowledge not available to them. This past year may have been and might continue to

be particularly isolating for some parish members. Any persons come to mind?

The Pastoral Council would like to reach out and help parishioners stay connected during this difficult time.

Please email Pastoral Council member, Lorraine Farr, Lvfarr7@gmail.com, or call the Parish Office, 732-828-1400, with those individuals' names and phone number. Please help re-connect friends, family, neighbors to our St Matthias Family!

Pray

Please pray for our RCIA Elect and Candidates who will receive the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil and at Pentecost
Prayer cards for journey of faith are at all church door exits



To Be Baptized

Nalini Malik, Dashawn Durden, Danielle Gille, Joselyn Montero

To Be Received in Full Communion with the Church

Loren Long, Shannon Long, Maritza Alimonte, Waid Barfield, Ava Ortman, Nicholas Chodl, Luis Cuevas, and Rosanna Garon

To Receive the Sacrament of Confirmation

Jodie Scalon, Natalie Ortman, Michael Chodl, Vanessa DiRocco, Michael DiRocco, Kristen Joyce Camerino, Nick Recine, Helena Cassutt, Udenna Ebii Okonkwo, Domique Marchie, and Michael Marchie

If You Test Positive for Covid & Attended Church, Please Let Us Know

If you attend church and then test positive for Covid, please call the Parish Office, 732-828-1400, as soon as possible to let us know. This will help us ensure that we can let others know who may have been exposed, as well as keep our church building as safe as possible. (Your name will not be shared with others.) Please also let us know if there is anything we can do to help and if you would like to be added to the Prayer List.

Learn

Confirmation Students Participate in ServiceWorX as Part of the Preparation Process

Our Confirmation students are preparing “Blessings Bags” to donate to local charities, including Elijah’s Promise. Last weekend, the first group assembled 238 bags. A second group will assemble bags next week.

We desperately need items to be donated THIS weekend for this upcoming group of Confirmation students. Items for the first group were provided by ServiceWorX.

If you can buy any of the items on the list to the right, please drop them off in the Cry room in Church before 1 pm Sunday.

Thank you!

ServiceWorX is coming to St. Matthias for our confirmation students and we need supplies for their service project!

Hygiene Kits

- Gallon Bags
- Masks
- Hand Sanitizer
- Shaving Cream
- Deodorant
- Comb
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- Soap/Shampoo
- Floss
- Razor
- Adult Bath Towels

Snack Bags

- Gallon Bags
- Single Serving Food Items
- Milk Boxes
- Cereal/Oatmeal Cups
- Fruit Cups
- Raisins
- Nut Packages
- Chicken or Tuna Pouch
- Soup Cups/Cans
- Stew Bowls
- Pasta
- Peanut Butter
- Water Bottles



Drop off in grocery plastic bags to the Church CryRoom from March 13-14, 2021 before and after masses by 1pm

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 are due by **March 31, 2021**. Applications are available in English and Spanish. If you need assistance completing the online application or need access to a computer, please contact the School at 732-828-1402.

Serve

National Catholic Sisters Week Ends Today, Sunday



Have you viewed the short video of Sister Maria and Sr. Marie Therese on our YouTube channel – youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ as they invite us to fight hunger?

Don't miss this video! And thank you to Sr. Marie Therese and Sr. Maria for your presence and ministry!





SMS Donations Needed for the "Got Sneakers" Project

St. Matthias School is partnering with **Got Sneakers** to make a difference. We are collecting gently worn, used and new sneakers. The sneakers will be recycled, stopping them from entering landfills. Since most sneakers are not biodegradable, they remain in landfills for years or are incinerated. This has a negative effect on our environment. Instead, we will be collecting sneakers and they will be recirculated to people in impoverished regions around the world. Really worn sneakers will be repurposed into new surfaces such as tracks and playgrounds. The other plus to this project is SMS will get a small subsidy for collecting the sneakers. We earn funds based on the total quantity of sneakers we collect.

Please clean out your closets and gather sneakers you no longer want; maybe you've outgrown them, or maybe they are out of style. Even if they are gently worn, they can still be recycled. Adult and children's sizes are all welcome. **Bring them to church the weekend of March 14.** There will be collection boxes near the Cry Room. Or bring them to school during the week and leave them in our box outside the front doors. Place your sneakers inside the containers and let's see how many pairs of sneakers we can collect! Thanks!

Give

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021 (updated)				Last Year's Total
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 32 - Feb. 7, 2021	\$7,734.00	\$23,225.75	\$30,959.75	\$29,719.99
Week 33 - Feb. 14, 2021	\$8,269.00	\$18,525.25	\$26,794.25	\$25,955.99
Week 34 - Feb. 21, 2021	\$4,613.00	\$12,211.25	\$16,824.25	\$28,748.99
Week 35 - Feb. 28, 2021	\$19,810.00	\$8,334.25	\$28,144.25	\$27,411.09
Note: The online Parish Giving amount varies week-to-week since some parishioners donate once a month and the full amount is recorded the week it arrives.			Month-to-date Total	Feb Total Last Yr
			\$102,722.50	\$111,836.06
			Current Year-to-date	Year-to-date as of Feb 28, 2020
			\$870,700.93	\$977,125.18

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021				Last Year's Total
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 36 - Mar. 7, 2021	\$12,433.50	\$24,165.75	\$36,599.25	\$25,211.09
Note: The online Parish Giving amount varies week-to-week since some parishioners donate once a month and the full amount is recorded the week it arrives.			Month-to-date Total	Mar Total Last Yr
			\$36,599.25	\$77,126.36
			Current Year-to-date	Year-to-date as of Mar 31, 2020
			\$907,300.18	\$1,054,251.54
Snow Removal Collection: \$6,837				

Stewardship Reflection Mar 14, 2021 4th Sunday of Lent

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son..." - JOHN 3:16

Of all the wonderful gifts that God has given to us, the gift of His own Son is truly the greatest. How can we ever thank God for a gift like that? God does not ask us to sacrifice our own precious firstborn, but He does ask that we are grateful and generous with our God-given gifts. That we nurture and develop our gifts, and in gratitude, generously give back with increase our time in prayer, our talent in charitable works and our treasure to support the mission and ministry of our parish and greater Church.

Reflexiónese — 14de marzo de 2021 4to. Domingo de Cuaresma

"Ya que Dios amaba tanto al mundo le entregó su único Hijo..." - JUAN 3:16

De todos los dones maravillosos que Dios nos ha dado, el don de su propio Hijo es realmente el más importante. ¿Cómo podríamos agradecer a Dios por un don como ese? Dios no nos pide que sacrifiquemos a nuestro querido primer hijo, pero nos pide que seamos agradecidos y generosos con los dones que Dios nos ha dado. Cuidemos y desarrollemos nuestros dones, y en gratitud, devolvámoslos generosamente con aumento de nuestro tiempo en oración, nuestro talento en trabajos de caridad y nuestros tesoros para apoyar la misión y el ministerio de nuestra parroquia y nuestra Iglesia mayor.

Give

From Fr. Abraham —

We see the Pandemic changing many aspects of our life, including the way of parish contributions. Due to health and safety concerns related to the pandemic, the number of volunteers that are available to count the collections has significantly diminished. **Donating your weekly collections through the Parish Giving online platform is helpful now more than ever.** Thank you to the increasing number of our parishioners who are using online giving, which is the safest and easiest method of giving for St. Matthias Church. To start using Parish Giving, go to our parish website, www.stmatthias.net/give and click on the “Parish Giving” link that will take you to the easy sign-up form. Thank you for sustaining the parish during this unprecedented emergency that we are all experiencing.

Shop on Amazon?

Please start by clicking on the link at: www.stmatthias.net/amazon Thank you!




St Matthias School Annual Fund

Thank you to everyone who has donated to our 2020-2021 SMS Annual Fund. The fund continues through the year and is used by the school for general operating expenses. Everything from teachers’ salaries to electricity to art supplies to Covid-safe cleaning supplies to printer cartridges to copy paper to computers, benefit from your donations to the SMS Annual Fund.

Read the letter from our Pastor and our Principal at:
<https://www.stmatthias.net/wp-content/uploads/SMS-Annual-Fund-2020-1docx.pdf>



2021 Bishop’s Annual Appeal

Transformed by Christ Body and Blood – Sent on Mission to Light a Fire in the Heart of the Church

The global pandemic has challenged us to evolve in how we share and communicate the Gospel message, but the message remains the same and it is worth sharing. So, we must continue to journey with others, even if we are physically apart, to make the Good News and His love known to all because that is what will see us through. While our discipleship is to always find new ways to bring His love and the Good News of Jesus Christ we are now called to do more for the Lord and each other. This year, we have seen a large increase in the use of virtual means to connect and engage with one another. Your gift to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal supports essential role of the **Vicariate for Evangelization and Communication** as we expand our efforts to share the Gospel message and make His love known to all. You can find the link to Bishop’s Annual Appeal Video at

<https://diometuchen.org/BAA>

Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council: Chair: Nick Grippo nickgrippo@gmail.com Co-Chair: Lisa Robinson laro504@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 Susan Klimcsak Barry Dusault Gwen Orlowski	Audrey Francis Kester Hector Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio Trustees: Isaac Peng Marge Richards
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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 Office.

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.



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