



St. Matthias Parish Office:

Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm.
 168 JFK Boulevard, Somerset, NJ 08873
 732-828-1400, fax: 732-828-0866
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

St. Matthias School (SMS):

170 JFK Blvd., Somerset, NJ 08873
www.stmatthias.info 732-828-1402
School Office Hours, Mon-Fri 8AM to 3PM.

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

Pastor: Rev Abraham Orapankal, **abraham**
Senior Priest: Msgr. Seamus Brennan, **sbrennan**
 Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Business Administrator
mpburke-grospin

Deacon Ron Caimi, *Senior Deacon*
 Kelly Counts, *Receptionist*, **kcounts**
 Deacon Russell Demkovitz, **rdemkovitz**
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 Leslie Guillen, *Bulletin Editor*, **lguillen**
 Amy Hanna, *Accountant/Databases*, **ahanna**
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 Sue Lenczewski, *Youth Coordinator*, **SMYLE**
 Mary Jo Loboda, *Parish Staff, Development*,
mjloboda
 Julio Montero, *Maintenance Supervisor*
 Dolores R. Nann, *Pastoral Associate for Faith*
Formation, **dnann**
 Vinnie Natale, *Bookkeeper*, **vnatale**
 Silvia Nizama, *Housekeeper*
 Deacon John Radvanski, **deaconjohn**
 Joan Best Seamon, *Pastoral Associate for Music*
Ministry, **jseamon**
 Sr. Marie Therese Sherwood, *OSF, Pastoral*
Assoc. for Social Concerns, **msherwood**
 Trish Stumper, *Parish Support Secretary*,
tstumper

St. Matthias School (add @stmatthiasnj.org)

Mary Lynch, *Principal*, **mlynch**
 Joseph Gidaro, *Vice Principal*, **jgidaro**

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS
SUNDAY, MARCH 26, 2023-
Fifth Sunday of Lent



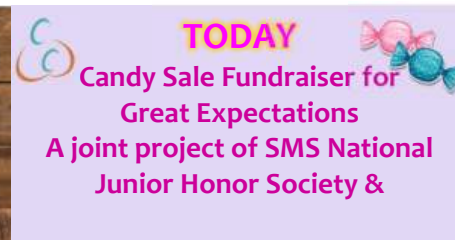
Smyle Meeting
Sunday (Today)
 at
 4:00PM in the cafeteria

Retirement Collection
for
Diocesan Clergy
 Next weekend,
April 1st & 2nd
 See page 8 for
 more information



Chrism Mass in our Cathedral

At 4 pm on **Tuesday, April 4, 2023**, Bishop James F. Checchio will celebrate the Chrism Mass with the priests of the Diocese. At the Mass, all priests make a Renewal of Commitment to Priestly Service, recommitting themselves to their Bishop and to their ministry to God and His People; the Bishop and all Priests then ask the people for a pledge of their prayerful support. **More information on page 8.**



The National BLACK CATHOLIC Congress

Day of Reflection for Black Catholics
April 22

The Diocese of Metuchen's Office of Multicultural Ministry is holding a Day of Reflection for Black Catholics on **Saturday, April 22, 2023** in preparation for the National Black Catholic Congress to be held July 20-23, 2023. The theme is "Write the Vision: A Prophetic Call to Thrive". Representatives from the different Black Catholic Communities are invited to attend the Day of Reflection on April 22nd which will be held at St. Matthias Parish in Somerset, NJ from 8:30 am to 12 pm.

Please note that registration for the April 22nd Day of Reflection is open to all, not just Black Catholics, although the topics will be focused on issues most relevant to Black Catholics in preparation for the Congress. There will be no charge to attend, but registration is required please visit: www.diometuchen.org/2023nbc

This Week @ St. Matthias From Msgr. Brennan

Masses are also livestreamed on our YouTube channel: youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ

The Church is open for individual prayer

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

Sunday, Mar 26, 2023 5th Sunday of Lent

8:00AM	Mass	Church
9:30AM	1st Eucharist Retreat: Parent & Child	Cafeteria
10:00AM	Mass	Church
12:00PM	Mass , Scout Sunday Mass	Church
1:30PM	Confirmation Retreat	Cafeteria
4:00PM	SMYLE Mtg.	Cafeteria

Monday, Mar 27, 2023 St. John of Egypt, Hermit & Prophet

8:00AM	Mass /Miraculous Medal Novena	Church
2:45PM	SMS—Tech Week & school play	TBD

Tuesday, Mar 28, 2023 St. Sixtus III, Pope

8:00AM	Mass	Church
2:45PM	SMS—Tech Week & school play	TBD
6:30PM	GIFT (for April) Church, clsrms, John XXIII	

Wednesday, Mar 29, 2023 Jonas & Barachisius, Monks & Martyrs

8:00AM	Mass—St. Joseph Novena	Church
9:30AM	Prayer Group 1 Holy Spirit	de Porres Rm
2:45PM	SMS—Tech Week & school play	TBD
6:30PM	GIFT (for April) Church, clsrms, John XXIII	

Thursday, Mar 30, 2023 St. John Climacus, Monk

	SMS School Play	TBD
8:00AM	Mass	Church
3:30PM	Children's Choir Gr. 3&4	Church
4:00PM	Children's Choir Gr. 5-8	Church
7:30PM	Holy Thurs. Adult Choir rehearsal	Church

Friday, Mar 31, 2023 St. Daniel of Murano, Camaldolese Hermit

	SMS School Play	TBD
8:00AM	Mass	Church
7:00PM	Stations of the Cross	Church

Saturday, Apr 1, 2023 St. Hugh, Bishop of Grenoble

	SMS School Play	TBD
8:00AM	NeXt Level Mtg.	John XXIII Rm
8:30AM	RCIA Retreat	Cafeteria
3:00PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Vigil Mass	Church

Sunday, Apr 2, 2023 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Retirement Collection for Diocesan Clergy

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
12:00PM	Mass	Church
2:00PM	Eagle Scout Ceremony w/Priest	Church
	Followed by reception	Cafeteria
6:00PM	Parish Penance Service	Church



The Sacred Paschal Triduum



After Christmas, Easter and holy week are probably a favorite time of year for most Catholics. And for many the three days, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday stand out in a special way. These days are known in the church as The Sacred Paschal Triduum, this year falling on April 6, 7 and 8. On these days the church celebrates the Last Supper on Holy Thursday, in which Jesus gave us the Eucharist; the Crucifixion and Death of Christ on Good Friday and his Resurrection from the dead with the first mass of Easter on Holy Saturday night.

But what do the liturgies of the triduum really celebrate? Many people think of these celebrations as some type of recalling or re-enactment of the historical events of the end of Jesus' life. But these celebrations are not about history but rather about Mystery. The liturgies of these days do not take us back to the upper room or to the garden of Gethsemane or to Calvary or to Easter morning to witness the empty tomb. Our celebrations are not about what once happened to Jesus 20 centuries ago but what is happening in his mystical body the church today. You and I, baptized into Christ and the church, gifted with the Spirit, gather in faith with our brothers and sisters and offer our thanksgiving in and through Christ who is risen and living among us. Through His death and resurrection and sending of His Spirit God has taken possession of our hearts and molds us into the likeness of His son. We are a broken, sinful people who are loved and forgiven and called to holiness and truth. The mass and these special liturgical celebrations are about what Christ is doing today in your life and mine .The sacred paschal triduum shines as the high point of the liturgical year.

Unfortunately many Catholics have seldom or never participated in any of the celebrations of these special days. I invite you to consider taking part in some or all of the celebrations of these days. In addition to the richness of the scripture readings and the special music there are other rich symbols like the washing of feet, presentation of the Holy Oils, Veneration of the Cross and the lighting and blessing of the Easter fire and the paschal candle, Baptism of the Elect, adults who have made the decision to become members of the catholic church. Elsewhere in this bulletin and on our website you will find further information and the schedule for each of these special days. I look forward to seeing you during the Sacred Paschal Triduum or at least for holy mass on Easter Sunday. Happy Easter.

Msgr Brennan



Readings for the Week

Monday: Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or Dn 13:41c-62; Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Jn 8:1-11

Tuesday: Nm 21:4-9; Ps 102:2-3, 16-18, 19-21; Jn 8:21-30

Wednesday: Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Dn 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56; Jn 8:31-42

Thursday: Gn 17:3-9; Ps 105:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; Jn 8:51-59

Friday: Jer 20:10-13; Ps 18:2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 7; Jn 10:31-42

Saturday: Ez 37:21-28; Jer 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13; Jn 11:45-56

Sunday: Mt 21:1-11 (procession); Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 26:14 — 27:66 or Mt 27:11-54

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, Mar 25	5:00PM	Intention of Parishioners
Sunday, Mar 26	8:00AM	Rose Gessner, by Rita Stuewe
	10:00AM	Dave Moynihan, by The Misuraca Family
	12:00PM	Timothy Connell, by The Connell Family
Monday, Mar 27	8:00AM	Lou Carcich, by The Carcich Family
Tuesday, Mar 28	8:00AM	Mary Brennan & Family, by Msgr. Brennan
Wednesday, Mar 29	8:00AM	10 yr. Death Anniversary for Paulo Castro, By Angie Masalunga
Thursday, Mar 30	8:00AM	Proceso Villarica, by Minda Villarica
Friday, Mar 31	8:00AM	Health & Blessings for Chris, Eche & Victoria Nwanonyiri, by Kate Nwanonyiri
Saturday, Apr 1	5:00PM	Kevin Doyle, by Isabelle & John Baker
Sunday, Apr 2	8:00AM	Intention of Parishioners
	10:00AM	Hugh Scott, by Wife, Pearl
	12:00PM	Alejandra Sunga, by Flora Sunga

Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office or **email Kelly Counts** at kcoun@stmatthias.net 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.*

Erika, Jay & Beth Adams
 Carolyn Banghart
 Tammy Baskaran
 Arthur & Regina Berlowitz
 John Blum
 Bishop Paul Bootkowski
 Anthony Brandi
 Barbara Butler
 Bianca Canlas
 Tara Capatosto
 Ellen Catalina
 Kyle Davidson
 Lisa DeFeo
 Ann Devlin
 Michael DiMaggio
 William Dolphin
 Vivian Dong
 Josephine Geenty
 Claudia Gemgnani

Helen Geraghty
 Emma Gergely
 Carol Gryskiewicz
 Sloopy & John Hoffman
 Marilyn Horvath
 Baby Isla-Rose Huffman
 Robert Kashinsky
 Al Kepenis
 Kathleen Langenbacher
 The Litrakis Family
 Mary Lou Litrakis
 John Litrakis
 Jude Raymond Maceren
 Clarissa & Kevin Magat
 Kenneth & Kelly Magat
 Al Maglio
 Susan, Tosh & King
 Manansala
 Christine Mathews

Beatrice May
 Anne McElwee
 Margaret Menendez
 Carol Millemann
 Sabrina Moloney
 Kathlyn Moore
 Eleanor Nagy
 Janice Navatkowski
 Danny Ongchango
 Paul & Doris Paetow
 Robert Pellegrino
 Jim Pettit
 Christina Pietrowiak
Valerie Polci
 Kim Price
 Nathan Reavey
 Caitlin Regan
 Doris Regan
 Gabriel Rivera

Jaxon Rivera
 Arina Robinson
 Arthur Robinson
 Maria Schwenzer
 Tippur Seshagiri
 Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF
 Sr. Bernadine Marie Stemnock
 Jeff Sullivan
 Tom Szabo
 Nancy Whelan
 Mark Worthington
 Angie Yetyet

And for all who are ill, homebound, elderly, in nursing care, or living with chronic illness, we pray.

Pray for those who have died...

— “His mercy endures forever.” *Chronicles*

Helen Vanni - Mother of Joey Anderson
 Rocco Melchione - Husband of Roberta

Reflect



Smile with Your Family



Three friends were discussing death and one of them asked: "What would you like people to say about you at your wake service while your dead body in the coffin is visible to everyone?" The first of the friends said: "I would like them to say, he was a great humanitarian who cared about his community." The second said: "He was a great husband and father who was an example for many to follow." The third friend said, "I would like them to say, 'Look, he's moving in the coffin!'" 😊

The pastor was visiting a terminally sick parishioner in the hospital. As he started consoling the patient the sick man said: "Don't worry about where I am heading to, Father. I have friends in both places." 😊

A funeral director called a man for further instructions about his mother-in-law's body. "Do you want her embalmed, cremated or buried?" "All the three!" the man

answered promptly. "Don't take any chances." After an atheist died, a friend looked at him in the casket, shook his head, and remarked: "All dressed up and no place to go." 😊

A man was surprised to read the announcement of his own death in the obituary column of the local newspaper. Ringing up his close friend, he enquired, "Did you see the announcement of my death in the paper this morning?" "Yes," was the frightened answer in a shivering voice. "But where are you speaking from? Heaven or Hell?" 😊

Why did they put a fence around the cemetery? People are dying to get in. 😊

What are ghosts' favorite streets? Dead ends 😊

Dad always thought the last thing he needed was a burial plot. He was right 😊

Parenting Tune-Up



Will you have fun with April Fool's Day? Tell your child stories of silly mistakes or dumb things you did when you were a kid. Mutual laughter can take the pressure off. At the same time, use the occasion to teach the kids how to be funny without being mean.

So parents can help kids ask themselves these questions when they hear or tell a joke: Does this joke include everyone? Or does it leave someone out or hurt?

Marriage Tune-Up



Research indicates that the average person listens for 17 seconds before interrupting (*5 Love Languages* by Gary Chapman). Sometimes one spouse may be more long winded than the other. Sometimes one hardly speaks at all. Pay attention to your words this next week. Try to meet in the middle.

Scared to Talk about Death!

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now, I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you . . ." Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" John 11: 1-45

They left the doctor's office. They were still struggling to take it all in. *Tumor . . . surgery . . . chemotherapy . . . a few months.* By the next day, the words settled in and became real. Calls were placed; appointments were scheduled; decisions were made. Then a conversation began that took them both by surprise. He asked: "What will you do if I die? Where will you live? Where will you work? Who will care for you?" She had questions of her own: "You've never been willing to talk about this, and now I wish you would.

Where do you want to be buried? Do you want me to take you home? What kind of funeral do you want?"

And the conversation continued over the next several days. "Would you marry again?" he asked. "I would want you to be happy." She asked, for the first time, detailed questions about all the day-to-day things he took care of. Was there something he wanted to do or a place he wanted to go? Was there any unfinished business that needed to be addressed? A new place opened up in their life together: a safe place to admit, "I'm scared," a hopeful place to constantly assure each other, "Whatever happens, we'll be OK."

What started as a strained, clumsy conversation became more and more

comfortable - and comforting. When she told a close friend about it, she was astonished at her resistance. "You shouldn't talk that way. That's giving up. You've got to fight!" But she now knew better. Talking about death is not an easy conversation, but it is liberating and freeing; it's a conversation centered in grace and love. They made it through his surgery and treatment. But the conversation continues in new and revealing ways that strengthen them for the hard days that are sure to come.

A couple confronts for the first time in their lives the reality of death; in today's Gospel, two sisters suddenly must cope with life without their brother. Every human being shares the

Continued

Scared to Talk about Death! (cont'd)

prospect of death. Each one of us is on the same journey to the dwelling place of God; as such, every day brings each one of us closer to death, the passage way we all must pass through to God. But in treating one another with the care and compassion that honors the fragility of life, we bring into one another's lives the hope of eternity in the Risen One. As this couple and Martha and Mary come to appreciate, resurrection is a perspective that finds hope in the hardest times, that uncovers life among the devastation, that reveals the light even in the darkest night.

Carrying a dead Soul in a living Body?

In Virgil, there is an account of an ancient king, who was so unnaturally cruel in his punishments that he used to chain a dead man to a living criminal. It was impossible for the poor wretch to separate himself from his disgusting burden. The carcass was bound fast to his body – its hands to his hands; its face to his face; the entire dead body to his living body. Then he was put into a dungeon to die suffocated by the foul emissions of the stinking dead body. Many suppose that it was in reference to this that Paul cried out: "O wretched man that I am!"

Today's readings invite us to turn away from sin, approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation and revive the dead soul we are carrying within our body, thus becoming eligible for the glorious resurrection Jesus promised to believers at the tomb of Lazarus.



What a Friend we have in Jesus!

One of the simplest and the most consoling hymns ever written is:

'What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and grief's to bear! What a privilege to carry, everything to God in prayer! O what peace we often forfeit; O what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer.'

Joseph Scriven wrote this hymn in 1857. He was a Christian missionary working in Canada, when he heard that his mother was seriously ill in Ireland. He could not go there to be with her. Instead, he wrote a consoling letter enclosing it with the words of this hymn, and mailed it to her. He offered to her in her illness the company and the comfort of Jesus. He knew that in times of illness and loneliness, there is none who can give us a better company and comfort than Jesus. There can be no greater friend than Jesus.

"Roll away the stone, unbind him and let him go."

There are so many dark areas in our private lives. We often bind ourselves with chains of addiction to alcohol, drugs, sexual deviations, slander, gossip, envy, prejudices, hatred and uncontrollable anger, and we bury ourselves in the tombs of despair. Sometimes we are buried in the tomb of selfishness, filled with negative feelings such as worry, fear, resentment, hatred, and guilt. Jesus asks us today to seek his help and that of the community around us to loosen those chains and come out of tombs of our own creation. Is there an area of life where hope is gone? Why not invite Jesus to visit this area? If we want Jesus to visit our dark dungeons of sin, despair and unhappiness, let us ask Jesus during this Holy Mass to bring the light and the power of the Holy Spirit into our private lives and liberate us from our tombs. Are there times when we refuse to let God enter into our wallets, fearing that faithful tithing will endanger our savings?

When we receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Jesus will call our name and command, "Come out!" Jesus calls each of us by name to come out of our graves and to help others to do the same. "Lazarus, come out! Mary, come out! Jim and Joe, Kathy and Lisa, come out!" This is particularly Good News to someone who is addicted, whether to a chemical substance or to unsavory habits. "Lazarus, come out!" This is good news for the person who has lived an empty, meaningless life, "Lazarus, come out!" This is good news for the tired, the hurting, the person at his or her wit's end. "Lazarus, come out!" This is good news for all of us: "Lazarus, come out!" This can be the beginning of a new life.

"Mike, Come out!" "Sally, come out!"

Dr. A. L. Jenkins was an emergency-room doctor for 48 years in Knoxville, Tennessee. In this capacity, Dr. Jenkins saw the best and the worst side of the field of medicine. But his most vivid memories are of those moments that are medically unexplainable. Dr. Jenkins recalls one man who was dead on arrival in the emergency room. It was Dr. Jenkins' policy to attempt resuscitation anyway. After fifteen minutes of CPR, the previously dead man began to show signs of life. The man sat up, looked around him, then said to Dr. Jenkins, "Oh, I wish I was still out there! It was beautiful!" The man would never explain what he meant, but would only repeat that the place he had been was "so beautiful, so beautiful." (Kristi L. Nelson, "From near-death to dynamite," *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, date unknown). Now, many explanations have been given for so-called near-death experiences, including chemical changes in the brain. But, all explanations aside, it is amazing how these experiences affirm what the Bible teaches us about life beyond the grave. There will come a time when the doctor can do no more for us, but somewhere on the other side, Christ will say, "Mike, come out!" "Joe, come out!" "Sally, come out!" This is a story that affirms resurrection.

Reflect

Good news and Bad news

John and Jim were professional players with the Atlanta Braves who lived and breathed baseball. These guys breathed, discussed, ate, and slept baseball. One of their big concerns was whether there would be baseball in Heaven. They loved baseball so much that they were not sure at all they wanted to spend eternity in heaven unless they could play baseball. They had an agreement that the first one who died would somehow get a message back to earth, letting the other know whether baseball was in heaven or not. Well, it happened. John died, and Jim grieved. He grieved for days - deeply saddened over his friend John's death. About two weeks went by, and then it happened. Jim was awakened in the middle of the night by the calling of his name, "Jim, Jim, Jim, wake up! This is John." "John, where are you?" "I'm in Heaven - and I have some good news and bad news. It's exciting, Jim. We do have baseball in Heaven. It's great. We play every day and there are marvelous teams, and tough, exciting competition." "That's great," said Jim. "But what's the bad news?" "Well," said John, "You are scheduled to pitch next Tuesday."

We live in a world that is filled with death. We kill each other in acts of murder, abortion, euthanasia, execution, war and terrorist activities. We kill ourselves through suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, smoking, overwork, stress, bad eating habits, and physical neglect. We watch calmly as others die from poverty, hunger and malnutrition, homelessness, unemployment, poor education, disease, child abuse, arms proliferation, discrimination, pollution, and destruction of the environment. The most important question is: am I ready to face my death? A strange question and its truthful answer are found in the sacred scriptures of the Hindus. "What is the greatest wonder in the world?" The answer is: "All of us know that we will surely die, but each of us foolishly thinks that he or she will not die any time in the near future." Let us not be foolish; let us be wise, well-prepared and ever ready to meet our Lord with a clear conscience when the time comes.

He had been "turned loose, untied."

Robert McAfee Brown was a chaplain in World War II. He was on a troop ship with 1,500 Marines on their way home after having served in Japan. To his surprise, he was approached by a group of Marines asking him to lead a Bible study during the voyage. One day, after the group had studied the passage about the raising of Lazarus, a Marine came to Dr. Brown saying, "The story is about me!" The young man had gotten into a lot of trouble before going into the service. He could not

stand the thought of facing his family. The story of Lazarus gave him hope and courage to face the consequences back home. He had been "turned loose, untied." [William Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, Revised Edition (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975), pp. 102-103.] Christ had rolled away the stone of his past life. That's what Christ does for us. He gives us the power to start again, to live again. He said to Lazarus, "Lazarus, come out!" Then to those who were present, "Take off the grave-clothes and let him go."

Ghost story!

There was an article about a judge in Yugoslavia who was electrocuted when he reached up to turn on a light while standing in the bathtub. He was zapped and fell out of the tub. His wife called the doctor who pronounced him dead. In accordance with government health regulation, the judge's body was immediately placed in a vault beneath the cemetery chapel. In the middle of the night, the judge regained consciousness. He had no idea where he was or what had happened. When he DID realize where he was, he ran to the closed vault door and began shaking it and yelling for help. The guard who was there was terrified and fled. Fortunately, the guard got some help; came back; opened the door and released the newly revived judge. The judge phoned his wife that he was coming home. She screamed and hung up the phone. Next he tried going to the homes of several friends. They took one look at him, thought he was a ghost and slammed the door in his face. Finally, he found a friend who hadn't heard he was dead. He convinced that friend to act as a go-between. Gradually, the judge was able to convince his friends and family that he really was alive! Lazarus from John's Gospel could have identified with that judge.



Life-Giving Wounds Retreat for Adult Children of Divorce or Separation June 3, 2023

The Life-Giving Wounds retreat is a unique opportunity for young adults (18+) and adults with divorced or separated parents to reflect intentionally on the wounds caused by their family's breakdown, together with others who know this pain and are knowledgeable, compassionate retreat leaders.

When: June 3, 2023 from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Where: The Shrine of St. Joseph, 1050 Long Hill Rd, Stirling, NJ
General Admission is \$75.00, Student Admission is \$25.00.

To register visit: www.diometuchen.org/familylife

If you have any questions, please contact:
cdaverso@diometuchen.org or amarshall@diometuchen.org

From Deacon Russ



A note From Deacon Russ

As many of you have noticed I have not been serving at Mass for many weeks. I have macular degeneration and have been getting injections in one eye. Unfortunately I have developed an extreme sensitivity to light.. and the lights on the altar have caused me to become light-headed on the altar.

As a result Father Abraham has agreed that I will no longer assist at Mass. I will continue my ministry as a Deacon by doing Baptism... Weddings... Wake services... and other areas as needed.

I am grateful for my almost 19 years as a Deacon here at Saint Matthias. Keep me in your prayers as I keep you in mine.

Yours in Christ,
Deacon Russ

Pray

Stations of the Cross - A Lenten Tradition

The devotional practice of praying the Stations of the Cross dates back to as early as the fourth century, shortly after the Christian Emperor Constantine built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Pilgrims to the Holy Land prayed at this church and began to trace the path of Jesus' passion. Here at St. Matthias, we continue this Lenten tradition, led by parish lay ministries and celebrated in individual styles.

On March 17, the prayer was led by members of the St. Vincent dePaul Society, with a special focus on the poor. For each of the stations, there was a scripture proclamation, a reflection and a brief passage from either St. Vincent dePaul or Frederick Ozanam, the founder of the St. Vincent dePaul Society. The service ended in singing, "In These Days of Lenten Journey", remembering our call to reach out to the homeless, to those without warmth, to the hungry, to the weary, to those who despair, to the oppressed and to recall our mission to sow Justice.

In the weeks remaining, please consider participating in this meaningful sacramental of the Church.

(Pictured in photos: Bob Cheril (Leader), Sister Marie Therese (Reader /Leader of Song), Hani Fares (Cross Bearer), Marge Richards (Processor)



Silver & Gold Wedding Anniversary Celebration



You are cordially invited to celebrate your 25th or 50th Wedding Anniversary with the Church of Metuchen and renew your marriage vows with Bishop James F. Checchio at a special Evening Prayer Service at the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi in Metuchen on Sunday, October 22, 2023 at 3:30 PM. Registration is required. Please register online at: <https://www.diometuchen.org/silver-and-gold-anniversary-celebration>. If you are unable to access, please contact the Family Life Office at 732-562-1543 or amarshall@diometuchen.org. Registration will close on **October 6, 2023**. Although no fee is required, in the past many Jubilarian couples have given a donation of gratitude to the Church in memory of this special occasion. Donations of Gratitude may be made online at <https://www.diometuchen.org/silver-and-gold-anniversary-celebration> or calling 732-562-1543.



Cont'd on next page

Pray

Retirement Collection for Diocesan Clergy, Apr. 1 & 2

Our retired priests have served so many people over the course of their ministry, nourishing our Catholic Faith, educating our youth, and serving the poor and vulnerable. **Next weekend, April 1 and 2**, as we celebrate Palm Sunday, the faithful of the diocese will have the opportunity to gratefully acknowledge the life-long dedication of these priests by contributing to the Annual Collection for our Retired Diocesan Priests. All funds raised through this collection will be used exclusively to assist our retired priests by subsidizing the Maria Regina Residence.

Chrism Mass in our Cathedral continued

The Bishop will also bless and consecrate the Holy Oils, which each parish receives for the rites of anointing. The Oil of Catechumens is used to anoint infants and adults before their Baptism; the Oil of the Sick is used on the forehead and hands of the infirm in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick; and Sacred Chrism is used to anoint the head of the newly baptized, the foreheads of Confirmandi, the hands of a priest at his ordination, the head of a bishop at his ordination, and the altar and walls of new churches. All are encouraged to join in-person (or watch via livestream), the ancient, grace-filled Chrism.

To watch the Chrism Mass livestream, visit :

<https://diometuchen.org/cathedral-livestream>

Message of the Holy Father

(continued from last week)

The Lenten journey of penance and the journey of the Synod alike have as their goal a transfiguration, both personal and ecclesial. A transformation that, in both cases, has its model in the Transfiguration of Jesus and is achieved by the grace of his paschal mystery. So that this transfiguration may become a reality in us this year, I would like to propose two “paths” to follow in order to ascend the mountain together with Jesus and, with him, to attain the goal.



The first path has to do with the command that God the Father addresses to the disciples on Mount Tabor as they contemplate Jesus transfigured. The voice from the cloud says: “Listen to him” (Mt 17:5). The first proposal, then, is very clear: we need to listen to Jesus. Lent is a time of grace to the extent that we listen to him as he speaks to us. And how does he speak to us? First, in the word of God, which the Church offers us in the liturgy. May that word not fall on deaf ears; if we cannot always attend Mass, let us study its daily biblical readings, even with the help of the internet. In addition to the Scriptures, the Lord speaks to us through our brothers and sisters, especially in the faces and the stories of those who are in need. Let me say something else, which is quite important for the synodal process: listening to Christ often takes place in listening to our brothers and sisters in the Church. Such mutual listening in some phases is the primary goal, but it remains always indispensable in the method and style of a synodal Church.

On hearing the Father’s voice, the disciples “fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, ‘Rise, and do not be afraid.’ And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone” (Mt 17:6-8). Here is the second proposal for this Lent: do not take refuge in a religiosity made up of extraordinary events and dramatic experiences, out of fear of facing reality and its daily struggles, its hardships and contradictions. The light that Jesus shows the disciples is an anticipation of Easter glory, and that must be the goal of our own journey, as we follow “him alone”. Lent leads to Easter: the “retreat” is not an end in itself, but a means of preparing us to experience the Lord’s passion and cross with faith, hope and love, and thus to arrive at the resurrection. Also on the synodal journey, when God gives us the grace of certain powerful experiences of communion, we should not imagine that we have arrived – for there too, the Lord repeats to us: “Rise, and do not be afraid”. Let us go down, then, to the plain, and may the grace we have experienced strengthen us to be “artisans of synodality” in the ordinary life of our communities.

Dear brothers and sisters, may the Holy Spirit inspire and sustain us this Lent in our ascent with Jesus, so that we may experience his divine splendour and thus, confirmed in faith, persevere in our journey together with him, glory of his people and light of the nations.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 25 January, Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul

~ FRANCIS

Learn



HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024

Saint Matthias School registration is open. We are enrolling students in PreK 3, PreK 4, Kindergarten and grades 1-8. Please help us spread the word about our school filled with faith, caring, and excellence to your relatives, friends, and neighbors. ALL are welcome! Thank you!

Learn

The HSA is proud to sponsor our first

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Date and Time TBD (based on interest)

Each donor will receive 1 HSA hour!

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1 BLOOD DONATION SAVES
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The HSA is organizing its first Blood Drive! We have been asked to gather interest before booking a date and time, so please let us know if you would be interested in donating.

SMS families receive 1 hour toward their 4-hour commitment.

To register visit: www.stmatthias.net/blooddrive2023

Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023				Last Year's Total
Current Month	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 36 - Mar 5, 2023	\$12,602.00	\$20,070.75	\$32,672.75	\$36,094.75
Week 37 - Mar. 12, 2023	\$10,523.00	\$23,236.25	\$33,759.25	\$30,521.25
Week 38 - Mar. 19, 2023	\$8,700.00	\$12,795.82	\$21,495.82	\$24,352.25
Week 39 - Mar. 26, 2023	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$20,592.25
			Month-to-date Total	Mar Total Last Yr
			\$87,927.82	\$111,560.50
			Current Year-to-date Total	Year-to-date as of
			\$1,028,470.34	\$1,008,537.07

2023 Bishop's Annual Appeal Renewed and Sent on Mission by the Eucharist



Thank you to those who have already responded to the Bishop's Annual Appeal. If you have yet to make your pledge to this year's Bishop's Annual Appeal, you can still do so. Please prayerfully consider a gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal to help our parish reach its goal. If we can exceed our goal, 50% of the amount collected over goal will be returned to us in the form of a parish rebate. Every gift, no matter the size, is important and greatly appreciated. Thank you. There are Envelopes and cards in the pews that you can use. You can find the link to the Bishop's Annual Appeal at <https://diometuchen.org/BAA>

Stewardship Reflection Mar 26, 2023 5th Sunday of Lent

“Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?’” JOHN 11:40

Many of us say that we believe in God. We attend Sunday Mass and participate in parish events. But when life gets hard and the pressure is on, when things aren't going our way, do we really believe? Do we really put our trust in the Lord? When we live a life of gratitude, recognizing all that we have been given, we really do see that God is providing for our needs. Living a grateful and generous life allows us to see God's active presence in our daily lives and we become “partakers of the divine nature.”

Reflexiónese 26 de marzo de 2023 5º domingo de Cuaresma

“¿No te dije que si crees verás la gloria de Dios? —le contestó Jesús” JUAN 11:40

Muchos de nosotros decimos que creemos en Dios. Atendemos a la Misa Dominical y participamos en los eventos parroquiales. Sin embargo, cuando la vida se pone difícil y aumenta la presión, cuando las cosas no van como queremos, ¿Realmente creemos? ¿Realmente ponemos nuestra confianza en el Señor? Cuando vivimos una vida de gratitud, reconociendo que todo lo que tenemos nos ha sido dado, realmente veremos que Dios provee para nuestras necesidades. Vivir una vida generosa y agradecida nos permite ver la presencia activa de Dios en nuestra vida cotidiana y nos hacemos “partícipes de la naturaleza divina”.

Serve



CAREGIVER/CARE SUPPORT MINISTRY 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 in the Parish Office.

DATE: SATURDAY, March 25th,

TIME: 10:00 - 11:30AM

WHERE: de Porres Room in the Parish Office

Connect with Our Local Community



Fundraiser for Great Expectations A joint project of SMS National Junior Honor Society & St. Martin de Porres Society

This weekend, March 25/26, please support a joint project of the St. Matthias National Junior Honor Society and the St. Martin de Porres Society - a candy fundraiser to benefit the Center for Great Expectations here in Somerset. Your candy purchase (\$2 each for chocolate and non-chocolate) will help fulfill some of the mothers' needs at the center. Candy sales will take place in the church vestibule after all Masses.



Mt. St. Mary House of Prayer

Registration for all offerings is required **10 days** in advance to avoid the program being cancelled. You can register and pay for any program at www.msmhope.org.

Thursday, Friday, Apr. 6, 7 from 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

SACRED TIME, SACRED SPACE

A personal, quiet day to enjoy God's presence. Day begins with communal prayer. Bring a bag lunch.

(\$20-\$30 as you are able)

In God's Image

In God's Image, the Catholic Faith Sharing Group for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people at Church of the Sacred Heart, South Plainfield, meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7:00PM. **Our next meeting is April 12 and will be both in person and online.** Please email for more information. The group is open to LGBTQ adults, 18 and over, and their families. All are welcome for faith sharing, prayer, conversation and support. For more information, contact Fr John at 908 756 0633, ext 125 or the group may be reached via email at sacredheartigi@gmail.com



NJ Catholic Youth Rally at Six Flags Great Adventure

May 21st, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
1 Six Flags Boulevard, Jackson, NJ 08527

Registration is open for our Annual Statewide Youth Rally!

The NJ Catholic Youth Rally is a day-long event that gathers teens from across the state of NJ for a day of fun, fellowship, Mass, and more held at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson, NJ. The day starts with dynamic opening ceremony hosted by the Diocese of Metuchen. Teens then get the day to enjoy the park and all the rides. The day concludes in the Batman Stunt Arena with a Mass. Open to all Jr. High, High School & Young Adult Ministry, Scouting Parish/School Athletic Programs, and families!

Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council:

Co-Chairs:

Rose Peng, rosepeng@optonline.net
John Taylor, jptaylor1068@yahoo.com

Co-Secretaries:

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Marilyn Wegg
Stephan Busono
Anne Marie Francis
Bill Isele
Maria Tapia-Burch

Msgr. Seamus Brennen,
Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

Trustees:

Pearl Scott
Marge Richards

Parish Finance Council:

Kester Hector, Chair
Finance Council
[@stmatthias.net](mailto:stmatthias.net)
Carmen Driz-Melilli
Barry Dusault
Gwen Orłowski

Audrey Francis
Joe Porter
Joan Pritchard
Mary Pat Burke-Grospin,
Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

About St. Matthias (please contact the staff members on the cover for up-to-date information)

Parish Registration — Welcome to St. Matthias! Please register on our website. www.stmatthias.net/join-us, 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 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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- Tuesday, 11/08
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