



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**
 Nathalie Godet, *Website Coordinator*, **ngodet**
 Leslie Guillen, *Bulletin Editor*, **lguillen**
 Amy Hanna, *Accountant/Databases*, **ahanna**
 Mike Lanyi, *Sacristan*
 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 5, 2023-
Second Sunday of Lent



March 8th - 14th

For the past several years, our Sisters in our United States Province have observed this week by striving to bring awareness to the plight of hunger experienced by so many. During this month, Sisters Marie Therese and Maria will be volunteering some time at the Franklin Food Bank.



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Join us on Fridays during Lent in Church at 7:00 PM. The Stations are a devotion intended to help us follow Jesus on his way to Calvary. By accompanying him on the Way of the Cross, we see ourselves mirrored in him, gain his courageous patience, & learn to trust God who is with us no matter what we have to go through. Each Friday we have a different theme with beautiful reflections, led by our different ministries. Welcome to pray this ancient devotion of the church.

This year, the feast of St. Patrick falls on a Friday. Bishop Checchio has already given dispensation, so you may enjoy corned beef (or other meat) that day and abstain from meat on another day that same week.



DID YOU KNOW THAT
1 BLOOD DONATION SAVES
THREE LIVES?!

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

This Week @ St. Matthias From Our Pastor

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.

Women's History Month—Mar

Sunday, Mar 5, 2023 2nd Sunday of Lent

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
11:00AM	Rosary Altar Soc. Mtg.	John XXIII Rm
12:00PM	Mass	Church
2:00PM	GIFT	Church, clsrms, John XXIII Rm

Monday, Mar 6, 2023 St. Colette of Corbie, Abbess & Foundress

8:00AM	Mass/Miraculous Medal Novena	Church
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Tuesday, Mar 7, 2023 Sts. Perpetua and Felicity, Martyrs

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:30PM	GIFT	Church, clsrms, John XXIII Rm
6:30PM	SMS: SAC meeting	SMS Library
7:30PM	SVDP Society Mtg.	de Porres Rm

Wednesday, Mar 8, 2023 St. John of God, Religious & Founder

International Women's Day

8:00AM	Mass—St. Joseph Novena	Church
9:30AM	Prayer Group 1 Holy Spirit	de Porres Rm
2:00PM	Alzheimer's Mtg.	Zoom
2:30PM	SMS Play Practice	School
7:00PM	SMDP Mtg.	Zoom

Thursday, Mar 9, 2023 St. Frances of Rome, & Foundress

8:00AM	Mass	Church
3:30PM	Children's Choir Gr. 3&4	Church
4:00PM	Children's Choir Gr. 5-8	Church
7:30PM	Adult Choir rehearsal	Church

Friday, Mar 10, 2023 Forty Martyrs of Armenia SMS-out 12:15PM

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:00PM	SMS: Daddy/Daughter Dance	Cafeteria
7:00PM	Stations of the Cross	Church

Saturday, Mar 11, 2023 St. Eulogius of Córdoba

9:00AM	Drama-Set Painting	Cafeteria
3:30PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Mass	Church

Sunday, Mar 12, 2023 3rd Sunday of Lent

Daylight Savings Time Starts

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	First Communion #3 at Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass—Sign Language Interpreter	Church
12:00PM	Mass	Church

Dear Friends,

On March 27, 2020, at an early point in the global pandemic, Pope Francis walked alone in the rain across an empty St. Peter's Square to offer prayer for the world in a time of crisis. "Faith," he said, "begins when we realize we are in need of salvation. We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we flounder: we need the Lord, like ancient navigators needed the stars." Recalling when Jesus was asleep in the boat as a tempest was raging (Mark 4:35-41), the Holy Father said, "The Lord awakens so as to reawaken and revive our Easter faith." On that day, Pope Francis presided over the rite of Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction in order to focus our attention on the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The Pope was reminding us that even in a time of turbulence and crisis, Jesus is present among us, as present as he was long ago in the boat on the Sea of Galilee.

This presence of Jesus, the Real Presence, that we experience in a very tangible way is when we all gather for the Eucharist daily but especially on Sundays. I am sure you heard that the US Catholic Bishops have called for a three-year National Eucharistic Revival, which aims to renew devotion and belief in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. This initiative has three phases: the national phase, the diocesan phase and the parish phase. At the moment we are in the diocesan phase which will come to an end with the Corpus Christi Sunday on June 11, 2023 when the parish phase will begin. This Revival will culminate with a National Eucharistic Congress, in Indianapolis, July 17-21, 2024. The year after that is the 'Year of going out on Mission.' Having enkindled a missionary fire in the hearts of the American faithful, the Holy Spirit will send us out on mission to share the gift of our Eucharistic Lord as we enter the universal Church's jubilee year in 2025. The Bishops have written a beautiful document titled "The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church" which is worth reading and studying.

Our Diocese of Metuchen has suggested that we form a parish committee to make the parish phase more participatory and beneficial. I wish to invite individuals who wish to be part of this committee to contact me or Msgr. Brennan. No qualifications necessary. Just a desire to deepen our faith in the Eucharist and an interest to promote the Eucharistic understanding and implications to our parish community. There will be guidance from us as well as from our Diocesan Office.

There are already many resources that all of us can easily access:

Start reading the USCCB's article: <https://eucharisticrevival.org>

Have a look at the free study guide at: <https://reviveparishes.com/eucharist>

Also you can watch a free two-hour online course, presented by Bishop Andrew Cozzens, on the Bishops' document on the Eucharist.

This is a chance for our whole parish to take a fresh look at our Holy Eucharist which the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1324-1327) describes as "the source and summit" of the Christian life. We will certainly gain new appreciation and insights into what we celebrate and who we receive in Holy Communion, Jesus Christ, the Lord of our life.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal



Readings for the Week

Monday: Dn 9:4b-10; Ps 79:8, 9, 11, 13; Lk 6:36-38

Tuesday: Is 1:10, 16-20; Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21, 23; Mt 23:1-12

Wednesday: Jer 18:18-20; Ps 31:5-6, 14, 15-16; Mt 20:17-28

Thursday: Jer 17:5-10; Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4, 6; Lk 16:19-31

Friday: Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a; 17b-28a; Ps 105:16-17, 18-19, 20-21; Mt 21:33-43, 45-46

Saturday: Mi 7:14-15, 18-20; Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12; Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

Sunday: Ex 17:3-7; Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9; Rom 5:1-2, 5-8; Jn 4:5-42 or Jn 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, Mar 4 5:00PM Frieda Emmer, by Vince & Dee Martell

Sunday, Mar 5 8:00AM Intention of Parishioners

10:00AM Eva Schaare, by The Quenault Family

12:00PM Ratna Sintawati Rahardja,
by The Sukendro Family

Monday, Mar 6 8:00AM Erlinda Samilliano, by The Tibay Family

Tuesday, Mar 7 8:00AM Vera Jones, by Anne Marie Francis

Wednesday, Mar 8 8:00AM Joseph Raymond, by Wife, Carol

Thursday, Mar 9 8:00AM Birthday Blessings for Sr. Rosaria,
By Loving Friends

Friday, Mar 10 8:00AM Christine Frauheim, by The Collins Family

Saturday, Mar 11 5:00PM Joseph Moran, by Joe, Ginny & Eileen

Sunday, Mar 12 8:00AM Rosean Svani, by Mom & Family

10:00AM Intention of Parishioners

12:00PM Siu C.K. Pang, by Leasing Pang

Pray for those who are sick...

If you or a family member are sick, please call the Parish Office or **email Kelly Counts** at kcounts@stmatthias.net 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
Angela Berlund
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
Claudia Gemgnani

Helen Geraghty
Emma Gergely
Mary Gidaro
Carol Gryskiewicz
Sloopy & John Hoffman
Marilyn Horvath
Baby Isla-Rose Huffman
Robert Kashinsky
Al Kepenis
Kathleen Lanenbacher
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
Fiorello Parente
Robert Pellegrino
Jim Pettit
Christina Pietrowiak
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
Jay Swick
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



Smile with Your Family



A certain missionary on a study trip to the Holy Land was visiting Jaffa (Joppa) where Peter was residing when he baptized Cornelius (Acts 10). The breath-taking beauty of this small seaside town was such that it inspired the missionary to come up with this joke: At the Transfiguration Peter offered to build three tents, one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah. Jesus said, "And what about you, Peter?" And Peter replies, "Don't worry about me Lord, I got a better place in Jaffa." 😊

During a Sunday service, the pastor asked the congregation for their intentions. We heard the usual requests to pray for sick people and the acknowledgments for those who helped when a parishioner died. The somber mood was broken when the last intention was heard. A woman stood up and said, "My granddaughter turned 16

this week and received her driver's license. Let us pray for us all." 😊

Sitting on a bus just days after undergoing surgery at New England Baptist Hospital in Boston, my father noticed a passenger coming down the aisle with a standard-issue hospital cane just like his. Pointing to it, my father asked the man, "New England Baptist?" "Hell, no," the man replied, "Irish Catholic." 😊

Before you criticize someone, walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you do criticize them, you're a mile away, and you have their shoes. 😊

I was at the park wondering why this Frisbee kept getting bigger... and then it hit me. 😊 Seen while passing by a church: "Get in touch with God by knee mail." 😊

"O Lord, open his eyes so he may see."



There is a mysterious story in 2 Kings that can help us understand what is happening in the Transfiguration. Israel is at war with Aram, and Elisha, the man of God, is using his prophetic powers to reveal the strategic plans of the Aramean army to the Israelites. At first the King of Aram thinks that one of his officers is playing the spy, but when he learns the truth he dispatches troops to go and capture Elisha who is residing in Dothan. The Aramean troops move in under cover of darkness and surround the city. In the morning Elisha's servant is the first to discover that they are surrounded and fears for his master's safety. He runs to Elisha and says, "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" The prophet answers "Don't be afraid. Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." But who would believe that when the surrounding mountainside is covered with advancing enemy troops? So Elisha prays, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opens the servant's eyes, and he looks and sees the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2 Kings 6:8-23). This vision was all that Elisha's disciple needed to reassure him. At the end of the story, not only was the prophet of God safe, but the invading army was totally humiliated.

"Lord, give me the grace for transformation."

The word transfiguration means a change in form or appearance. Biologists call it metamorphosis (derived from the Greek word *metamorphoomai* used in Matthew's Gospel), to describe the change that occurs

when a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. As children we might have curiously watched the process of the caterpillar turning into a chrysalis and then bursting into a beautiful Monarch butterfly. Fr. Anthony De Mello tells the story of such a metamorphosis in the prayer life of an old man. "I was a revolutionary when I was young, and all my prayer to God was: 'Lord, give me the grace to change the world.' As I approached middle age and realized that half of my life was gone without changing a single soul, I changed my prayer to: 'Lord, give me the grace to change all those who come in contact with me; just my family and friends and I shall be satisfied.' Now that I am old and my days are numbered, I have begun to see how foolish I have been. My one prayer now is: 'Lord, give me the grace to change myself.' If I had prayed for this right from the start, I should not have wasted my life."

The common theme of today's readings is metamorphosis or transformation. The readings invite us to work with the Holy Spirit to transform our lives by renewing them during Lent, and to radiate the grace of the transfigured Lord around us by our Spirit-filled lives. The Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain reminds us that the way of the cross leads to Resurrection and eternal life and that the purpose of Lent is to help us better to enter into those mysteries.

Baby powder and Christian transformation

You might remember comedian Yakov Smirnoff. When he first came to the United States from Russia he was not prepared for the incredible variety of instant products available in American grocery stores. He says, "On my first shopping trip, I saw powdered milk; you just add water, and you get milk. Then I saw powdered orange juice; you just add water, and you get orange juice. And then I saw baby powder, and I thought to myself, 'What a country!'" Smirnoff was joking, but we make these

Reflect

Baby powder (cont'd)

assumptions about Christian Transformation—that people change instantly from sinners to saints. Catholics call it transformation through repentance and renewal of life, deriving strength through the word of God and the Sacraments to cooperate with God's grace for doing acts of charity. Some other Christian denominations call it *Sanctification of the believer*. Whatever you call it, most denominations expect some quick fix for sin. According to this belief, when someone gives his or her life to Christ, accepting Him as Lord and personal Savior, and confesses his or her sins to Him, there an immediate, substantive, in-depth, miraculous change in habits, attitudes, and character. Can we go to Church as if we are going to the grocery store to get *Powdered Christian*? The truth is that Disciples of Christ are not born by adding water to *Christian powder*. There is no such powder, and disciples of Jesus Christ are not instantly born. They are slowly raised through many trials, suffering, and temptations and by their active cooperation with the grace of God, expressed through works of charity.

“I just want you to know that I Love You!”

Did you hear the story about an inattentive, workaholic husband who suddenly decided to surprise his wife with a night to remember? He went down to the department store and bought her the expensive dress she had been admiring. He bought her a large bottle of perfume to go with it. He ordered tickets to the Broadway play she had been wanting to see and made reservations at their favorite restaurant. On his way home he stopped by the florist and bought two dozen red roses which he carried home under his arm. Upon arriving home, he exploded through the door, hugged his wife affectionately and told her what he had done. “I just want you to know that I love you; I appreciate you; I adore you.”

Instead of melting in the man's arms his wife started screaming at the top of her voice. “This has been the worst day of my life,” she said. “It was awful at the office. We lost our biggest account; co-workers were obnoxious; clients were unreasonable. I came home to find the kids had broken my favorite lamp; the baby sitter is quitting; and the water heater is out; and now surprise of surprises, my normally sober husband comes home drunk!” When today's Gospel starts talking about a Transfiguration with radiant faces and glowing garments and visitors from the dead, we become more than a little suspicious. What is going on here? All along the question remains: Are we willing to let ourselves be engulfed in mystery, inspired by glory, transformed by en-

counters of a Divine kind? That's what the Transfiguration of Jesus is all about.

Do You Know these things about Lent?

Is Lent actually forty days long? Technically, no. According to the *General Norms*, "Lent runs from Ash Wednesday until the Mass of the Lord's Supper, exclusive" (*General Norms* 28). This means Lent ends at the beginning of the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. Count it as you will, that's more than forty days. Therefore, the number forty in traditional hymns such as "Lord, Who throughout These Forty Days" is only an approximation.

Are Sundays excluded from Lent? No. The definition of what days are included in Lent is given above, in *General Norms* 28. No exception is made for Sundays. Indeed, the *General Norms* go on to specifically name the Sundays of the period as belonging to the season: "The Sundays of this season are called the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent. The Sixth Sunday, which marks the beginning of Holy Week, is called Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday)" (*General Norms* 30). Some people customarily allow themselves on Sunday to have things they have voluntarily given up for Lent, but since these forms of self-denial were voluntarily assumed anyway, a person is not under an obligation to practice them on Sunday (or any other specific day of the week).

Why the season is called Lent? *Lent* is the Old English word for *spring*. In almost all other languages, *Lent*'s name is a derivative of the Latin term *quadagesima* or "the forty days."

Why is Lent approximately forty days long?

In the Bible, forty days is a traditional number of discipline, devotion, and preparation. Moses stayed on the mountain of God forty days (Ex. 24:18, 34:28). The spies were in the land forty days (Num. 13:25). Elijah traveled forty days before he reached the cave where he had his vision (1 Kgs. 19:8). Nineveh was given forty days to repent (Jonah 3:4). And, most significantly for our Lenten observance, Jesus spent forty days in wilderness praying and fasting prior to undertaking his ministry (Matt. 4:2). Thus it is fitting for Christians to imitate him with a forty-day period of prayer and fasting to prepare to celebrate the climax of Christ's ministry, Good Friday (the day of the crucifixion) and Easter Sunday (the day of the Resurrection).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sinning" [Heb. 4:15]. By the solemn forty days of Lent the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert" (CCC 540).



Reflect



Mercy Quotes from Pope Francis

God's patience has to call forth in us the courage to return to Him, however many mistakes and sins there may be in our life.

... It is there, in the wounds of Jesus, that we are truly secure; there we encounter the boundless love of His heart. Thomas understood this. Saint Bernard goes on to ask: But what can I count on? My own merits? No, "My merit is God's mercy. I am by no means lacking merits as long as He is rich in mercy. If the mercies of the Lord are manifold, I too will abound in merits." This is important: the courage to trust in Jesus' mercy, to trust in His patience, to seek refuge always in the wounds of His love.

"The new Prioress is turning monastic life into one big party!"

A most unusual protest took place in a convent in New Jersey. Four nuns locked themselves in a tiny second floor infirmary and took a vow of "near silence." They were protesting new rules established by their new prioress, Mother Theresa Hewitt. It seems that Mother Theresa had introduced television, secular videos, recorded music, bright lights, and (horror of horrors) daily "sweets" into the convent. The sweets consisted of a tin of candy which was passed around each day and each nun was supposed to indulge. In the words of one of the protesting nuns (who were among the younger nuns in the order, by the way) the new prioress was turning monastic life into "one big party." In order to express their revulsion at these ungodly changes, the four sisters locked themselves away.

We can sympathize. There is much in our brave new world from which I would like to withdraw. I can sympathize with Simon Peter who wanted to build three booths and stay on the mountaintop of the Transfiguration in the presence of Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Unfortunately he was not given that option, and neither are we. We must live in this world of strident, discordant noise. There is no retreat.

The Mountain Top

John A. Redhead, Jr. tells of a father and son who have a really good relationship. Among their many good times together, one stood out above all the rest: It was a hike up a particular mountain where they seemed to reach the height of a beautiful friendship. After they returned home, there came a day when things did not seem to run as smoothly. The father rebuked the son, and the son spoke sharply in return. An hour later, the

air had cleared. "Dad," said the son, "whenever it starts to get like that again, let's one of us say 'The Mountain Top.'" So it was agreed. In a few weeks another misunderstanding occurred. The boy was sent to his room in tears. After a while, the father decided to go up and see the boy. He was still angry until he saw a piece of paper pinned to the door. The boy had penciled three words in large letters: "The Mountain Top." That symbol was powerful enough to restore the relationship of father and son. (Harry Emerson Fosdick, *Riverside Sermons* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958).) Come with me to the mountain. It is there that relationships can be made right. Come with me to the mountain. See who Jesus is. See what, by his grace, you and I can yet become.

The transfiguration experience of Jesus is about a message of hope and encouragement. In moments of doubt and during feelings of despair, the expectation of our transformation in Heaven helps us to reach out to God and listen to His consoling words: "This is my beloved son/daughter in whom I am well pleased."

The Objective and time of the Transfiguration

The primary purpose of Jesus' Transfiguration was to consult his Heavenly Father in order to ascertain His plan for Our Lord's suffering, death and Resurrection. The secondary aim was to make his chosen disciples aware of His Divine glory, so that they might discard their worldly ambitions about a conquering political Messiah. A third purpose was to strengthen their Faith and hope and to encourage them to persevere through the future ordeal. The Transfiguration took place in late summer, probably in AD 29, just prior to the Feast of Tabernacles.

Hence, the Orthodox tradition celebrates the Transfiguration at about the time of the year when it actually occurred in order to connect it with the Old Testament Feast of Tabernacles. Western tradition celebrates the Transfiguration twice, first at the beginning of Lent with the Gospel account and second on August 6 with a full feast day liturgy.

Parish Updates

If you are now solely using a cell phone, have changed your phone number or address, please call the parish office, so we can update your records. We would also like to update our parish data base with e-mail addresses. Email Kelly at: kcoun@stmatthias.net to have your email address included or to update an email address. Thank you!

If you are moving, please notify the Parish Office so we can keep our parishioner records current. Thank you!

From Our Pastoral Staff

Happy Second Sunday of Lent.

Lent has taken on a new meaning for me this year. Terry and I recently returned from an unexpected trip to Holy Land. Friends of ours rented an apartment in Jerusalem while they were visiting their grandson who is studying at a Yeshiva there, and they graciously invited us to join them for a week. It was life-changing!

Thanks to lots of great advice from our parishioners, we were able to include many meaningful sites in our itinerary, as well as visiting places that held great significance for our Jewish Friends.

We visited Yad Vashem, the profound Holocaust Memorial. We went to 2 services at the Great Synagogue- the singing of the cantor and the choir was breathtaking. We celebrated the Sabbath fully with our friends, no cell phones, no turning on lights, no driving or taking cabs, and a beautiful Sabbath dinner completely prepared before sundown.

We even went to a Lutheran church in the Old City of Jerusalem to hear an organ concert presented by a young Russian organist playing one of the finest pipe organs in Israel.

But most meaningful to us, we visited some of the holiest sites of our beautiful Catholic faith. We visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and prayed along with pilgrims from all over the world at the sites of the Crucifixion and the Tomb. And, along with our friends, we visited the River Jordan, The Basilica of Mary in Nazareth, The Church of the Multiplication, The Church of the Beatitudes and Capernaum, the last 3 right on the Sea of Galilee.

On the long drive we passed through the desert through which Jesus walked in last week's Gospel. We saw olive groves and shepherds and caves.

And we saw Mt. Tabor in the distance, where today's gospel story took place. We did not go to it- not enough time- but there it was in full glory.

To see what a climb it must have been for Jesus, Peter, James and John really surprised me. Jesus really wanted to get away from it all to give his friends such a heavenly vision. They must have had plenty of time to talk about what they saw on the way down!

I know this sounds so naive, but I came back to NJ with a new understanding that the gospels we hear every week are REAL. Jesus was a real person, who had real friends and walked and prayed on real mountains and valleys and at the shore of the Sea of Galilee. And his message was real- so real that he died to make it happen for all of us. He had a hard life and there were so many who conspired against him for the unfailing but simple truth he proclaimed- Love One Another!

Life changing...

Joan Best Seamon, Pastoral Associate for Liturgical Music, St. Matthias Church



Message of the Holy Father

Lenten Penance and the Synodal Journey

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke all recount the episode of the Transfiguration of Jesus. There we see the Lord's response to the failure of his disciples to understand him. Shortly before, there had been a real clash between the Master and Simon Peter, who, after professing his faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, rejected his prediction of the passion and the cross. Jesus had firmly rebuked him: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a scandal to me, because you do not think according to God, but according to men!" (Mt 16:23). Following this, "six days later, Jesus took with him Peter, James and John his brother and led them away to a high mountain" (Mt 17:1).

The Gospel of the Transfiguration is proclaimed every year on the Second Sunday of Lent. During this liturgical season, the Lord takes us with him to a place apart. While our ordinary commitments compel us to remain in our usual places and our often repetitive and sometimes boring routines, during Lent we are invited to ascend "a high mountain" in the company of Jesus and to live a particular experience of spiritual discipline – asceticism – as God's holy people.

(continued next week)



INTERESTED IN A NEW MINISTRY?

A few faith-filled men and women of our parish have initiated a new ministry, (St. Matthias Martha Ministry) with the desire for following Jesus' example to serve others by providing an opportunity to be part of the church community through active care of our worship space.

The mission of the St. Matthias Martha Ministry is to enhance the beauty of the worship space, to create an atmosphere whereby the assembly may heighten their awareness of the purpose and mystery of God through the senses and thus enhance appreciation of the various liturgical seasons in collaboration with the parish staff. The atmosphere of reverence and beauty reflect the glory of God. Thus the worshippers who come to our church, especially for the

weekend Masses, baptisms, weddings and funerals will be welcomed into a pleasing environment.

We are looking for anyone with good will to help and time to volunteer. Teams rotate so time is minimal. Those with creativity and/or experience and imaginative ideas to decorate are welcome.

If you feel called to this ministry, please come to a "kick-off" meeting on Tuesday, February 21 immediately following the 8 AM Mass. For more information, please call Claudette Gaspard 732-406-4118 (Environment) email: gaspard17@aol.com or Nancy Inzano (Altar Linens). 732-261-2530. E Mail: nancy.inzano@gmail.com

Learn

BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT ST. MATTHIAS – FEBRUARY 2023

Continued from last week...

For more information on the Congress itself, you can view several articles on the Congress website, National Black Catholic Congress in Washington area in July 2023 continues historic tradition - Catholic Standard - Multimedia Catholic News (cathstan.org)

II) This month we also celebrate our nation's first Black Catholic Cardinal, His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory. In 2004, Pope Saint John Paul II appointed Bishop Gregory as the sixth Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Atlanta and then in 2019, Pope Francis appointed him as the seventh Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Washington. This marked the first time an African American would hold this title. Pope Francis then named Archbishop Gregory as the first African American Cardinal for the Catholic Church on October 25, 2020. More information on Cardinal Gregory can be found in many places, among them the Felician University website, Celebrating Black History – His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory - Felician University of New Jersey.

III) Finally, there are literally hundreds of Black saints and a small display of just a fraction of them can be seen in the school cafeteria until the end of the month. There have also been 3 African Popes. But did you know that there are five African American Catholics who are being proposed for sainthood? They are Pierre Toussaint (New York), Henriette DeLille (New Orleans), Mary Elizabeth Lange (Baltimore), Augustin Tolton (Chicago), and Julia Greeley (Denver). For more information, see Black Catholics on the Canonization Journey, Noteworthy Black Catholics - National Black Catholic Congress Website (nbccongress.org)

Look for the SMDP Society again in November 2023 as we celebrate the feast of St. Martin de Porres Society and National Black Catholic History Month.

The St. Martin de Porres Society



Pinewood Derby by Cub Scouts of Pack 195

This past Saturday Feb 25th, the Cub Scouts of Pack 195 (sponsored by St. Matthias Parish) held their annual Pinewood Derby at the SMS cafeteria. It was a great event, full of fun and cheer, of course preceded by a lot of hard work. It is just one of many events that boys and girls of Pack 195 participate in throughout the year. If you have a boy or a girl in K - 5th grade who may be interested in learning about cub scouts, please reach out to us via info@scoutpack195nj.com, or visit our web page www.scoutpack195nj.com.



Give (and Receive!)

Stewardship Totals for Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023				Last Year's Total
	In-Pew/Mail	Parish Giving	Weekly Total	Weekly Total
Week 32 - Feb. 5, 2023	\$9,108.44	\$18,094.75	\$27,203.19	\$31,073.75
Week 33 - Feb. 12, 2023	\$12,048.00	\$22,434.25	\$34,482.25	\$27,060.25
Week 34 - Feb. 19, 2023	\$8,604.00	\$12,849.11	\$21,453.11	\$26,116.35
Week 35 - Feb. 26, 2023	\$12,554.00	\$8,749.25	\$21,303.25	\$18,800.14
			Month-to-date Total	Feb Total Last Yr
			\$104,441.80	\$103,050.49
Ash Wednesday (In-			Current Year-to-date	Year-to-date as of Feb
			\$940,542.52	\$896,976.57



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

The impact and success of the *Catholic Center at Rutgers* is relational outreach to students, a distinct approach for college campus ministry. The staff includes religious from the Sisters of Jesus Our Hope and the Brotherhood of Hope, as well as, the Associate Director of Vocations for the Diocese of Metuchen and several interns. They are out on campus meeting and interacting with students where they live their lives and also reach them using the tools of technology. Thanks to your gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal, the Catholic Center offers a safe haven where students are able to grow in their knowledge and practice of the faith, experience a meaningful sense of service to the community, and come to a deeper understanding of their call to discipleship. Thank you for your support.

Stewardship Reflection Mar 5, 2023 2nd Sunday of Lent

"Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you." Genesis 12:1

God calls all of us to leave behind our old ways and to follow Him, placing our complete trust in Him. Some of the old ways that we struggle to leave behind might be materialism, selfishness and greed. Yet, God promises to show us a new land and a better way to live. Remember what St. Teresa of Calcutta said, "God does not call us to be successful, God calls us to be faithful."

Reflexiónese 5 de marzo de 2023 2º domingo de Cuaresma

"Deja tu tierra, tus parientes y la casa de tu padre, y vete a la tierra que te mostraré" GÉNESIS 12: 1

Dios nos llama a todos a dejar atrás nuestras viejas costumbres y a seguirlo, colocando en Él toda nuestra confianza. Alguna de las viejas maneras que nos esforzamos por dejar atrás pueden ser el materialismo, el egoísmo y la codicia. Sin embargo, Dios nos promete mostrarnos una nueva tierra y una mejor forma de vivir. Recuerde lo que dijo Santa Teresa de Calcuta, "Dios no nos llama a ser exitosos, Dios nos llama a ser fieles".

Serve

LAZARUS MINISTRY--Welcoming new members

The Lazarus Ministry began in 1996. Its existence grew out of a need for the Catholic Community of St. Matthias to offer support to our parishioners at the time of loss of a family member.

Our service includes attendance at the Funeral masses and Viewing to offer support by our presence.

If you are interested in this Ministry, please contact Sister Marie Therese: msherwood@stmatthias.net



Phone Ministry to Our Home Bound Parishioners

If any of our homebound parishioners and their caregivers would like to receive a caring, friendly phone call periodically from one of our parishioners, please contact Sister Marie Therese at:

msherwood@stmatthias.net

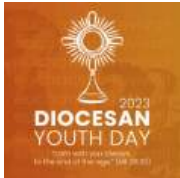


Part-Time General Maintenance Person

St. Matthias is looking for a **part-time general maintenance person**. This employee will be responsible for maintaining the safety and cleanliness of the church/school.

Please contact **Mary Pat Burke-Grospin** at: mpburke-grospin@stmatthias.net or (732) 828-1400 ext.121.

Connect with Our Local Community



**Diocesan Youth Day
2023
March 12th from
11:30am - 5pm**

St. Thomas Aquinas High School

Theme: Eucharistic Revival!

- The day will begin with check-in at 11:30 AM and begin promptly at 12 noon and run until 5:00 PM.
- All High School aged teens are welcome!
- Sunday Mass with Bishop Checchio.
- Featuring Keynote speaker, Fr. Malachy Joseph Napier, CFR a selected Eucharistic Preacher from the USCCB's National Eucharistic Revival.

For more information to register:
<https://www.diometuchen.org/yyam>



**Community Child
Care Solutions
Diocese of
Metuchen**

In New Jersey, Family Child Care is a voluntary registration of a home in which Child Care Services are provided for up to 5 children. You are a registered provider, not a babysitting service.

If you would like to become a registered provider in Somerset County, please call to register to attend an orientation on Monday, March 13, 2023 at 10:00AM & 1:00PM.

Call 908-927-0869, ext. 2478 or 732-324-4357, ext. 2855
www.communitychildcaresolutions.org.

**St. Thomas Aquinas High School
Summer Program**

Looking for unique academics and athletics enrichment opportunities for your child this summer?

The Summer Aquinas Academy offers camp opportunities throughout the summer led by STA teachers and coaches, providing a fun, structured, engaging environment for students to learn new skills and make new friends.

Registrations due by May 30. Visit stahs.net/summer for prices, dates, age groups, and other information.

United Way of Northern New Jersey

The United Way of Northern NJ is again offering FREE & SECURE online tax prep for low- to moderate income households.

Got question42ns? Email UnitedWayTaxPrep@UnitedWayNNJ.org. Or call 973-993-1160 x 5.



Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council:

Co-Chairs:

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

Co-Secretaries:

- Frank Rees
- 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
- 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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event dates

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Tuesday, 10/11

Tuesday, 10/18

Tuesday, 10/25

November 2022

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go.rutgers.edu/rudining

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