



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

For all Parish emails, add @stmatthias.net

Pastor: Rev Abraham Orapankal, [abraham](mailto:abraham@stmatthias.net)
Parochial Vicar: Rev. Msgr. Joseph Curry, [jcurry](mailto:jcurry@stmatthias.net)
Priest-in-Residence: Msgr. Seamus Brennan

Pastoral Staff

Mary Pat Burke-Grospin, Business Administrator, [mpburke-grospin](mailto:mpburke-grospin@stmatthias.net)
Deacon Russell Demkovitz, [rdemkovitz](mailto:rdemkovitz@stmatthias.net)
Ana V Kelly, Marketing & Development, [akelly](mailto:akelly@stmatthias.net)
Dolores R. Nann, Faith Formation, [dnann](mailto:dnann@stmatthias.net)
Deacon John Radvanski, [deaconjohn](mailto:deaconjohn@stmatthias.net)
Joan Best Seamon, Music Ministry [jseamon](mailto:jseamon@stmatthias.net)
Sr Marie Therese Sherwood, OSF, Social Concerns, [msherwood](mailto:msherwood@stmatthias.net)
Phyllis Stone, Liturgy/RCIA and Administrative Assistant to the Pastor, [pstone](mailto:pstone@stmatthias.net)

St. Matthias School (add @stmatthiasnj.org)

Elena Malinconico, Principal, [emalinconico](mailto:emalinconico@stmatthiasnj.org)
Joseph Gidaro, Vice Principal, [jgidaro](mailto:jgidaro@stmatthiasnj.org)

Parish Office Staff

Kelly Counts, Receptionist
Nathalie Godet, Formation/Parish Support Sec.
Leslie Guillen, Bulletin Editor
Amy Hanna, Parish Support Secretary
Vinnie Natale, Bookkeeper
Trish Stumper, Parish Support Secretary
Mike Lanyi, Sacristan

Maintenance Staff

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

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. MATTHIAS
SUNDAY, MAY 16, 2021 –
Ascension of the Lord

Highlights—This Week

Outdoor Mass —THIS Saturday, May 15, 5 pm, in celebration of the Feast of St. Matthias

Collection for the Development of the People—This Saturday & Sunday.

Discover St. Matthias—on Tues., May 18th, via Zoom. See page 9 for details.

SMYLE Service Project—See page 10.

Pentecost is next Sunday, May 23rd.



Return to Normalcy — Changes in the Mass & Parish Office

With significant relaxation of the restrictions statewide set to begin on May 19, we too shall return to normalcy cautiously. We have resumed the use of kneelers and the practice of receiving Holy Communion within the Communion Rite. While continuing the use of masks and keeping social distancing, other practices can be resumed slowly.

It is also safe to open up the Parish Office meeting rooms. Different groups can begin to book these rooms as long as the group members are comfortable to meet in person and the cleaning and other protocols are observed. As the pandemic becomes less and less of a threat, we'll continue to introduce normalcy back into the liturgy and life of the parish. Good things are ahead as we welcome everyone back into parish life.
— Fr. Abraham Orapankal

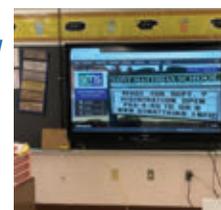
The First Group of Promethean Display Boards Has Arrived!



This past Monday, the first 9 Promethean boards arrived at the school and were installed in classrooms. Thank you to the seven individuals/families who sponsored a board! And thank you to all of our donors to the *GivingTuesday* campaign, the *Day of Giving* campaign and the *Read-a-thon*. The remaining boards on order will be arriving in the coming months.

We are still in need of funds for additional boards. If you are willing to donate to help us reach our goal of one board in every classroom, please go to: charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/sms-somerset

Questions? Contact Ana Kelly, akelly@stmatthias.net
Don't forget to check to see if your employer offers matching funds.



Please start you Amazon shopping at: www.stmatthias.net/Amazon

This Week at St. Matthias

- **All Masses** will be celebrated **in-person** (overflow in the cafeteria).
- **Masses** will also be **livestreamed on our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ](https://www.youtube.com/c/StMatthiasSomersetNJ)**

The Church is open for **individual prayer** Sun-Fri from 7:30 am to 7pm & Sat from 9 am to 7pm, unless another event is taking place (Mass, Funeral, Wedding, etc.)

Sunday, May 16, 2021 **Ascension of the Lord** Collection for the Development of the People Celebrating the Feast of St Matthias

8:00AM	Mass– Ascension	Church
10:00AM	Mass– Ascension	Church
12:00PM	Mass – Ascension	Church
2:00PM	First Communion Retreat	Cafeteria
6:30PM	SMYLE Youth Session	Zoom

Monday, May 17, 2021 **Tax Day**

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
8:30AM	Miraculous Medal Novena	Church
6:15PM	HSA Exec. Bd. Mtg.	Zoom

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
9:00AM	SMS—Students Exposition of the Sacrament	Blessed Church
7:30PM	Hand Bell rehearsal	Church

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
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Thursday, May 20, 2021

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
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Friday, May 21, 2021

8:00AM	Daily Mass	Church
11:00AM	Memorial Mass-Pat Toland	Church

Saturday, May 22, 2021 **Pentecost**

12:00PM	Fist Communion	Church
3:30PM	Sacrament of Reconciliation	Church

Sunday, May 23, 2021 **Pentecost**

8:00AM	Mass	Church
10:00AM	Mass	Church
10:30AM	RCIA	Zoom
12:00PM	Mass & Adult Confirmations	Church
2:00PM	First Communion	Church



Bulletin Article Requests:

If you would like to send information to be included in our bulletin, please email it to bulletin@stmatthias.net by **12 Noon, Thursday, 9 days before the intended issue** (earlier for holiday weekends). Approved content is published on a space-available basis.

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

This year, the Feast of Ascension (Thursday May 13) is postponed to Sunday May 16 which is today. After the resurrection, Jesus taught his disciples about God's kingdom for forty days (Acts 1:3) "He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight" (Acts 1:9). Two angels then tell the disciples that Jesus was "taken into heaven" (Acts 1:11). But the ascended Jesus is still with us through his indwelling Holy Spirit as he has promised, "I am with you always; yes, to the end of time." What is celebrated is Jesus' exaltation and the end of his earthly existence as a prelude to the gift of the Spirit. Hence this feast is a celebration of Jesus' final glorification after his suffering, death and Resurrection – a glory in which we also hope to share.



And yet, humanly speaking, the concept of bodily Ascension is a mystery that we cannot fully understand. Pope Francis doesn't shy away from explaining mysteries of our faith. In his catechesis on Ascension, he says: "Jesus' Ascension into Heaven thus allows us to know this reality that is so consoling on our journey: in Christ, true God and true man, our humanity has been brought to God. He has opened the way. He is like the leader of a mountain climbing party that is roped together. He has reached the summit and pulls us to himself, leading us to God. If we entrust our lives to him, if we let ourselves be guided by him, we are certain of being in safe hands."

It is this assurance that allowed multitudes of Christians to follow Jesus, even to the point of martyrdom. St. Matthias, our parish patron, is one such. The Apostles felt that they had to replace Judas who betrayed Jesus. They nominated two men: Joseph Barsabbas and Matthias. They prayed and drew lots. The choice fell upon Matthias, who was added to the Eleven. (Acts 1:15-26). What happened after that? No exact historical details are available. According to Greek tradition, Matthias preached and converted the people of Cappadocia in central Turkey, and was martyred in the region about the Caspian Sea around the year 80 AD.

Every year, we used to have our great Carnival around the feast of St. Matthias. All of us are sad to miss that week of fun, games, food and celebration. This year, we have been praying a Novena to St. Matthias for the past nine days leading up to his feast. Today as we celebrate our parish patronal feast, what is of importance is to remember that Matthias was chosen to be an apostle because he was with Jesus and was a witness to his resurrection. That means, following his example, we need to make greater efforts to know Jesus personally by our familiarity with God's Word and by talking to Jesus daily in prayer or meditation. Thus we become witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus who is God-with-us always.

Happy Feast of St. Matthias!

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Abraham Orapankal

Readings for the Week

Monday: Acts 19:1-8; Ps 68:2-3ab, 4-5acd, 6-7ab; Jn 16:29-33

Tuesday: Acts 20:17-27; Ps 68:10-11, 20-21; Jn 17:1-11a

Wednesday: Acts 20:28-38; Ps 68:29-30, 33-35a, 35bc-36ab; Jn 17:11b-19

Thursday: Acts 22:30; 23:6-11; Ps 16:1-2a, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11; Jn 17:20-26

Friday: Acts 25:13b-21; Ps 103:1-2, 11-12, 19-20ab; Jn 21:15-19

Saturday: Acts 28:16-20, 30-31; Ps 11:4, 5, 7; Jn 21:20-25

Sunday: Vigil: Gn 11:1-9 or Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20b or Ez 37:1-14 or Jl 3:1-5; Ps 104:1-2, 24, 35, 27-28, 29, 30; Rom 8:22-27; Jn 7:37-39
Day: Acts 2:1-11; Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34; 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13 or Gal 5:16-25; Jn 20:19-23 or Jn 15:26-27; 16:12-15

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, May 15	5:00PM	Intention of Parishioners
Sunday, May 16	8:00AM	Esther DeGuzman Liban, by The Faith Sharing Group
	10:00AM	Juana Yumang, by Edna Yumang
	12:00PM	Dominick Clementi, Jr. by Angela & David Burtenshaw
	5:30PM*	Linda Nye Tooles, by Beverly Gilliam
Monday, May 17	8:00AM	Ann Marie Pressler, by Louis & Mary Nepote
Tuesday, May 18	8:00AM	Jon Clisham, by Mary Sheil
Wednesday, May 19	8:00AM	Bert Maglio, by Mom, Dad, Pete & Sue
Thursday, May 20	8:00AM	Rest in Peace Mary Eads, by The Family
Friday, May 21	8:00AM	James Kane, by The Collins Family
Saturday, May 22	5:00PM	Aurelia Italia, by The Nastasi & Nitti Families
Sunday, May 23	8:00AM	Ramona Bombita, by Jennifer Paredes
	10:00AM	Deceased members of the Sunga/Munar Families, by Flora Sunga
	12:00PM	Connor Koenig, by The Telyczka Family
	5:30PM*	Intention of Parishioners

*Mass intentions for the 5:30PM Mass will combined with the that at the 12PM Mass.

Pray for Those Getting Married...

Yannekie Joseph & Guiseppe Agugliaro May 27, 2021

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.

Beth & Jay Adams	Mary Dolan	Susan, Tosh, & Bongking	Datius Rutashoby
Elbren, Sr. & Natalia Agdeppa	Marty Dolphin	Manansala	Lettice Kinunda Rutashoby
Kristy Alexander	William Dolphin	Beatrice May	Rudy Schaar
Robert Bachman	Dorothy Domenici	Margaret Menendez	Maria Schwenzer
Carolyn Banghart	Josephine Geenty	Gail Miranda	Sr. Mary Amata Shina, OSF
Maria Barreiro	Claudia Gemgnani	Linda Misuraca	Sr. Rosaria Shina, OSF
Barbara Branham	Emma Gergely	Dave Moynihan	Encarnacion (Gina) So
Marie Brody	Rose Gessner	Baby Ezran Natural	Alessandro Spagnolo
Maripearl Brooks	Mary Gidaro	Patricia Nese	Dennis Stuewe
Baby Isla-Rose Callahan	Jeff Hentz	Danny Ochangco	Jeff Tami
Sadie Callender	Emma Himey	Julianne Opydike	Madeline Tarantino
Tara Capatosto	Sloopy Hoffman	Maria Pennington	Fred & Carolyn Vanmiddlesworth
Ellen & Frank Catalina	Michael Kirugi	Jim Pettit	Carmencita Ventura
Barbara Coan	Taylor LaCort	Christina Pietrowiak	Eulalia Villanueva
Wes Coddington	Al & Rose Larangeira	Oscar Poisler	Al Wojciechowski
Joseph DeFrancesco	William Lecorchick	Anthony & Andrew Referente	Leon Wojna
Adoracion & Cenon DeGuzman	Pat Leposa	Kathleen & Mannix Referente	Mark T. Worthington
Mary Ellen Delaney	The Litrakis Family	Chris Retz	Kenneth Yacavino
Alaina Derecola	Kenneth & Kelly Magat	Nina Ripley	Everyone who is ill with Covid-19
Surya & Juliany Dharma	Al Maglio	Ann Ritchick	...and for all who are homebound,
Nancy Diaz	Sue Maglio-Alese	Angela Romanek	elderly, in nursing care, or living with
Jim Dolan	Shirley Mahoney	Elizondo Ruiz	chronic illness

Pray for those who have died...

Bernie Gonzales—"His mercy endures forever." Chronicles

From the Pastoral Staff

At the Saturday Mass this weekend, we will celebrate the Feast of St. Matthias. There is much that we don't know about Matthias. He is only mentioned once in the New Testament. From the *Acts of the Apostles*, we know that he had been with Jesus from the time that Jesus was baptized until his Ascension. Yet, Matthias did not become an apostle while Jesus was on earth. He became an apostle afterwards, to replace Judas.

We officially celebrate Matthias' feast day on May 14, but that was not always the case. Prior to the 1969 revision of the General Roman Calendar, his feast day was celebrated on February 24 (February 25 in leap years). The change was made so that we could celebrate his feast outside of Lent.

According to Loyola Press' *Saints and Feast Days*, "Tradition links Matthias with the country of Ethiopia, where he is believed to have met his martyrdom." Encyclopedia Britannica notes that "Greek tradition states that [Matthias] Christianized Cappadocia, a

mountainous district now in central Turkey, later journeying to the region about the Caspian Sea, where he was martyred... St. Helena, mother of the Roman emperor Constantine the Great, reputedly transported Matthias' relics from Jerusalem to Rome." *The Catholic Encyclopedia* notes that "According to Nicephorus, Matthias first preached the Gospel in Judaea, then in Aethiopia (by the region Chochis, now in modern-day Georgia) and was there stoned to death." Another document mentions that "a marker placed in the ruins of the Roman fortress Gonio (Apsaros) in the modern Georgian region of Adjara claims that Matthias is buried at that site." Another source mentions that "Matthias died at Sebastopolis, and was buried there, near the Temple of the Sun." Yet another tradition maintains "that Matthias was stoned at Jerusalem by the local populace," and another one states that "Matthias died of old age in Jerusalem."

It is difficult to ascertain which facts are true and which ones are not. But maybe these aren't the important

things to remember about Matthias. Clement of Alexandria perhaps had it right when he spoke of the apostles not being chosen "for some distinguished peculiarity of nature" that they possessed. Instead, the apostles were chosen because "they were *capable of becoming* apostles on being chosen by Him." In other words, the apostles didn't have to be perfect witnesses nor have their acts together ahead of time -- something we all know is true from reading the Gospel stories. Instead, the individuals chosen were capable of becoming apostles.

This can be a source of comfort for us, as well as an invitation, and even a challenge. **Who are we capable of becoming, if we are open to God's invitation?** Let us pray to Matthias and ask him to help us on this journey that he has also travelled.

Ana V. Kelly
Pastoral Associate



Reflect



Smile With Your Family



The Ascension mission to preach the Gospel: After attending a convention led by Billy Graham, a woman wrote to him. "Dear Sir, I feel that God is calling me to preach the gospel. But the trouble is that I have twelve children. What shall I do?" The televangelist replied: "Dear Madam, I am delighted to hear that God has called you to preach the Gospel. I am even more delighted to hear that He has already provided you with a congregation in your own home."

If it doesn't rain: A young man wrote this to his girlfriend. "Sweetheart, if this world was as hot as the Sahara desert, I would crawl on my knees through the burning sand to come to you. If the world would be like the Atlantic Ocean, I would swim through shark-infested waters to come to you. I would fight the fiercest dragon to be by your side. I will see you on Thursday if it does not rain."

Driving compliment: "You know, somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. They left a little note on the windscreen, it said 'Parking Fine.' So that was nice."

How lazy? "I'm so lazy I've got a smoke alarm with a snooze button."



Great Commissions and the Ascension!

Actually, there have been many persons given exciting commissions in their lifetimes. There was Michelangelo's commission to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, Sir Christopher Wren's commission to re-build St. Paul's Cathedral in London following the Great Fire

(September 2-6, 1666), Walter Reed's assignment to stop yellow fever at the "Big Ditch" in Panama, Chamberlain's orders to stop the Confederates at Little Roundtop in Gettysburg and the mission of the U.S. Navy Seals to get the terrorist mastermind, Bin Laden, dead or alive.

But I tell you, in my life and yours, there is an even greater commission. It is found here in Matthew 28:18-20 where Jesus Christ turns to his disciples and says, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."



Three-Step Baptism

In one of the great cathedrals of Europe there is a baptistery that tells the story. The water flows through it reminding us that Jesus says he is the living water. To be baptized, a person walks down three

steps, each one marked by a word: the world, the flesh, and the devil. Descending the steps the convert is plunged beneath the water to die to sin and then raised from the depths to newness of life in Christ. To leave the baptistery now he must climb three steps, each one marked by a word: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. So it is that a new creature is born, a new breed of man, a citizen of a new kingdom, a breed apart. Dead to sin, he is alive to God and sent forth to grow and love and give light to a lost and dying world. He doesn't do it alone. He does it in the Church, in little communities. In these, people demonstrate, in their way of being together, God's eternal kingdom come upon them. It took Michelangelo over ten years to paint the Sistine Chapel. Our missionary commission lasts until the job gets done, until life is over, "until the close of the age."

Solar Power!

One of the national coordinators of Sun Day held early in May every year is Denis Hayes. He worked as a researcher at a Washington D.C. 'think-tank' and has written a book on solar energy entitled, *Rays of Hope: The Transition to a Post-Petroleum World*. Hayes claims that we are at the crossroads of making a critical choice for mankind – the choice between going solar or going nuclear for a power source. Hayes opts for the sun because it is "the world's only inexhaustible, predictable, egalitarian, non-polluting, safe, terrorist-resistant and free energy source." We've already learned to use the power of the sun to grow food, make wine and operate greenhouses. All we need to do is develop better technology to harness solar energy to heat houses, drive our cars and run our industry. People like Hayes are looking at the sky with its sun as the main source of our future energy supply.



Today we turn our attention to the sky for another reason – to commemorate our Lord's Ascension into Heaven. Each Sunday we profess through the Creed, "He ascended into Heaven." Christ's Ascension was the culmination of God's Divine plan for Christ Jesus, and he returned to his Father with "Mission Accomplished." The Ascension is the grand finale of all his words and works done for us and for our salvation. It was a culmination, but not the conclusion. As he is now with God in glory, he is now with us in Spirit: "Lo, I am with you always." The feast of the Ascension celebrates one aspect of the Resurrection, namely Jesus' exaltation. The focus of this feast is the heavenly reign of Christ, not the historical details, the when and where of the Ascension itself. The Lord would be "seated at God's right hand," meaning He alone would be in control of the continuing plan of salvation through the Spirit, unrestricted by time, space or culture. Thus the Paschal Mystery of Jesus' passion, death, Resurrection, Ascension and the sending of the Holy Spirit forms one unbroken reality which is to be understood by Faith. Ascension means that Jesus is with his Father in glory now, and will return to us in glory at the Last Judgment.



“Torpedo Evangelism!”

Rebecca Pippert, the author of *Out of the Salt Shaker: Into the World*, tells of a time she was sitting in her car at a traffic light with her window rolled down. As the light turned green a car drove by and its occupant threw something into her car hitting her on the cheek. It didn't hurt but she was so startled that she pulled over immediately. When she unrolled the paper, she discovered it was a gospel tract. She says she was the apparent victim of what she refers to as "torpedo evangelism."

I'm sure the torpedoer meant well. At least I hope so, but he or she did the wrong thing for the right reason in the wrong way. We can engage people in conversation about their faith and their relationship with God in a non-judgmental manner. We can encourage. We can invite. We can offer counsel. But we leave the hard work, the heart work, up to Jesus and the Holy Spirit. You see, we are not on some sort of spiritual mugging mission. But we need to believe that the ascended Lord is ready to use his power in our lives, our families, and our work places. He is ready to use his power when we are overcome with fear, worry, grief, and pain. Just before Jesus ascended to heaven he said, "I will be with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20). That means that Jesus not only has the power to be present in our lives as we come to terms with what is happening, but as Lord of lords and King of kings he has the power to do something about it.

The Power Within!

A priest, Walter Ciszek by name, was in Russia for 23 years, five of which were spent in the dreaded Lubyanka prison in Moscow and ten of which were spent in the harsh Siberian slave labor camp. He was finally released from Russia in 1963, in exchange for two Soviet spies held in USA. He died in 1984 at the age of 84. After release he wrote a book *He Ledeth Me*. In this book he tries to answer the question: "How did you manage to survive in Russia?" He says: "I was able to endure the inhuman conditions in which I found myself because I experienced somehow the presence of God. I never lost my faith that God was with me, even in the worst of circumstances."

What was true of Fr. Walter Ciszek is true of each of us. Jesus is with us; God is with us in the power of his Holy Spirit. We need to use the power of the ascended Lord in our lives: The ascended Lord is ready to use his power in our lives, our families, and our work places. He is ready to use his power when we are overcome with fear, worry, grief, and pain. Just before Jesus ascended to heaven he said, "I will be with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20). That means that Jesus not only has the power to be present in our lives as we come to terms with what is happening, but as Lord of lords and King of kings he has the power to do something about it. When we learn that we have a serious health problem; when we hear the news that someone close to us has died; when we worry about money, our children, our job or lack of it; when we are upset, hurt, guilty, angry or depressed; when we have to make difficult decisions about the future; we are reminded that the ascended Jesus is close by and ready to use his power.

The Disciples Completed Puccini's Opera!

The Italian composer Giacomo Puccini wrote *La Boheme*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Tosca*. It was during his battle with terminal cancer in 1922 that he began to write *Turandot*, which many now consider his best work. He worked on the score day and night, despite his friends' advice to rest, and to save his energy. When his sickness worsened, Puccini said to his disciples, "If I don't finish *Turandot*, I want you to finish it." He died in 1924, leaving the work unfinished. His disciples gathered all that was written of *Turandot*, studied it in great detail, and then proceeded to write the remainder of the opera. The world premier was performed in La Scala Opera House in Milan in 1926, and Toscanini, Puccini's favorite student, conducted it. The opera went beautifully, until Toscanini came to the end of the part written by Puccini. He stopped the music, put down the baton, turned to the audience, and announced, "Thus far the master wrote, but he died." There was a long pause; no one moved. Then Toscanini picked up the baton, turned to the audience and, with tears in his eyes, announced, "But his disciples finished his work." The opera closed to thunderous applause and found a permanent place in the annals of great works.

Jesus instructs us in his Ascension message to finish his work of saving mankind by proclaiming His Good News by words and deeds. That means we have a teaching mission: Jesus taught us lessons of Faith, Hope, forgiveness, mercy, redemption and Love. We cannot put these lessons on a shelf and ignore them. They stand before us in the Person of Jesus. Although no longer visibly present in the world, He is present in his words. We must make his words real in our lives and in the lives of others. Christianity was meant to be a Faith in which Jesus' followers would help and care for others, just as Jesus had done. But the spreading of the Good News to all nations is not a goal that can be attained by human might and craft. This is why Jesus promises to empower his messengers with His abiding presence and that of the Holy Spirit. The challenge of sharing the Good News with all mankind should, therefore, begin with our admission that we have often been arrogant and overbearing. We must learn to be humble and let the Holy Spirit lead the way.



Broken but Renewed!

In 1981 Peter Cropper, the British violinist, was invited to Finland to play a special concert. As a personal favor to Peter, the Royal Academy of Music lent him their priceless 285-year-old Stradivarius for use in the concert. This rare instrument takes its name from the Italian violin maker, Antonio Stradivari. It is made of 80 pieces of special wood and covered with 30 coats of special varnish. Its beautiful sound has never been duplicated. When Peter Cropper got to Finland, an incredible nightmare took place. Going on stage, Peter tripped and fell. The violin broke into several pieces. Peter flew back to London in a state of shock. A master craftsman named Charles Beare agreed to try to repair the violin. He worked endless hours on it. Finally he got it back together again. Then came the dreaded moment of truth. What would the violin sound like? Beare handed the violin

to Peter Cropper. Peter's heart was pounding inside him as he picked up the bow and began to play. Those present could hardly believe their ears. Not only was the violin's sound excellent, but it actually seemed better than before. In the months ahead Cropper took the violin on the worldwide tour. Night after night the violin, everyone thought was ruined forever, drew standing ovations from concert audiences.

The violin story is a beautiful illustration of what happens when God comes into our broken lives and makes us whole again. We need His touch, His Spirit! The ascended Jesus is our source of strength and encouragement: Perhaps some of the nagging doubts which inevitably accompany the journey of faith could be lessened by our meditating on the Ascension and its implications. When we are too far from faith to pray on our

own, let us remember that we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, praying for us. When the trials of life feel too heavy to bear, we must remember that Christ will come again in glory, the same glory in which he arose from the tomb, the same glory in which he ascended, and the same glory in which he currently abides. Though our limited perception might find him absent, he is fully present, participating in every moment of our lives. By His Ascension, Christ has not deserted us but has made it possible for the Holy Spirit to enter all times and places. In this way it is possible for each of us to be transformed by the power of the Spirit into agents or instruments of Christ. We become enlivened with the Holy Spirit. Our actions become animated in a new way by the Spirit of the God we love and serve. We have become Christs in the world.

Shy, but Witnessing to Christ

Ruddell Norris was a conscientious young man. But he was also a shy young man. He found it hard just to talk to people, much less to discuss religion with them. Then one day he got an idea. Ruddell did a lot of reading, and he was aware of the many pamphlets about the Catholic faith. So he decided to set aside a part of his weekly allowance to buy pamphlets. Ruddell placed his pamphlets in places where he thought people would pick them up and read them. For example, he placed them in waiting rooms and in reception areas. One day a young woman who was a friend of his family told his par-

ents how she became a convert and how her husband returned to the Church. "It all started with a pamphlet," she said. "I found it in the hospital waiting room."

You can imagine the boy's excitement when he learned of the impact just one of his pamphlets had. He just tried to obey the missionary command of Christ. We need to be proclaimers and evangelizers: In today's Gospel, Jesus gives his mission to all the believers: "Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature." This mission is not given to a select few but to all be-

lievers. To be a Christian is to be a proclaimer and an evangelizer. There is a difference between preaching and proclaiming. "We preach with words but we proclaim with our lives." As we celebrate the Lord's return to His Father in heaven – His Ascension – we are being commissioned to go forth and proclaim the Gospel of life and love, of hope and peace, by the witness of our lives. On this day of hope, encouragement and commissioning, let us renew our commitment to be true disciples everywhere we go, beginning with our family and our parish, "living in a manner worthy of the call [we] have received."

Pray

Novena for the Saint Joseph

We will be praying a novena to St. Joseph on the **first Wednesday of the month** until the end of this year. **It is at 8:30AM**, after the 8:00 AM Mass. Please join us in praying the novena prayer.



Letter from Father Abraham



May 5, 2021

St. Matthias Parish School Safely Moves Forward to an Exciting Future!

Fr. McKenna, our founding pastor, and the pioneer families that founded St. Matthias School could hardly have imagined the world of 2021 and the many challenges that the church and families would face. What they did imagine and create was a place where "Jesus Language" was spoken and where committed men and women strive to provide a place that is safe and fertile for young people to learn and grow guided by Christian Principles. For over 56 years, St. Matthias School has strived to rise to the challenges that each generation has presented. We continue to build as we move forward to maintain this legacy with both **Foundational** and **Innovative** initiatives.

FOUNDATIONAL

- This past September, St. Matthias School lived this legacy by opening its doors full time to in-person-learning, with the option for students to remain virtual. It offered a safe, welcoming environment, at a time in our history when it was most needed. It continues to offer opportunities to the students to grow in excellence.
- The Administration continues to make sure that the School buildings and grounds are safe and secure, including recent additions such as investing in a new phone system and improving communication throughout the buildings and grounds with new radios.
- The staff is involved with a professional development plan to align curriculum standards and methods of instruction with best practices. They are actively involved in professional studies and workshops through BER and LincSpring to further develop their skills.
- Daily instruction in areas of the curriculum includes grade level standards instruction for all students with a balance of small group instruction to ensure growth for all students.

INNOVATIVE

- The use of Google Educational Suite and Chromebooks ensures a seamless learning process whether in-person or virtual.
- Upgraded Webcams in all classes ensure a high quality of connectedness between teachers and students.
- Upgrading of the present White Board system, with Promethean ActivePanel Titanium boards in the classrooms, continues to develop and enhance interactive learning.
- The development of the workshop model of instruction is improving the areas of literacy and math.
- Research and development is fostering a Makerspace mindset.

Through our faith and the commitment of so many women and men throughout our history, we are confident we will be able to address whatever challenge is presented to us!

Having said this, we look to our next challenge of finding a new Principal. We have formed a Search Committee tasked with finding the right person to lead us into this bright future! The Search Committee members, with representation from the parents, staff, SAC, HSA, and the parish, are Msgr. Joe Curry, Jackie Schneider, Joe Gidaro, Laura Albanese, Mary Lynch and Nick Grippo, with Elena Malinconico acting as an advisor to the committee. The Search Committee will keep you informed of their progress as they continue to accept and interview candidates, with the goal of recommending a candidate to me and to the Diocesan School Office for our approval.

As we move forward to this time of transition, we will have continued dialogue to clearly articulate the vision for St. Matthias School moving into a fruitful future. These conversations will include the school administration and staff, students, parents, SAC and the parish community. We will continue to work together to embrace an action plan for the future of the school to include, but not be limited to, a Strategic Plan, a Marketing and Development Plan and a Technology Plan. Please keep this process and all involved in your prayers as we work to ensure and enhance the great tradition and legacy that have been entrusted to us.

Thank you for your continued support.
St. Matthias, pray for us!

Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Pastor

Give

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 44 - May 2, 2021	\$9,499.00	\$9,656.25	\$19,155.25	\$30,721.36
Week 45 - May 9, 2021	\$8,523.00	\$27,064.75	\$35,587.75	\$27,166.36
				\$27,014.36
				\$26,457.36
				\$26,890.79
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	May Total Last Yr
			\$54,743.00	\$138,250.23
			Current Year-to-date To-	Year-to-date as of May 31, 2020
			\$1,148,098.18	\$1,298,087.89

Stewardship Reflection May 16, 2021 Ascension of the Lord

“Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.” – 1 JOHN 4:15

How strong is your faith? When you have an opportunity to either defend or clarify a question about our Catholic faith, do you do it? Or, do you remain silent so that others don't think you are weird? Pray for the courage to be strong in all circumstances and to joyfully share your witness with others.

Reflexiónese — 16 de mayo de 2021 Ascensión del Nuestro Señor

“Todo aquel que confiese que Jesús es el Hijo de Dios, permanece en Dios, y Dios en él.” – 1 JUAN 4:15

¿Qué tan fuerte es su fe? Cuando tienes la oportunidad de defender o aclarar un asunto acerca de la fe Católica, ¿lo haces? ¿O permaneces en silencio para que otros no piensen que eres raro? Rece para tener el coraje de ser fuerte en cualquier circunstancia y compartir con los demás su testimonio con alegría.



Shop on Amazon?

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



Connect

Calling All Gardeners!



St. Matthias has a special request. We would like to plant flowers in front of church again this year, in time for our First Communions which will take place on **Saturday, May 22 at 12:00 and Sunday May 23 at 2:00.**

When you go to your favorite nursery pick up a flat of vincas, either pink or white, that you could donate to St. Matthias. Why vincas? They are deer proof and easy to grow.

You can drop them off anytime, around the statue of the Blessed Mother by the steps to the parking lot. We need the flowers by this Sunday, May 16. Let us know that you have donated a flat of vincas so we can thank you. You can send an email to jseamon@stmatthias.net. Also let us know if you would like to help us plant.

Once we see how many plants we get, we will arrange a time to get together to do the actual planting, sometime the week of May 17. Thanks in advance for your help in making St. Matthias as beautiful on the outside as it is on the inside! Questions? Contact Joan Best Seamon at jseamon@stmatthias.net

You are invited to “Discover St. Matthias”!

WHAT:

Our next Discover St. Matthias

WHEN:

Tuesday, May 18, 7:30 PM

WHERE:

Via Zoom

The Welcoming Ministry invites you to learn more about your Parish, its history and many ministries and groups that are part of it. All recent parishioners are welcome and encouraged to attend the May Zoom event. This is a great way to ask questions you may have.

To receive the link to join in, please send an email to:

StMatthiasWelcome@gmail.com



Serve

Parish Vocations Committee

The Parish Pastoral Council has begun to establish a PARISH VOCATIONS COMMITTEE, with two of its members, Joe Percoco and Mary Beth Vetter Purcell, leading it. The purpose of The Parish Vocations Committee is to promote vocations by making the St. Matthias parish community aware that we, as a community, have a responsibility for fostering vocations and that vocation is ministry through married life, single life, ordained life of priests or deacons and consecrated life of religious men and women. Anyone who feels strongly about this goal is invited to contact either of these two leaders: Joe Percoco at: percoco@oit.rutgers.edu or MaryBeth Vetter Purcell at marybeth.vetter@gmail.com

SMYLE Service Project [Pregnancy Aid Center, Raritan]

June 5/6 Before/After Masses –Cry Room By 1PM Sunday

This list indicates the MOST NEEDED items:

- Enfamil [yellow]
- Kids toothbrushes and toothpaste
- Kids socks-ages 2 and up
- Diapers size 5
- Diaper cream, e.g. Desitin
- Boys and girls summer pajamas [sizes 2-10]
- Boys and girls summer shorts and short sleeve tees [sizes 2-10]
- Baby lotion



Local Community

The Joy of Love & Family Conference Series

The five Catholic Dioceses of New Jersey will be co-sponsoring a conference titled The Joy of Love & Family, in honor of the Year of the Family. The talks will take place over a six month period beginning in June 2021. They will touch on topics for every stage of family life. More information is now available at: www.lightingheartsonfire.org You may also sign up to receive notifications.

Topic categories include Young Adults, Newly Married, Families with Young Children, Single/Married Adults, Golden Years, and Family Healing. The series will feature expert speakers who will give practical and spiritual information as well as thought-provoking testimony of real-life experiences. The goal of the conference is to provide resources for people of all ages to reflect on and bear witness to family love. Some of the presentations will also be available in Spanish.



Parish Leadership

Parish Pastoral Council:

Chair: Nick Grippo
nickgrippo@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Lisa Robinson
lar0504@comcast.net

Secretary: Tom Aussem

Co-Secretary:

Denise Brown

Lorraine Farr
Anne Marie Francis
Claudine Langrin
Joe Percoco
Rose Peng

MaryBeth Vetter Purcell
John Taylor
Ana Kelly, Ex-Officio
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

Parish Finance Council:

Joe Porter, Chair
FinanceCouncil
@stmatthias.net

Susan Klimcsak
Barry Dusault
Gwen Orłowski

Audrey Francis
Kester Hector
Joan Pritchard
Fr. Abraham, Ex-Officio

Trustees:

Isaac Peng
Marge Richards

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

Parish Registration — Welcome new members! Please register by calling the Parish 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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