

## § Now Thank We All Our God >

Each year at this time, folks are asked to sign up and participate in a local walk for the homeless to benefit several charitable organizations that provide life-giving services to the poor and needy of the Washington metropolitan area. This annual walk is a worthy cause, and the funds raised help countless less fortunate citizens of our community. What struck me as odd was the response of one man when asked why he and his wife were participating in the event. He said: "It just feels right (to participate)." The statement did not sit well with me...it sounded self serving. The more I pondered the man's words, the more I thought about my motivation and therefore our motivation for addressing the needs of the poor. We should always be a people of faith who give of their substance not merely of their abundance. We should be people who are always motivated to do that which is *just which may or may not make us feel good. The reason we give and serve the poor is not to make us feel good... instead the reason is simply that we are called to serve their needs because it is what our God asks of us.* Doing good in the world and thinking of those less fortunate is not a holiday must-do, but an everyday response to the blessings and prosperity that we are the beneficiaries or recipients thereof.

This week our annual feast of Thanksgiving will afford us all an opportunity to reflect upon the many blessings and gifts we have received lovingly from the hand and heart of Almighty God. While technically it is not a holy day of obligation, and we are not bound to attend mass on that day, I can't help but feel impassioned about a personal conviction that I wish was more widely held by everyone in our community. Should we not utilize this annual feast to come to mass, not for the sake of feeling good about ourselves, but because it is the only right and just thing to do in response to God and what he has given to us? In fact, we state this very sentiment each time we celebrate the Eucharist. The priest says: "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God." The people responds: "It is right to give Him thanks and praise!" It is right to give Him thanks and it is the just thing for us to do. As with each year before, I make an earnest plea with each of you today, whether you will be away on Thanksgiving or here in Lanham...make every effort to come to Mass on Thanksgiving Day. Come because it is what is right and just. God gives freely to us and let us now give back to Him the only thing He asks from us...our hearts full of wonder and praise for the gifts we have all received. Remember the poor every day and please remember your parish with a Thanksgiving gift that truly reflects the depth of your gratitude to God so that His work on earth might continue through the ministry of this parish! On behalf of Father Stan, Father Connor and our entire rectory and school staff, I wish you and your family a very happy, holy, and blessed Thanksgiving Day. Our staff will be off for a few days so that they too can enjoy the blessing of family and friends.

Each year our nation celebrates Thanksgiving Day as a day of gratitude for the bounty of our land and the freedom we cherish so dearly. For many of us it is a day to travel home to be with loved ones and share in a lavish meal; for others, it means parades and football games; for still others, it signals the opening of the holiday season. No matter what our image of Thanksgiving Day may be, we as Catholics should take this opportunity not to overlook the religious overtones of the holiday. Hopefully, we can all make a special effort this year to gather together on *Thanksgiving Day, November 27th* to celebrate the Eucharist (...a word meaning "thanksgiving") at **10:00am** in the church. This will be the only Mass that day (no 8:30 am Mass). God has bestowed so much on us. Let us now express gratitude to Him in special fashion this day. *When you come to Mass on Thanksgiving Day, please bring with you, in a nice basket or container, the bread and wine that will be placed upon your family table that afternoon or evening for your meal. A special blessing will be given to the bread and wine to be used for your Thanksgiving meal.*

## A Table Grace for Thanksgiving

Dear Lord,  
We thank You for Your goodness  
that has brought us the bounty of this day.  
At this special time of year, may we remember  
to give thanks for all of the blessings You have bestowed upon us.  
Lord, bless our family wherever they may be.  
Lord, bless our friends and keep them safe from harm's way.  
Lord, bless our hearts so that they are always ready to welcome love.  
Lord, may we always remember to give You thanks.  
Amen.

### Stewardship Report:

#### Revenue

November 16:	7,157.33
Faith Direct:	1,609.25
<b>Total Offertory:</b>	<b>8,766.58</b>
Last Year:	9,432.24
Poor Box:	169.00
Every Penny Counts Box:	96.25

Number of Adult Envelopes: 256; Number of Children's Envelopes: 16; Number of Faith Direct donors: 36 Number of Registered Households: 640

**Advent Coin Folders for the Poor Box:** Our annual special Christmas appeal for our Poor Box begins again with the appearance of the Advent Coin Folders. From November 17<sup>th</sup> through Christmas Day, each working household or individual is asked to set aside twenty-five cents a day (one quarter) so that by time December 25<sup>th</sup> arrives, each folder will contain a \$20.00 gift to the Poor Box. This year more than ever we need those who have the means to participate in this easy and simple method of fundraising to support the parish's charities and strengthen our ability to respond to our own parishioners in their time of need. Take your coin folder home this weekend from the entryway of our church and begin to prepare a special gift for the Christ Child on Christmas. God bless you for your continuing generosity!

**Tuition Assistance Forms:** PSAS tuition assistance forms for elementary and high school are available online at [www.adw.org/education/assistance.asp](http://www.adw.org/education/assistance.asp). Please remember that if you are requesting financial assistance through the archdiocese or want to apply for school scholarship programs, you must FIRST complete the PSAS application and submit it on time. Students who will be in catholic high school next year may also apply for the Fitzgerald Scholarship. Information is available at the above website and the due date is also December 5, 2008.



### Holy Day of Obligation:

**Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Holy Day of Obligation for all Catholics!** *This holy day falls on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>! The Mass schedule at St. Matthias will be as follows: On Monday December 8th: 7:30am, Noon and 7:30pm Masses. Please mark your calendar so as not to forget this special holy day honoring the special grace and dignity bestowed by God upon our Blessed Mother, Mary.*

## An Evening of Thanksgiving & Praise

**Tonight~ November 23rd at 5:00 pm in the Church**

Join our Youth Group and Distinguished Guests

for a joyful evening of song and dance!

(Free Will Offering. Proceeds to benefit the St. Matthias Youth Group.)

### Other Items of Note:

**School Subscription Raffle Tickets:** Tickets are \$50 and only 1,200 tickets will be sold so that you have a better chance to win!! You can win as many as 35 times, as your ticket is placed in the Lottery pool every week for the 35 week Lottery. Please contact Ms. Vivian Mason at 301-577-9412 with any questions, or E-mail her at [vmason@stmatthias.org](mailto:vmason@stmatthias.org).

**Christmas Giving Tree:** The Christmas Giving Tree will return this year to the front right side of the Altar in the church on November 24th. The tree is decorated with ornaments bearing the name of an organization and a requested gift. Please take an ornament and return it along with the unwrapped gift requested by December 14th to the church or rectory. The gifts will be distributed to patients at Walter Reed Army Medical Center; Springfield Hospital Center; PG County Hospital Pediatric Unit; Mt. Washington Pediatric Unit; and Gift of Peace. Thank you for making the season special for those in need!

**LOC 2009 Holiday Sales:** The Ladies of Charity will be selling Missals, Christmas cards and other seasonal items after Masses each weekend to support their charitable works including, Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for the needy. Items include the following: 2009 Sunday Missals for \$3.50; Advent Calendars for \$1.00 and a set of 4 Advent Candles for \$7.00.

**No Christmas Trees This Year!** While Christmas will be celebrated with all her seasonal trimmings on December 25<sup>th</sup>, there will be one noticeable absence in our parish holiday preparations. After examining the last three years of sales of fresh Christmas trees on our parish property I decided, along with the Parish Finance Council, to terminate this event. The risk of losing money was becoming a greater possibility in the light of our current economy. In short, it is a tremendous amount of work for a minimal profit. Thank you for all who did assist in years past, and in your name, I want to especially thank Mr. Craig Hough, our parish landscaper, who worked tremendous hours and was a true Santa's helper to us each of the past three years. Please share this news with your neighbors and friends who may have faithfully come to support our efforts.

### Faith Formation

**Confirmation/Candidate Parent Meeting:** The first Confirmation Parent/Candidate meeting will be held on Monday, **December 1, 2008 at 6:45 pm in Friendship Hall.** All candidates from both Saint Matthias School and the Faith Formation program are required to attend this meeting **accompanied by at least one parent.**

**Baptism Preparatory Seminar:** The next seminar for parents who would like to have their infants baptized will be held on Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 pm in the school library. Parents must be registered parishioners (for at least six months) who actively participate in church activities. Call the office to register by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Planning Ahead:** There will be no Faith Formation classes on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Instead, families are encouraged to observe **this Holy Day of Obligation** by participating in the parish liturgy at 7:30pm.



## Mass Intentions for the Thirty Fourth Week in Ordinary Time

**Monday, November 24:** Andrew Dung-Lac, priest, martyr

8:30 am All Souls

**Tuesday, November 25:** Catherine of Alexandria, virgin

8:30 am All Souls & George Defayette

**Wednesday, November 26:**

**School Closed; Rectory closes at 12 noon**

8:30 am All Souls

**Thursday, November 27:** THANKSGIVING DAY

**School & Rectory Closed**

10:00 am All Souls & The People of the Parish

(There will be NO 8:30am Mass this day)

**Friday, November 28:**

**School & Rectory Closed**

8:30 am All Souls

**Sat., Nov 29:** Vigil— First Sunday of Advent

**3:30 pm to 4:30pm—Confessions**

5:00 pm All Souls

**Sunday, Nov 30:** First Sunday of Advent

8:00 am All Souls

9:30 am All Souls

11:30am All Souls



**Please Pray for: †The Sick and Homebound In Our Parish:**

Phil Ates; Virgie Azarcon; Ann Benson; Barbara Brink; Audrey Brown; Margaret Carr; Fidel dela Cuesta; Eleanor DeMarco; Lisa Farland; Don Falls; Francis Greenfield; Leslie Hand; Joseph Harrison; Charles Henry; Lena Jacobs; Anne Mbimi Ifouini; Charles Jones; Rev. Patrick Keeny; Paula Kelly; Robyn Kirby; Laura Elaine Kiessling; Ray Krok; Nancy Maimone; Joe Makowski; Albertine Mandzo; Luke Martellotti; Willie (Bill) Moore; Bernadette Murphy; Larry Murphy; Rosemarie Nardoizzi; David Obi; Peter O'Neill; Joseph Otero; Alice Parker; Dawn Pearson; Joe Sico; Walter Stewart; Josephine A Yodichkas; Margaret Zanin; Ryan Zawada **†For Our Deceased:** Mrs. Virginia Lee Reynierse **†** *Names will be placed on our prayer list for three weeks. To add a name or to request continuing prayers, contact Tara Guevara by phone at 301-459-4814 or email [tguevara@stmatthias.org](mailto:tguevara@stmatthias.org).*

### Votive Lights

**Sunday, November 23rd through Saturday, November 29th:**

*Shrine of the Sacred Heart*

**For the Special Intentions of:** Father Jeff; Richard & Carmen Kosko

**For the Happy Repose of:** Rufino & Christine Prieto; George & Katie Kosko; Ernest Jorgensen; Hildegard Hiltl

*Shrine of the Madonna & Child:*

**For the Special Intentions of:** The Ferrara Family; The people of the parish

(Please note: This is the LAST week of votives for 2008.)



**Have A Happy Thanksgiving Holiday!**