

§ From the Pastor

A Special Holiday Request from your Pastor

This will mark the fifth year that one of our parishioners, Mr. Thad Ereme, will spend the holidays in a federal prison. Many of you are familiar with Thad's story and what I have always believed about him...that he is innocent, and has been convicted unjustly. For those not familiar with his story, I have placed in the pamphlet racks of the church a reprinted article from The Pharmacist that tells the story of Thad's ongoing ordeal. His wife and children still worship with us each week, and have endured many hardships in the absence of this husband and father. My annual request at this time is a simple one; I ask every household/adult to take a moment to write to Thad before Christmas. A greeting card or letter from his family of faith, his brothers and sisters in Christ, offering him encouragement and our prayers means a great deal to him! Please **do not** send any gifts or money as they will not be given to him...only cards and letters. Your mail is subject to being opened and inspected by prison officials prior to Thad's receiving it.



Send all cards/letters to:

Mr. Emmanuel "Thad" Ereme
No: 37730-037
F.P.C. Canaan
P.O. Box 200
Waymart, PA 18472

New Pamphlets Available in "The Good News About" Titles:

Please take a moment to look through the pamphlet rack in the back of the church. There are several new titles available in the "Good News About" series published by Father Jude Winkler, OFM Conv. Available pamphlets include: **Celebrating Christmas with Simplicity; Our Christmas Traditions; Dealing with Anger; The Letters of Paul; and Driving as a Christian.**

Take Pride in Your Parish: As we work hard to decorate our church and parish grounds with a veritable festival of lights and images of the coming of Christ, please take a moment to help maintain the grounds and displays. In the church, please be respectful of the Christmas decorations. Pick up any litter you see in the pews, aisles and vestibule. Take a moment to help tidy up the hymnals and perhaps straighten the pamphlets in the racks. On the parish grounds, pick up and dispose of any trash you see. Be respectful of the outdoor displays and do not allow children to play with the lighted figures. Lastly, during this joyous season anticipating the birth of the Christ child, remember to treat your fellow parishioners with love and respect. Instead of being hurried and disrespectful, take a moment to extend to your fellow man the sign of peace that we celebrate at each Mass. Let the joy and love of the Christmas season inspire you to make someone else's day all the better! Continued blessings and a very Merry Christmas to you all!

Stewardship Report:

Revenue

December 14:	7,606.45
Faith Direct:	1,609.25
Total Offertory:	9,215.70
Last Year:	9,643.60
Poor Box: (Vietnamese Dominican Sisters)	2,163.85
Every Penny Counts Box:	57.62

Number of Adult Envelopes: 224
Number of Children's Envelopes: 7
Number of Faith Direct donors: 36
Number of Registered Households: 649

Christmas Flower Memorials: Please be sure to return your



Christmas Flower Memorial requests by **Sunday December 22nd** so they may be included in the **Christmas bulletin**. Please PRINT neatly or type the names on a sheet of paper and insert in your envelope. Names can also be emailed to tguevara@stmatthias.org. Denote each name with an **L** for living or a **D** for deceased. We suggest a minimum offering of \$10.00.

Advent Coin Folders for the Poor Box: Please be sure to return your completed Advent Coin Folder to the rectory so that your \$20 gift to the Poor Box may continue to support those members of our community who are in need this year. God bless you for your continuing generosity!

Special Collection for The Vietnamese Dominican Sisters: If you did not have the chance to contribute to the special Poor Box collection for our Vietnamese Sisters, there is still time! Please take a special offertory envelope from the pamphlet rack to ensure proper credit to this fund. Checks should be made payable to Saint Matthias.

NEW OFFERTORY ENVELOPES: The new annual boxes of offertory envelopes for 2009 are now available. **THEY WILL NOT BE MAILED.** Please stop by the Rectory Office on Monday between 8:30am and 4:00 pm or Tuesday from 8:30am until 4:00pm to pick up your boxed envelopes. Envelopes will be available to pick up after regular Masses beginning after the holidays.



Elf Tested! Santa Approved!
Rudolph says:
"Two Thumbs Up!"



The Perfect Holiday Gift for Someone Who Has Everything! A St. Matthias the Apostle School Subscription Lottery Ticket!

WIN \$300 Weekly plus \$50 to Seller of Winning Ticket!
Sell the Ticket to yourself
and WIN \$350.00!!!!

To Purchase a ticket, please contact Vivian Mason in the school:
Phone: 301-577-9412 or E-mail: vmason@stmatthias.org.

Remember, you have to play to win!

Our 2008 Christmas Season

Confessions:

The Gift of Pardon and Peace

Saturday, December 20th: Confessions from 3:30 to 4:30 pm

Sunday, December 21st: Confessions from 2:00 to 3:30 pm

Monday, December 22nd: Confessions from 7:00 to 8:00 pm
 (**The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for private adoration and prayer during the Sunday and Monday Confession times).

The Solemnity of the Nativity of our Lord Christmas Day

Wednesday, December 24th at 5:00 pm and 10:00 pm
 Carols by our Traditional Choir beginning at 9:30 pm
 Thursday, December 25th at 8:00 am and 10:00 am

The Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God : New Year's Day

Wednesday, December 31st at 5:00 pm
 Thursday, January 1st, 2009 at 10:00 am ONLY

Please note that the rectory business office will be closed between Christmas and New Year's to afford our parish staff with some well deserved rest and relaxation with their families and friends. Thank you in advance for planning ahead for any needs you may have of our staff and we extend our apologies for any inconvenience this may cause. The offices will reopen on Friday, January 2, 2009 at 8:00 am.



Christmas Decorators Wanted

We are looking for volunteers to assist in decorating the church for Christmas. Decorating will take place on December 23rd beginning at 6:00 pm. Teen and adult volunteers are welcome! Please, no small children.

To volunteer, please contact Tara in the rectory at 301-459-4814.



Youth Group

Kwanzaa Celebration: On Saturday, December 27th, the B.A.S.I.C. (Brothers and Sisters in Christ Ministry) of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church will host their second annual family Kwanzaa celebration at 6:00 p.m. in the Panorama Room. A donation of \$5.00 per person over the age of 5 is requested, and African attire is suggested. All parishioners are invited and encouraged to attend. The program will include the origin, symbols and principles of Kwanzaa and feature African and liturgical dancers. For additional information, please contact Justine Briscoe Middleton at 202-889-7020.



Mass Intentions for the Fourth Week of Advent

Monday, December 22:

School Closed

8:30 am Heinz Busges

Tuesday, December 23: John of Kanty, priest

School Closed

8:30 am Dana Zehrbach

Wednesday, December 24:

School & Rectory Closed

8:30 am Lillian Rampone

Wednesday December 24: Christmas Eve

5:00 pm George O. Defayette; Joseph & Mary Defayette; Harry Yocum; Harold & Molly Stone; Stephen Klear; Michael Flynn; Michael Eckenrode

9:30 pm Carols by the Traditional Choir

10:00pm Intentions of Father Jeff's Family and Friends; For the Intentions of the People of the Parish; and For all of our generous Benefactors

Thursday, December 25: Christmas Day

School & Rectory Closed

This is a Holy Day of Obligation for All Catholics

8:00 am Intentions of Father Stan's Family & Friends

10:00 am Intention of the People of the Parish, Parish Benefactors and the Special Intentions of Father Jeff

Friday, December 26: Stephen, first martyr

School & Rectory Closed

8:30 am Dana Zehrbach

Sat., December 27: Vigil— The Holy Family

3:30 pm to 4:30pm—Confessions

5:00 pm Richard J. Kosko (Living)

Sunday, December 28: The Holy Family

8:00 am Angelica De Leon

9:30 am The Ndigwe Family (Living)

11:30am Anthony Kosloski

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

Phil Ates; Virgie Azarcon; Ann Benson; Leslie Berkey; Barbara Brink; Margaret Carr; Fidel dela Cuesta; Eleanor DeMarco; Lisa Farland; Gali Galiciano; Francis Greenfield; Leslie Hand; Joseph Harrison; Charles Henry; Lena Jacobs; Father Keene; Paula Kelly; Robyn Kirby; Laura Elaine Kiessling; Ray Krok; Nancy Maimone; Joe Makowski; Willie (Bill) Moore; Bernadette Murphy; Larry Murphy; Rosemarie Nardozzi; Mary Nelson; David Obi; Peter O'Neill; Alice Parker; Dawn Pearson; June Provini; Rohland Reich; Joe Sico; Walter Stewart; Margaret Zanin; Ryan Zawada **†For Our Deceased:** Henry Sylak **†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.**

Faith Formation

We wish you a very blessed Christmas season and hope you will find some time for peace and rest. **We will resume classes on Monday, January 12, 2009 at 6:30 pm prompt.** May the New Year be filled with abundant blessings from Our Savior Jesus Christ! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!