



# God Is Good News

LENT—EASTER—PENTECOST      FEBRUARY TO MAY 2016

## Jubilee Year opens Door of Mercy for everyone



Around the world on December 8, Catholic churches opened Doors of Mercy in a tradition that dates back to the 15th century. The ritual marked the beginning of the Jubilee Year of Mercy called by Pope Francis to begin on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and continue throughout the rest of the liturgical year, closing on November 20, 2016.

In Rome, a door at St. Peter's Basilica, is the Holy Door and is bricked up on the inside. On the first day of the Holy Year, the Jubilee Year, the pope strikes the brick wall with a hammer and then opens the door to let in the pilgrims who come to make the most of the indulgence. Once again, it is the Pope himself who closes the door at the end of the Jubilee Year.

Here at St. Matthias parish, we marked the opening of the Holy Year of Mercy with the opening of our own Door of Mercy. Earlier, one of the doors from the gathering area to the sanctuary was closed and symbolically covered to resemble bricks. On Dec. 8, Fr. Ray struck open the door and led the congregation through the door way as a sign of entering the Holy Year.



As the Vatican explains: "The Holy Door represents Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and the gate of the sheep pen." The bible says in John 10:9 that "I am the gate. Whoever enters through me, will be safe. He will go in and out, and find pasture."

Throughout the bible, we see Jesus showing mercy. He opens the door of new life to the woman who is sinful but can love.

Jesus tells Peter that one must forgive seventy times seven times. Through baptism, Jesus permits us to join his People; He comes to seek us when we go astray, just as a shepherd goes to look for his lost sheep; He welcomes us at the door just as the father welcomes the prodigal son. Every time we walk through the Door of Mercy, we will recall our sinfulness and the great love and mercy that God has granted us through the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

The Jubilee Year is celebrated every 25 years, meaning that the Holy Door is opened every 25 years. The Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica was last opened by Pope John Paul II on 24th December 1999, when he simplified the ceremony for the Jubilee Year in 2000. Pope Francis has called for an Extraordinary Jubilee Year.

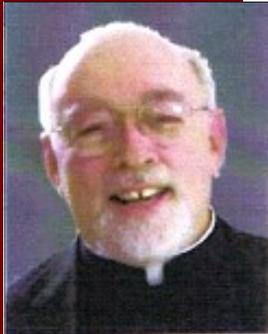


### Jubilee Year of Mercy

"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful." Luke 6:36

December 8, 2015-November 20,

**PadRay  
Ponders**



**“This  
pilgrimage  
will be a  
lifelong  
dream come  
true;  
hopefully you  
will join me.”**

# “On pilgrimage then folks desire to start”

*-- Prologue, Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer*

Dear Church,

As part of the celebration of the Jubilee Holy Year called by our Holy Father, Francis, I would like to invite you to join me on a pilgrimage to Italy from October 18-29, 2016.

We will begin our pilgrimage in Venice, the city of waterways, gondolas and bridges where we will visit the Basilica of St. Mark with its magnificent mosaics expressing the story of faith, the Doges Palace and the Bridge of Sighs.

We will also visit Florence, home to Michelangelo’s David and the finest collection of Renaissance art in the world.

In addition, we will make pilgrimage to Assisi, Birthplace of St. Francis where we will visit the Basilica of St. Francis, the Church of St. Clare and Santa Maria degli Angeli with its “thornless rose bush.” We will proceed along the Adriatic coast to the site of Saint Padre Pio at San Giovanni Rotondo.

We will end our pilgrimage with about three days in Rome, the Eternal City, an artistic and historical gift to the world. We will visit Vatican City and the four major Basilicas of Rome where we will have the opportunity to enter the Jubilee “Holy Door” and receive a Plenary Indulgence for the Holy Year.

Also on the agenda will be visits to the Vatican Museums, see Michelangelo’s Original frescoes in the Sistine Chapel including the Last Judgement and Creation of Man. The highlight,

of course will be an audience with Our Holy Father, Francis, if available. Our last day will be totally free to explore Rome on our own.

Come share in this time of prayerful pilgrimage. I am sure you will be pleased with this pilgrimage for it is both high on value and low in cost. Our pilgrimage will be a joyful journey designed to highlight our Catholic faith, help us appreciate its historical past and view art, which was inspired by our church.

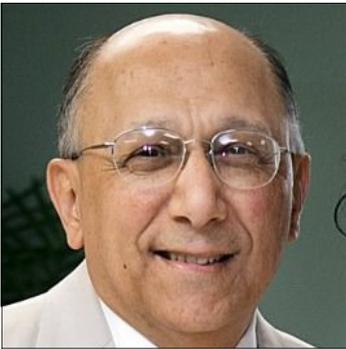
We will have an Info Session on Sunday afternoon, February 21, at 12:15 after the 11:00 a.m. Mass. This pilgrimage will be a lifelong dream come true; hopefully you will join me.

In God’s Mercy,



## Everyday Faith...

# Sharing a faith beyond understanding



By Tom Shiban,  
Parishioner

What exactly is Faith? When we think of Faith, we usually think of the word “believe.” E.g. “I believe that there is something beyond

beyond this world, beyond my total understanding, Someone good and Someone great, Someone who cares about me, and will for the rest of eternity. And although I can’t explain all of it, the experiences of my life have shown me that a glorious life awaits me beyond the grave.”

As Catholic Christians, we could ask our PSR children what Faith means to them in simplest terms, and they would answer with one word: JESUS! That’s what Faith-sharing is to me. How has Jesus affected me in my life?

The answers to that question are why I’m again a member of the ALPHA team. ALPHA gives

me the opportunity to share my Faith stories and to listen to the Faith stories of others.

I was blessed with parents and other family members who put Jesus first in their lives, even in the face of poverty and other adversity. Surviving two world wars and the Great Depression, my mom and dad taught me that God always provides to people who believe in Him.

ALPHA asks us the question, “Is Jesus Christ relevant in your life?” Answering that question is what Faith-sharing is all about; how has Jesus blessed you in your life?

Life is short. Please consider joining us on Thursday evenings from February 4 – March 24. It’s never too late – you will be welcomed!

## A job well done!

Congratulations to parishioner Karen Spirakus. Karen coordinates the Baby Bottles for Womankind drive in all participating churches in the diocese. The 2015 drive broke another record with \$105,000 collected in the baby bottles.

## From Fr. Ray...

# A personal invitation to ALPHA

I would love it if we could have over a hundred folks sign up for this year’s ALPHA Course for anyone interested in finding out more about the Christian faith. Adults of all ages are invited. Beginning Feb. 4, for eight weeks, join us for dinner at 6:30; music at 7:00, talk or video at 7:15; discussion at 7:30; home by 8:30 in time to watch “Bones” on TV.

Topics:

- Who is Jesus?
- Why did Jesus Die?
- How can we have faith?
- Why and how do I pray?
- Why and how should I read the Bible?
- What about the Holy Spirit?
- And much more!

To register, please call the Rectory at 440-888-8220 or go to [www.stmatthiaschurch.org](http://www.stmatthiaschurch.org). Reading this after Feb. 4? You can still join us!

## What is ALPHA?

**A**n anyone interested in finding out more about the Christian faith. Adults of all ages are welcome.

**L**earning and laughter. It is possible to learn about the Christian faith and to have fun at the same time!

**P**eople meeting together. An opportunity to get to know others and to make new friends.

**H**elping one another. The small groups give you a chance to discuss issues raised during the talks.

**A**sk anything. ALPHA is a place where no question is seen as too simple or too hostile.

**ALPHA  
Course  
February 4  
– March 24**

**As part of our Jubilee Holy Year of Mercy, we’re bringing back “The Alpha Course” to help you achieve a closer relationship with the Lord.**

**If you or any of your family or friends have any questions about God, Christianity, Church or life in general... THEN ALPHA IS FOR YOU!**

**ALPHA is an opportunity to explore these claims, to share what you think, and to explore these questions for yourself. There’s no pressure, come and go as you please but each talk builds on the previous one.**

**Watch the bulletin and/or our parish website in the next month for more information**



## ~ 2016 Lenten Liturgy Schedule ~

### Ash Wednesday

February 10

Mass & ashes 7 a.m. & 7 p.m.

Scripture & ashes 12 noon

### Lenten Regulations

As Jesus fasted 40 days in the desert, the Church traditionally fasts during Lent as a gesture of repentance and a reminder of our dependence on the love of God.

**Fasting:** Ages 18-59 fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, one full meal and two smaller meals, no snacking between meals.

**Abstinence:** Ages 14 and older, no meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lent.

## ~ Reconciliation ~

- Feb. 24 Diocesan-wide Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance; Fr. Ray will be hearing confessions from 5-8 p.m.  
 Mar. 14 Pizza 6 p.m. & Penance 7 p.m.

## ~ Stations of the Cross ~

### On the following Fridays:

- Feb. 12 7 p.m. Stations of the Cross  
 Feb. 19 7 p.m. Stations of the Cross  
 Feb. 26 7 p.m. Stations of the Cross  
 Mar. 18 7 p.m. Stations of the Cross  
 Mar. 25 Noon Good Friday Stations

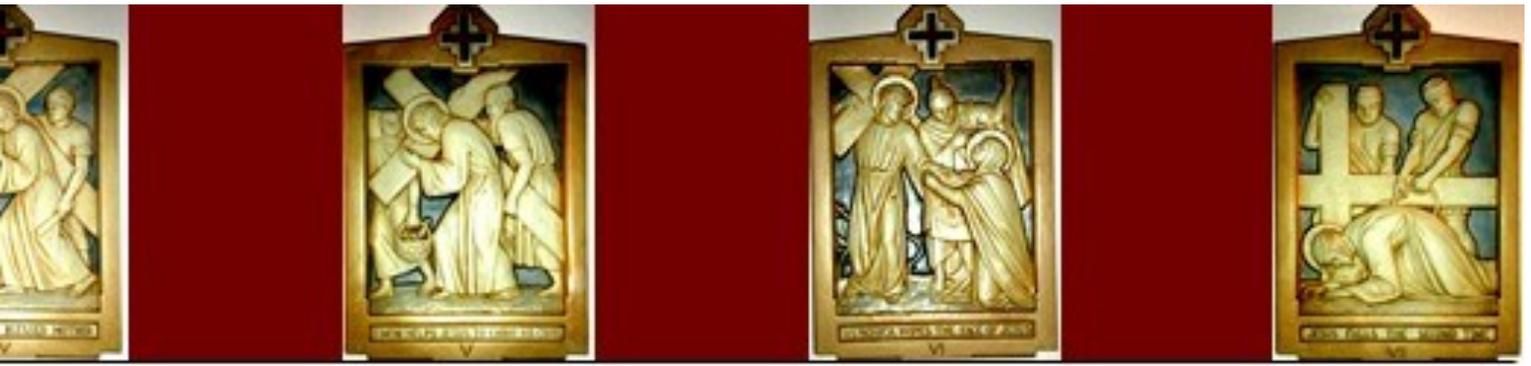
## Try these great ideas t

By Chris Walter

*As in previous years, St Matthias offers a number of opportunities to make our Lent more meaningful. Use this time to grow in faith and deepen your relationship with the Lord.*

- **Youth Renewal – Rise to the Challenge:** High school students, boost your spiritual muscles. Attend the Youth Renewal Week-end March 4-6. Details are in the bulletin or contact Gloria Litwinowicz for more information, 216-235-8263.
- **Use Time Wisely** – Spend less time with TV, the computer or video games and use that time for prayer, spiritual reading and acts of kindness. We can bring glory to God if we are able to discipline or curb our cravings, whether for food or something else.
- **Men's and Women's Bible Study** – St. Matthias Women's Bible Study meets every Tuesday morning at 9 a.m. Contact Florence Visk at 440-804-6174. Men's Bible Study meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday mornings of the month at 9 a.m. Contact Ray Fazio at 440-845-1434.
- **Jesuit Retreat House** – Go to [www.jrh-cleveland.org](http://www.jrh-cleveland.org) to consult their retreat schedule and register for a retreat for a weekend, a day or an evening.
- **Stations of the Cross** – Attend any of the Stations on our schedule listed to the left or in the weekly bulletin.
- **Pizza and Penance** – Join us Monday, March 14 starting with pizza at 6 p.m. followed by a penance service beginning at 7 p.m. This is a great opportunity to share fellowship with other parishioners followed by receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.





# to enrich your Lent

## Special Lenten Events:

- **Alpha** – Anyone interested in finding out more about the Christian Faith. Adults of all ages are invited. This is an eight week course beginning February 4, 2016. Join us for dinner at 6:30pm, music at 7:00pm, talk or video at 7:30pm, and home by 8:30pm.
- **Little Black Books** – Books will be available in the Gathering Area for this popular devotion..
- **“Paper products and personal items” drive** – Brookside notified us that the Food Bank no longer provides soaps, paper or personal items. However, these items are greatly needed by their people. Therefore, during Lent the Social Action Committee is hosting a drive to collect the items to send down to Brookside. Regular and travel sizes are acceptable. Please drop off donations in the Brookside bench in the Gathering Area.

## Easter Season Events

- **Consoling Heart of Jesus Retreat** will take place on Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. in the classrooms April 6 through June 15.
- **Reboot Live** May 11 at Assumption Parish – details in the bulletin and on the website, [www.stmatthiaschurch.org](http://www.stmatthiaschurch.org)

**Need more information?** You can find more information about parish events and activities in the St. Matthias Church weekly bulletins—they're available on the parish Web site: [www.stmatthiaschurch.org](http://www.stmatthiaschurch.org).

## ~ 2016 Eastertide Liturgy Schedule ~

### Palm Sunday

March 19	Mass	4 p.m.
March 20	Mass	9 a.m. & 11 a.m.

### Holy Thursday March 24

Morning Prayer	8:30 a.m.
Mass of Lord's Supper	7 p.m.
followed by Adoration until midnight	

### Good Friday March 25

Morning Prayer	8:30 a.m.
Stations of the Cross	12 noon
Movie	3 p.m.
Soup and Salad	5 p.m.
Good Friday Liturgy	7 p.m.
with veneration of the cross and communion	

### Holy Saturday March 26

Morning Prayer	9 a.m.
Easter Vigil Mass	9 p.m.

### Easter Sunday March 27

Mass	9 a.m. & 11 a.m.
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### Feast of the Ascension (Seventh Sunday of Easter)

May 7	Mass	4 p.m.
May 8	Mass	9 a.m. & 11 a.m.

### Pentecost

June 14	Mass	4 p.m.
June 15	Mass	9 a.m. & 11 a.m.



**Seven Corporal  
Works of Mercy**

*Feed the hungry: "For I was hungry and you gave me to eat." Mt. 25:35*

*Give drink to the thirsty: "...I was thirsty and you gave me to drink..." Mt. 25:35*

*Clothe the naked: "I was...naked and you clothed me..." Mt. 25:36*

*Visit the imprisoned: "I was in prison and you came to me." Mt. 25:36*

*Shelter the homeless: "...I was a stranger and you took me in..." Mt. 25:35*

*Visit the sick: "...I was sick and you cared for me..." Mt. 25:36*

*Bury the dead: "Amen, I say to you, insofar as you did it for one of these least of my brothers, you did it for me." Mt. 25:40*

## Sandwich Sunday feeds the needy

With 60 people working together, it took only an hour to make 650 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and pack them into lunches for Metanoia and Brookside to feed the homeless.



## Lunch Blessings



### Free food, Free Grace for You!

The St Matthias Spiritual Life Commission hosted a new event called Lunch Blessings on Jan 13, providing food for the soul and food for the body.

The event began in the chapel, where Florence Visk led the group in a meditation on the scriptures of the day along with song and prayer for a grace-filled hour.

The 14 participants then moved to the classrooms for a lunch of soup and salad and the pleasure of one another's company. The most frequent comment at the end of the lunch: "Let's do this again!"

The Spiritual Life Commission is looking forward to offering another "Lunch Blessings" May 11 at 11 a.m. Watch the bulletin or the web site for further details.

*All ages gathered on Jan. 24 to pack lunches for the homeless, stopping only when the group ran out of bread.*

# Homebound receive poinsettias and holiday breads with Eucharist



Kathy Kraynak is one of a dozen parishioners who visit our homebound members on a weekly or biweekly basis. Their main purpose is to bring the Eucharist to them and provide a personal connection with the church through the visit. Kathy says she feels the gifts she most uses in this ministry are compassion and understanding.

“The question they always ask is ‘So what’s going on at church?’ They love receiving the bulletin so they can feel a part of things,” Kathy says. “They also want to talk about what is going on in their life. I must be a good non-judgmental listener. I’m very grateful for the privilege of bringing the Sacrament to them and being Jesus to others.”

What was the reaction of the recipients when they receive their poinsettia and holiday bread? They were surprised that the church cares enough that someone be thinking of them. The plants and holiday breads are something tangible that shows them they are loved. I would like to thank our girl scouts for making the holiday breads and cards that were delivered with the poinsettia. If you would like to become a Visiting Eucharistic Minister, call Elaine Fechko at 440-888-8220 X 12. Training is provided by the Diocese.



**Please remember those serving in the military this holiday season, especially the members of our parish family...**

- Patrick Chalupa**
- Teran Chapman**
- Delaney Davis**
- Christopher Dominick**
- Joey Fulton**
- Joshua Haugh**
- Spencer Kordic**
- Tim Ryan**
- David Schmidt**
- Timothy Schmidt**
- Sean Sirl**

We regularly send Care Packages to our military members. Check the weekly bulletin (you can find it online) for a list of items we’re able to send, and are needed by the troops. All donations are appreciated and can be put in the bin in the Gathering Area.

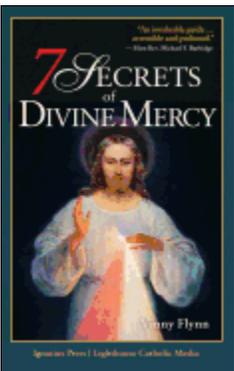
We also need bakers to bake and drop off baked goods to send to the military. For details, call Karen Spirakus at 216-524-7070.



## Lenten Reading...

# Make reading part of your Lent

By Mary Lou Mallinak, parishioner, Covenant Books & Gifts, North Royalton

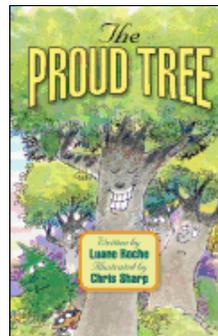


**7 Secrets of Divine Mercy**  
By Vinny Flynn  
Ignatius Press, \$14.95

Lent isn’t just for giving things up. This newest book by Vinny Flynn shows the heart of Divine Mercy with insights from Scripture, teachings of the Church, and St. Faustina’s diary. This Lent plumb the depths of God’s loving mercy.

**The Proud Tree**  
By Luane Roche  
Illustrated by Chris Sharp  
Ligouri Publications,  
\$5.99

This Lent children can read the imaginative telling of Jesus’ Crucifixion through the eyes of a proud and selfish tree. He was chosen to form the cross for Jesus’s Crucifixion and is humbled as he watches the suffering Jesus endures.





# Saint Matthias the Apostle Church

1200 West Sprague Road, Parma, OH 44134

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## Mission Statement of the People of Saint Matthias Church



*We, the family of Saint Matthias, called to be disciples of Christ, reach out with a loving and caring spirit. Proclaiming the message of the Risen Lord, we provide for the spiritual growth and development of our community. By sharing liturgies, ministries and responsibilities, we promote God's kingdom.*

**GOD'S GIFTS for GOD'S PEOPLE**  
*[time, talent and treasure]*



- **Opening the Mercy Door**
- **Lent/Easter Activities & Schedule**
- **New ALPHA class**
- **Pilgrimage to Italy**
- **Visits to the homebound**

"God Is Good News" is the newsletter of Saint Matthias the Apostle Church  
Editor: Patti Bertschler.

Staff: Irma Baker, Elaine Fechko, Mary Lou Mallinak, Chris Walter

## Saint Matthias Church

(440) 888-8220 - [www.stmatthiaschurch.org](http://www.stmatthiaschurch.org)

### Masses

Saturday: 4 p.m.  
 Sunday: 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.  
 Holy Days: 7 a.m. & 7 p.m.  
 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 8:30 a.m.  
 Wednesday: No service

### Reconciliation

Anytime by appointment or Saturday 3–3:45 p.m.

### Office Hours

Monday-Friday: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### St. Matthias Parish Staff

**Rev. Raymond A. Sutter**, D.Min. - Pastor  
**Ken Golonka** - Deacon Emeritus  
**Elaine Fechko** - Pastoral Minister - Outreach  
**Dianne Laheta** - Pastoral Minister - Catechesis  
**Gloria Litwinowicz** - Youth Minister  
**Sig Mikolajczyk** - Music Director  
**Joe Mikolajczyk** - Cantor/Choral Director  
**Michael Starinsky** - Business Manager  
**Chris Walter** - Office Manager  
**Laura Walters** - Receptionist  
**Joe Medwetz & Bob Arbuckle** - Facilities