



WEEKLY SCHEDULE FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

SUNDAYS

10:00 AM HOLY EUCHARIST
10:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL

A MESSAGE FROM FR. MATHEW

Dear people of God,
As I write this letter, All Saints Day is approaching us. On All Saints Day, we celebrate and honor the saints. However, my pastoral letter is not about the saint but it is about the sinner. Let me share with you an example. The other day, I took a photo of myself or self portrait (selfie) with my iPhone. As I was examining the quality of that photo which did not turn out the way I wanted; my daughter made an interesting remark. She remarked, "Papa, don't worry if you are imperfect, AI can make you perfect." She also added, "By the way, celebrities don't look perfect either, but AI makes their photos perfect." This short conversation had me wondering about the development of AI technology (Artificial Intelligence) and our fascination with perfection. AI has started dominating our lives including our social media feeds with fake pictures and fake videos. Our obsession with perfection is leading us on a dangerous path I believe. Recently, I was listening to a report about scammers using AI to scam people. Beware! Of course, there are many positive aspects of technological innovations – I am certainly not downplaying those positive contributions.

The good news of the gospel is that God loves us in the midst of our imperfections and brokenness. We are perfected by God alone. Recently at our church service, we meditated on the parable of the perfect Pharisee and the imperfect tax collector (Luke 18: 9-14). The saintly Pharisee took the route of self-righteousness infatuated with perfection. Thus, declaring himself as perfect before God. Not only did he indulge in self-pride but he uses prayer as a weapon to shame the other – the tax collector. Prayer became a performance!

On the contrary, the tax collector was so ashamed of his imperfect self. Standing far away ashamed to face the holy sanctuary, he was beating his chest, calling himself a sinner, and begging for the mercy of Almighty God. In the end of the story, the sinner or the imperfect tax collector went home perfected and justified by God. Unlike the Pharisee, prayer became an experience of God's love and reconciliation for the tax collector. Now, let me pose a question for all of us to think about. Are we disoriented with our religious perfection just like the tax collector or are we oriented with the reality of our imperfect self being justified by God's righteousness and grace alone?

Peace,
Varghese Mathew+

OUTREACH SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2 FEEDING WESTCHESTER

Starting in 1988 as a food bank with one man and a van, Feeding Westchester's Distribution Center has expanded into a 12,000 sq. ft. staging space with a 2,500 sq. ft. cooler capacity, 6,800 sq. ft. dry storage and expanded loading docks.

Getting nourishing food to the community requires a robust infrastructure and a high degree of coordination. FEEDING WESTCHESTER secures food and donations from national food and grocery manufacturers, retailers, shippers, packers, and growers, and from government agencies and other entities. Through its mobile pantry program, FEEDING WESTCHESTER distributes food to local food banks like the Dobbs Ferry Food Bank. All cash donations to FEEDING WESTCHESTER go toward implementing these services.



With federal food assistance cuts leaving thousands in Westchester struggling, families with kids and many seniors are missing out on much-needed food. Add to that group federal workers who are still working but not receiving paychecks during the government shutdown in Congress. Many are skipping meals! Each dollar you donate provides two meals to your neighbors in need. Please be as generous as you can on Sunday November 2 or any Sunday during the month of November.

MIDNIGHT RUN, NOVEMBER 21

Sorting of clothes for this run will start on Wednesday November 19 at 10 AM. We are grateful to all of the regulars who have been helping out on Wednesdays, preparing food, filling lunch bags and going on a run. We invite those who have never participated in the work of the run, to lend a hand in whatever way you can and add your name to the list of regulars. Speak with Nancy Gottself if you would like to help.

STEWARDSHIP

November is the month when we focus on giving thanks for all our blessings. In the Episcopal Church it is also the month when we consider stewardship, the act of giving to God. Both acts (thanks + giving) are exquisitely combined in the single word Thanksgiving. We need to be mindful of both of these actions through the month of November. Sharon de Vivo is spearheading our stewardship program and will soon be announcing the theme of this year's stewardship month.

OCTOBER 5: THE FEAST OF ONAM

Our thanks to the Mathew family for another tasty celebration of the Feast of Onam. We lost track of the number of delicious Indian dishes served on the occasion and there was so much food left over that many of us took treats home with us. In the accompanying program, Fr. Mathew and Anu read the story of Onam while Bethsaida performed a ritual dance. The feast of Onam celebrates the harvest, much like our own Thanksgiving, and parishioners at St. Barnabas are the lucky beneficiaries. Thanks again to the Mathew family for sharing this happy occasion with all of us.



OCTOBER 5 BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

For the most part all those receiving a blessing on St. Francis Day were well behaved and wagging their tails. Many people brought photos of pets who don't travel well to receive a blessing. The day was bright and sunny: a perfect day for honoring the patron saint of animals and to bless our beloved animal companions.



SO NICE TO HAVE OUR CHOIR BACK

The life of a choirmaster is never easy. Having found the perfect blend of voices to launch the season, our choirmaster, Larry Wolf, had to deal with the unexpected departure of one member who found the commute from Brooklyn every Sunday more than he could handle. But a replacement was found, and beautiful music fills the air at St. Barnabas every Sunday. We thank Larry and all of our choir members for their contribution to our services.

COFFEE HOUR

We love our coffee hours and so far our pot luck system of bringing food seems to work, even when the pickings are slim. Setting up is so easy and can be done the day before, but getting volunteers for the job is challenging. So, please consider being a set-up angel when Kathy Wolf sends out her weekly coffee hour requests. All you have to do is set up the coffee pot and put out cups, plates, napkins and utensils. How hard is that?

UPDATE ON OUR PLEDGES

Our August financials show that we are behind in our pledges by \$6587. This is \$2000 more than our July deficit. Winter is coming with increased heating costs, snow plowing, etc. If you are able, please try to bring your pledge up to date.

| | 8-31-25 | 8-31-24 | Budget | (Shortfall)/ Excess |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|------------------------|
| Pledge | \$37,413 | \$44,498 | \$44,000 | (\$6,587) |
| Weekly | \$3,176 | \$3,515 | \$3,444 | (\$268) |
| TOTAL | \$40,589 | \$48,013 | \$47,444 | (\$6,855) |

THANKSGIVING, NOVEMBER 27

As we gather with our families to give thanks for all our blessings this year we thought it might also be appropriate in these perilous times to add a prayer for the Human Family from our Book of Common Prayer:

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Happy Thanksgiving