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Website: www.saintmatthews.ca

PARISH OFFICE

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- frtientran9@gmail.com

Rev. Patrick Le, Asst. Pastor - ple@rcav.org

Rev. Mark Gazin, CSB Part-time Asst. Pastor - mgazin@rcav.org

Dcn. Steven Potusek, Deacon - spotusek@rcav.org

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM
Saturday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Rectory: 604-589-2083

Office: 604-589-2448 parish.smat@rcav.org

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Anna De Leon

Bookkeeper: Ma. Lourdes Tejada

P.R.E.P.: Christine Maypa - prep@saintmatthews.ca

Maintenance: Lorne Ward - lorne@saintmatthews.ca

Principal: Deborah Welsh - wels@stmatthewselementary.ca

Elementary School: 604-589-7545 - www.stmatthewselementary.ca
Preschool: 604-589-1222 - preschool@stmatthewselementary.ca

Sunday, December 24-25, 2023




4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus." - Lk. 1:31

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
"For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord." - Lk. 2:11

REGULAR MASS TIMES

SATURDAY: Anticipated Mass - 5:30 PM

SUNDAY: English Mass - 8:30 & 10:30 AM
12:30 & 7:30 PM
Vietnamese Mass - 5:00 PM
Last Sunday 12:30 PM (Mass in English with African Choir)

WEEKDAYS: Monday to Friday (except TUESDAY) - 8:00 AM
Tuesday - 7:00 PM
Friday - 7:00 PM (Vietnamese)
First Friday—7:00 PM (in English)
Saturday and Holidays - 9:00 AM

CONFESSIONS
Weekend & Daily Masses: half an hour before Mass

OFFICE AND CHURCH CLOSED ON MONDAYS FOR CLEANING



REGULAR DEVOTIONS

Holy Rosary
30 minutes before daily Mass

Divine Mercy
Tuesday after the 7 PM Mass

Our Lady of Fatima
3rd Monday of the month 6:30-7 PM

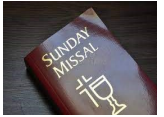
Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Saturday after the 9 AM Mass

First Friday
After the 8 AM Mass -
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
12:00 noon Benediction
6:25 PM—Holy Rosary

UPCOMING EVENTS


Sat.—Sun.	Jan. 6-7	New Year's Bottle Drive
Sat.—Sun.	Jan. 13-14	CWL Membership Campaign

(see details inside)



2024 Sunday Missal and Calendar are available

Missal—\$5 Calendar—\$2



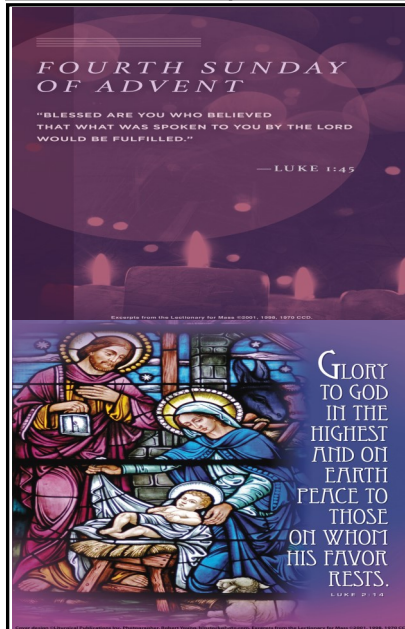

2024 Sunday Envelopes are now in the Fireside Room.
Please see inside for important reminders.




BAPTISM: By appointment with a minimum of 2 months' notice (during pregnancy) so that instructions can be given to parents and godparents about the duties and responsibilities assumed in this Sacrament. Contact parish.smat@rcav.org.

MARRIAGE: A minimum of 6 months' notice with one of the parties registered in the parish and practicing his/her faith. The Marriage Preparation course is mandatory. Please ask for "Guidelines for the Celebration of Marriage".

FUNERALS: Please call the parish office before making arrangements.



4th Sunday of Advent
Life is troubling. Who among us has not struggled with anxiety and difficulties, sometimes massive ones? I certainly have, as have many of my loved ones. If we do, does this mean that we don't trust the Lord or just need to toughen up?

I don't think so. How encouraging for us anxious and troubled souls to hear Luke describe the Blessed Mother Mary in these words, "But she was greatly troubled at what was said." An archangel has visited her. An inconceivable promise has been made to her. Her life has become wildly unpredictable, perhaps more so than any person before or since. The first point for us: the Lord is with her *precisely when she is troubled*. Her anxiousness and God's presence are not mutually exclusive. Christianity is not about a trance-like robotic indifference. It's about the presence of divine love. Even in — especially in — troubled circumstances.

Our troubled soul can become our greatest treasure. What seems so troubling at first to Mary becomes the best possible thing, Jesus, the Savior and Lord, is now her son. All the difficulties and troubles remain, and yet her movement

into the fullness of God is accelerated. What is troubling you right now? This scripture invites us now, this week, to hear the Lord's messenger say to us what he said to Mary, "Do not be afraid! You have found favor with God."

The Nativity of the Lord
"She gave birth to her firstborn son." The pain of childbirth is something that boggles my mind. I'm sure I couldn't handle it. I can't even watch scenes in movies in which a woman gives birth. I understand it's a beautiful part of nature, but there's still something awful about it and the attendant suffering.

Which is why it's worth pondering an often neglected and currently unpopular part of the Church's theology around the birth of Christ, His was miraculous because it caused no pain to His mother. Even her physical virginity remains intact. Of course, we modern scientific people scoff at such an idea.

Without obsessing over the obstetrical details, we discover a glorious illumination in the symbolic meaning of this birth that we moderns find so embarrassing. *God comes into the world in an utterly non-violent way*. He himself will suffer His own bloodshed but will never shed that of others. He is so peaceful and non-violent that He will even rise from the dead without breaking the seal of the tomb. All of humanity, in the Church, will give birth to Him in the Church free from the terrible pain due to original sin. How badly we need the truth of this miraculous birth today!

Let's delight in this great mystery and miracle of Jesus's birth. He is the Prince of Peace and always non-violent. We need not fear Him, ever.

- Father John Muir ©LPI

RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS
By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

4th Sunday of Advent
What is Your Fiat?
Are you an anxious people-pleaser prone to overcommitting yourself? Welcome to the club! We have slogans, and for your convenience I've listed them here:
"Sounds great!"
"No worries!"
"Absolutely, I can do that, not a problem!"
These are your go-to responses for when someone requests a favor that is a huge inconvenience, but you would rather die than disappoint. It's not *exactly* disingenuous — it's just a little neurotic. Again, welcome to the club.

You know who doesn't belong to this club? The Blessed Mother. For many reasons, I'm sure, but the biggest one is that she's always completely up-front. Take her response to the Angel Gabriel: "Let it be done."

If there are more powerful words than these, I can't think of them now. And yet, as responses go, this certainly isn't an enthusiastic one. There was never a human creature more willing to obey God than Mary, full of grace, so it makes it all the more striking that her response to Gabriel is this reserved — and it makes it all the more certain that she means exactly what she says.
Let it be done.

Not: Yes, this is exactly that I asked for!
Not: Nope. This sounds awful. Count me out.
But precisely this: If God is asking, my answer is yes.
The Angel Gabriel visits us all, in a way, at some point or another, bearing news we did not expect. When we can say, in the face of that uncertainty, "Let it be done," we are embracing our calling as disciples. We are becoming like Mary.
"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord." — Luke 1:38

The Nativity of the Lord
News of Great Joy
I am not going to wish you a Merry Christmas.

I have no problem with merriness, and I certainly hope you have your share of it today. May the frosting on your cookies be extra thick. May the lights of your tree be particularly twinkly. May the crackling of your fire be especially pleasant, and the places around your table filled by smiling loved ones. No, there is nothing wrong with being merry, especially on such a day.

But the angels did not bring news of great merriment. They brought news of great joy, and though our world often confuses the two, they are not the same thing.

Joy is harder to achieve than merriness, but it's easier to keep because it is far, far more durable. Joy can withstand the roughness of this earthly life in a way that merriness never could. Merriness cannot live in the hearts of people whose plans have been upended, whose futures have been rearranged and whose very lives are in danger. But joy certainly can.

Merriness doesn't follow from a long and uncertain journey, with no reassurances except the steadfast belief that you are doing the will of God. But joy does.

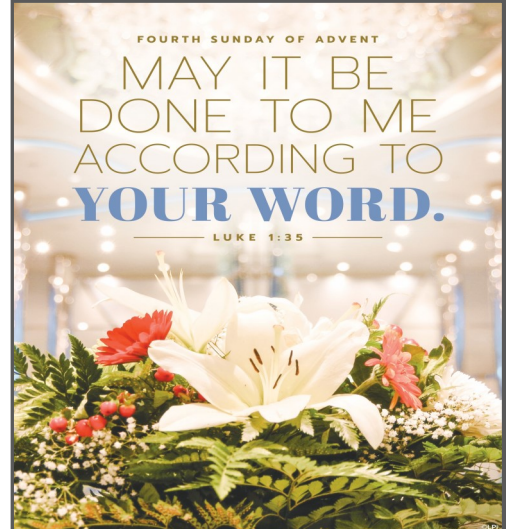
Merriness does not shiver in a stable or hang on a cross. But joy can, and it has.

May you have a truly joyful Christmas.
"You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing..." — Isaiah 9:2

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CONTACT LIST - ST. MATTHEW'S PARISH COUNCIL

African Community	Ms. Tina Obiwumma	augustinaobiwumma@gmail.com
Altar Servers	Mrs. Teodora Suzuki	teodora.suzuki@gmail.com
Altar Women	Mrs. Margaret Pereira	604-589-2448
Bereavement Ministry	Dcn. Steven Potusek	spotusek@rcav.org
BLD Community	Ms. France Alayon / Mrs. Nerrie Hombrebueno	francealayon@yahoo.com neriehombre@gmail.com
Bible Study	Mrs. Louise Klaponski	cw1stmatthewssurrey@gmail.com
Catholic Women's League	Mr. Johan Rego	cvasurrey@gmail.com
Catholic Young Adults of Surrey (CYAS)	Ms. Hoang Nguyen	hoangn.nguyen93@gmail.com
Choirs: Fri 7 PM	Mrs. Letty Regis	letic@telus.net
Sat 5:30 PM	Mrs. Kathleen Grosjean	grosjean@shaw.ca
Sun	Mr. Peter Luongo	sluongo@telus.net
(last Sunday)	Mr. Homer Garcia-Reyes	askmymusichomer@gmail.com
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Liturgy of the Word for Children	Mr. Tim McKinnon	tjm3499@gmail.com
	Mrs. Katrina Amurao	katrina.amurao@gmail.com
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	Ms. Van Nguyen	kathynguyen027@gmail.com
	Ms. Eleanor Wong	eleanorwong@aol.com
Youth Ministry		



LIVE THE LITURGY
4th Sunday of Advent
God's plans are not always what we imagined. Sometimes they make us hesitate. Be like Mary. Say "Yes, Lord" — and God will show you that His imagination is better than yours.

The Nativity of the Lord
Christ was born for you, exactly as you are. But He has come to offer you a new life. A better life. Don't be afraid to cast off the darkness. Step into the light of Christ's love. ©LPI

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CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR MASS SCHEDULE



December 23

5:30PM – Regular Sunday Mass (English)

December 24

8:30AM – Regular Sunday Mass (English)
10:30AM – Regular Sunday Mass (English)
12:30PM – Regular Sunday Mass (English)
2:30PM – Regular Sunday Mass (Vietnamese)

5:00PM – Christmas Eve Children’s Mass (English)
7:30PM – Christmas Eve English Mass
9:45PM – Christmas Eve Vietnamese Mass
12MN – Christmas Eve English Mass

December 25

8:30AM – Christmas Day English Mass
10:30AM – Christmas Day English Mass
12:30PM – Christmas Day English Mass
5:00PM – Christmas Day Vietnamese Mass
NO 7:30PM Mass

December 31

8:30AM – Regular Sunday Mass (English)
10:30AM – Regular Sunday Mass (English)
12:30PM – Regular Sunday Mass (English)
5:00PM – Regular Sunday Mass (Vietnamese)

7:30PM – New Year’s Eve (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God) English Mass

January 1

8:30AM – New Year’s Day (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God) English Mass
10:30AM – New Year’s Day (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God) English Mass
12:30PM – New Year’s Day (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God) English Mass
5:00PM – New Year’s Day (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God) Vietnamese Mass
NO 7:30PM Mass

Christmas and New Year’s Day, the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God, fall on a Monday this year and are Holy Days of Obligation. All parishioners are obligated to attend Mass for Sunday, Christmas, and New Year’s. And that one mass cannot count for both the Sunday obligation and the Christmas or New Year’s obligation.

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CHRISTMAS 2023 MESSAGE FROM PASTORS AND DEACON

Dear Parishioners,

In the spirit of great joy, as we celebrate once again the Birthday of Jesus, Our Savior, on behalf of St. Matthew’s Parish, together with Father Patrick, Father Mark, and Deacon Steve, I would like to wish everyone and your family a happy, healthy and Blessed Christmas Season! As we welcome the Infant Jesus into our hearts at Christmas, let us keep Our Lord with us always and allow Him to guide us throughout the New Year!

Our parish of St. Matthew’s has resumed to full force after Covid 19 and growing even more actively in all aspects. Let us open our hearts to welcome everyone and serve one another as we welcome Our Lord and serve Him!

We would like to thank all for your love, prayers, and generous support to our parish throughout this past year. We, at the rectory, are very grateful for all the Christmas cards, food, gifts that many have sent us over the holiday.

May the Saving Lord bless everyone with the fullness of life, peace, joy, happiness, and good health during this Christmas Season and throughout the New Year 2024.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Yours in Christ,
Frs. Tien Tran, Patrick Le, Mark Gazin & Deacon Steve Potusek



SUNDAY ENVELOPE AND ONLINE DONATION REMINDERS

SUNDAY ENVELOPES

1. If you missed Sunday mass/es, please put all consolidated donations in one envelope. Do not separate them into different envelopes as recordings can no longer be backdated (nor post-dated).
2. Do not use envelopes from the past years, the number assigned per family changes every year. Either use pink envelope and write your full name on it, or request for a new one from the Parish Office if nothing has been assigned to you yet.
3. Do not use Sunday envelopes for other purposes (i.e., mass offering, payment for Church fees, etc.), it will cause confusion for our Sunday counter volunteers.
4. If you do not use your Sunday envelope at least 10 times within the year, the system will not automatically assign a new one for the following year. However, you may always request for one at the Parish Office.

ONLINE DONATIONS

1. Please use the full name officially registered with the Parish Office, not names different from what was registered. Do not use your child’s name as well especially if they are minors. It causes confusion in recording online donations.
2. Monitor your bank statement regularly to make sure that your online donations are processed accordingly.
3. Update your online profile in St. Matthew’s website for any changes with your bank information (i.e., expiry date, etc.) to avoid failed transactions.
4. You may still get a Sunday envelope even if you are set up for online donation. Online donation does not give an option for Second or Special Collections (other than Building Fund).
5. If you are attending mass regularly every Sunday and your online donation is set up to be processed monthly, your mass attendance/donation record would only reflect once per month. If you wish for your weekly mass attendance to be recorded, please use your Sunday envelope, and drop it empty every time you attend Sunday mass.

Having mass attendance/donation record makes it easier for our priests to fulfill parishioners’ requests (i.e., letter of certification, subsidy to elementary or high school, sponsorship for baptism/confirmation, etc.), as it signifies the individual/family practicing the Catholic faith at least by regularly attending Sunday mass. Drop your envelope with or without monetary donation every time you attend mass, it gets recorded either way. And if you are attending mass in another parish, you may also drop your St. Matthew’s envelope and that will be sent to our Parish Office for recording as well.

YOUTH MINISTRY



New Year's Bottle Drive

Are you having any gatherings or parties over the holidays? If so, consider dropping off your refundables to the Youth Ministry's New Year's Bottle Drive happening on **January 7!** Bottles can be dropped off by the **Jubilee Hall stairs on Saturday, January 6 (there will be a sign!) or on Sunday, January 7 before 2:30pm** where a team will be able to assist you! All funds will help provide financial aid for youth to attend their upcoming retreat in May. If you have any questions, please contact Eleanor Wong at eleanorwong@aol.com. Thanks for your help!

ARCHDIOCESAN EVENT



Weekend Getaway Marriage Conference

We are excited to partner with Family Life Canada to offer weekend getaways to married couples in the Archdiocese of Vancouver! The Weekend Getaway is a marriage conference uniquely designed to enrich your relationship. For most couples, it's a chance to reconnect, re-establish the foundation, and rekindle romance. For others, it's a fresh start. For some, it will be the weekend that saves a marriage. Wherever you're at in your relationship, this retreat is a weekend to remember. The atmosphere is relaxed, warm and fun! You'll hear from real couples doing real life together... God's way. You'll be given time to process what you're learning. And together, build a joyful marriage that lasts a lifetime.

The next getaway is on the weekend of **February 16-18, 2024 at the Fairmont Empress in Victoria, BC**. The fee is usually \$299. Use promo code **RCAVVIC** to register for \$199. Accommodations at the Fairmont Empress Victoria for conference participants should be booked separately. Special room rate starts at \$209/night before January 26; rates may vary thereafter.

The registration deadline is **Wednesday, February 14, 2024**. For more information call Joyce 604-683-0281 ext. 223 or visit <https://beholdvancouver.org/events/marriage-conference-weekend-getaway>.

PROJECT ADVANCE



So far to date, out of a total of 2677 families, only 408 families (or 15.2%) have contributed to Project Advance. That means there are over 2200 families that have not contributed. This year, we are hoping for an increase in the level of participation among our parishioners.

Our parish's rebate from Project Advance will go towards paying for the mortgage on our Parish Centre which provides critical meeting spaces for ministries and groups. It will also assist us to pay our share of the assessment for rebuilding Holy Cross Regional Secondary School.

We need all of us to pitch in NOW! Any contribution will be appreciated, and NO DONATION IS TOO SMALL. Please contribute what you can but please participate and give. You can give online at projectadvance.ca, or in-person at our Parish Office. **For your donation to be included in 2023 tax receipt, it must be received by the Parish office no later than December 27, 2023.**



DEVOTIONS TO OUR LADY OF FATIMA

Please pray the Holy Rosary daily



Please include in your prayers All the Souls in Purgatory Eternal rest grant upon them O Lord, and let perpetual Light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

Pray For: Desiree & Virgilio Pino; Liz Da Costa; Tommy Contreras; Victor Miller; Gerry Della Mattia; Helen Doyle-Stote; Horst & Elsa Seliger; Demetrio Tamparia; Angelita Correa; Edgardo Olivares; Alex; David Keenan; Alberto Ordonez; Colleen Salmon; Teresita Dimaano; Irene Collingwood; Antonio, Adela, Arvin, Johnna, Virgilio & Karen Guinto; Jane & Eunice Dare; Adelaida, Ronald & Andrew De Leon; Felix Djuhari; Sueann Zore; Cathy, Colleen & Gavin Herrera; Jaime & Nita Fermalan; Emilia & Rose Sayson; Norbert De La Tour; Ma. Lydia Ramirez; Yvonne Bailey; Cora De Jesus; Mary Grace Navasca; Lario Roma; Vicenta Ty; Leny Uy; John Pinto; Ricardo Piraquive; Rowena Serviento; Leonora Fejer; Roy Arbiol; Ely Pamintuan; Andrea Bernabey; Caceres, Rios, Alonso and Santa Cruz family; Pablito Basit; Helena Olivares; Consuelo Santos; Margaret Lee; Valeriana Quinto; Deanna Maceda Silva; Lena Pinto; Gregorio De Guzman; Concepcion Romero; Paul Fernandes; Scott Strobel; Don Barber; Jorge Papa; Lynn Hagglund; Juliet Buan-Torres & Joseph De La Cruz.; Mitch Montero; Talah Bautista; Mauricio Engada; Martha Doyle; Luz Eugenio; Pam Barthelette; Alanna Mckinley; Regina Diolata; Lawrence & Susan Odubajo; Theresa Fagbamiye; Naty Parinas; Mary Ann Cabading; Jurest Pe Perion; Greg Narciso; Dahlia Constance Gomez; Concepcion Lacanienta

Priority on this list is given to parishioners, **as space permits**. Names will be removed from time to time. If you submit a name to the Prayer List, **it is your responsibility** to inform the office should his/her circumstances change.

Were you married outside the Catholic Church?

If you are married, but were not married in the Catholic church, we would like to offer you an opportunity to have your marriage regularized with the Church. Please make an appointment with our priest to discuss having your marriage convalidated.

Sacrament of the Sick. What was referred to as "Last Rites" is now called "Anointing of the Sick" administered by a priest when one is "in danger" due to sickness or old age. Please call the Parish Office to arrange.

Care Home Communion Visits. Please remember to let the Parish Office know whenever you or a loved one is hospitalized or moved into a Fleetwood area care home. The Parish has a dedicated group of people who will bring Holy Communion weekly to you or yours.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE (CWL) CORNER



Our Christmas weekend is likely full of gatherings, meals, gifts, family and friends.. Will you remember Jesus this weekend?

For us a Savior is Born Today! Lord Jesus, on this holy, beautiful day that is your birthday, we thank you for all the light and warmth and goodness in our lives. Help us to allow You to fill our world with PEACE. Happy Birthday Jesus!

ST. MATTHEW'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



New Family Applications 2024-2025

For any families wishing to have their child attend our school for the 2024-2025 school year, application forms will be available at the school office beginning **Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 9:00AM**. Application forms are only available at the school office. If you have any questions please contact the office at 604-589-7545 or office@stmatthewselementary.ca Thank you.

ST. MATTHEW'S PRESCHOOL & OUT OF SCHOOL CARE



Job Opportunity: St. Matthew's Preschool & Out-of-School Care is hiring a licensed ECE / ECE Assistant Teacher. Please email pre-school@stmatthewselementary.ca for the full job description and details.

HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL SPRING BREAK BASKETBALL SKILLS CAMP



Who and When:

January 2nd—5th 9am-11am Boys and Girls currently in Gr 4-7

Where: St Matthew's Elementary Gymnasium 16065 88 Ave, Surrey, BC V4N 1G3

Why: To improve overall basketball skills, meet future classmates and have fun.

How: Email Head Coach/Teacher Matthew LeChasseur hchoysbasketball@gmail.com to **confirm your child's spot** in the camp. It is limited space and first come first serve.

Download and fill out a registration form at www.hchoysbasketball.com and bring a cheque/cash and completed registration form on the first day of the camp.

Cost: \$100.00 includes daily Gatorade and prizes.

2024 CATHOLIC EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2024 VANCOUVER TRADE & CONVENTION CENTRE
 REGISTRATION@CISVA.BC.CA for conference inquiries

Be a part of something truly special and grand. Register as a vendor at our **2024 Catholic Educators' Conference**.

Here's four reasons why you won't want to miss this opportunity:

- 1. EXPOSURE**
With our conference set to attract a large crowd of over 1500 attendees, your brand will gain maximum exposure.
- 2. NETWORKING**
Connect with our 46 schools, potential clients, and fellow vendors to establish valuable business connections.
- 3. PROMOTION**
Benefit from our extensive marketing efforts that will promote your presence before, during and after the event.
- 4. INNOVATION**
Showcase your latest products and innovations to a captivated audience.

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CONNECT WITH US @CISVA2

Your presence at our conference will be a highlight, and we can't wait to have you on board. **Scan the QR code to register!**

Life without End Workshop

Join an Engaging 3-part workshop with Catholic resources on eternal life, meaningful funerals, and sacred burial.

Friday January 19th St. Matthews Parish 9:00am - 11:00am

I Hope and Positive Vision
 II Mystery of Death
 III Spiritual and Practical Preparation

Workshop Leader: Peter Nobes
 Director of Catholic Cemeteries

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