

The Messenger

St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church | 3450 Irving Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55408 | 612.825.9595 | www.stmarysgoc.org

December 2020

Inside This Issue

Bookstore.....	10
Children and Youth.....	11
Education and Fellowship.....	3
Koinonia.....	3
Missions and Outreach.....	7
Our Life Together.....	2
Parish News and Events.....	4
Philoptochos.....	5
Stewardship.....	8
Worship Schedule.....	3

St. Mary's

Mission Statement

To proclaim, celebrate, and share the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ in accordance with the Orthodox Tradition.

The Five Tasks of Our Parish Vision

- Hear
- Pray
- Grow
- Serve
- Share



A Message from Father Jason

Father Jason Houck, Associate Priest

Not Another Boring Banquet

During the last week of October, we had the honor to have Metropolitan Nathanael visit the Twin Cities to bestow the Bronze Cross Award on our own Paulette Hastings. The Bronze Cross Award is a service award given to a volunteer in each parish of the Metropolis to honor and encourage volunteerism in our parishes. Metropolitan Nathanael said of the award, "As Orthodox Christians, we place our faith in Jesus Christ who saved the world through service to others and self-sacrifice.



As His children, we are called to embrace Christ's example. We are truly blessed to work alongside so many servant leaders on a daily basis. We know that these men, women, and emerging adults seek to receive an imperishable wreath in heaven; however, it is our hope that by highlighting their example, others will be inspired to imitate them."

Paulette Hastings worthily received the award for her hard work. A few of Paulette's contributions to our parish include: her exemplary organization and inclusive leadership as past president of Philoptochos, her service as a past Church School Director, her visits to our V.I.P.'s at Jones Harrison Assisted Living Residence, her volunteering at the Taste of Greece, and her overall willingness to help when volunteers are needed. We arranged a surprise visit at her house (check out the video on St. Mary's YouTube channel and Facebook) allowing the Metropolitan the chance to bestow the award on Paulette. Due to COVID-19, the banquet in Chicago to honor the Bronze Cross

—article continues on page 3.

Our Life Together

Baptisms

Erika Young

Angelina Young

Valerie Young

November 14, 2020

Ayana

Parents: Alex & Candice Michael

November 15, 2020

Deaths

Helen Hasselstrom

November 2, 2020

Chris J. Boosalis

November 4, 2020

May their memories be eternal.



Share YourShelf

December's recipient of Share YourShelf contributions is Community Emergency Service (CES).

Sunday, December 6

Canned soups or vegetables

Sunday, December 13

Diapers (size 5)

Sunday, December 20

Hygiene items

(e.g. toothpaste, soap, shampoo)

Sunday, December 27

Baby formula

"The best antidote I know for worry is work. The best cure for weariness is the challenge of helping someone who is even more tired. One of the great ironies of life is this: He or she who serves almost always benefits more than he or she who is served."

—Gordon B. Hinckley, *Standing for Something: 10 Neglected Virtues That Will Heal Our Hearts and Home*

Memorial Prayers

Sunday, December 6

Luke Angelus (1 year)

Angie Angelus (8 years)

Our Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family of Elena Benakis Straub who passed away on October 17 in California.

We extend our sympathy to Maria Paradise whose brother Demetrios T. Demetriou passed away on October 29.

We extend our sympathy to Paul Hibberd whose sister Judith passed away on October 31 in California.

We extend our sympathy to Greg Witt whose father Donald Witt passed away on November 10.

May their memories be eternal.



Holiday Office Closures

Saint Mary's Church Office will be closed all day on Thursday, December 24 and Friday, December 25. The office will be open 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. on Monday, December 28-Wednesday, December 30. We will close at noon on Thursday, December 31 and will be closed on Friday, January 1.

St. Mary's Church Staff

Priest

Fr. George Dokos

Associate Priest

Fr. Jason Houck

Attached Priest

Fr. John Kostas

Deacon

Deacon Paul Kalina

Administrator

Julie Moricz

Parishioner Support Communications

David Mertesdorf

Ministry Support

Doria Saros

Youth Director

Jonathan Klein

Church School Director

Dena Tortorelis

Facilities Coordinator

Bob Yang

Music Director

Thespina Macres

Organist

Mark Macres

St. Mary's Parish Council

President

Dean Murdakes

Vice President

John Beauchamp

Secretary

Paul Hastings

Treasurer

Michael Rakes

Assistant Treasurer

Naira Istephanous

Members

Joseph DiGiovanni

Thomas Hainlin

William M. Hoeft

Nicholas Legeros

Dean Psychogios

Andrew Theodotou

Luke Twito

Education • Fellowship • Worship

Fellowship and Study Groups

Men's Fellowship

Friday, December 4
7:00 a.m.

In-person at Church and on Zoom

Topic: The Book of Exodus

Senior Citizens

No December gathering.

Monthly gatherings are cancelled until further notice.

All other gatherings are cancelled until further notice.

Koinonia

All Koinonia gatherings are suspended for the time being. We will keep you posted as to when gatherings can safely resume.



Weekend Schedule

Saturday

Orthros – 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Great Vespers – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday (live-streamed)

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Weekday Schedule

Wednesday, December 2

Habakkuk the Prophet

Saint Porphyrios

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Small Blessing of Water

– 6:00 p.m.

Friday, December 4

Saint Barbara

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, December 5

Saint Savas

Orthros – 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, December 9

Conception of the Theotokos

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, December 12

Saint Spyridon

Orthros – 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, December 15

Saint Eleutherios

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, December 17

Prophet Daniel; Saint Dionysios

Evening Divine Liturgy

– 6:00 p.m.

Christmas Weekend Worship Schedule

Thursday, December 24 — Eve of Nativity

Royal Hours – 9:00 a.m.

Vesperal Divine Liturgy – 4:00 p.m.

Friday, December 25 — Holy Nativity

Orthros – 9:00 a.m. • Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, December 26 — Synaxis of the Theotokos

Orthros – 9:00 a.m. • Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 27 — Sunday after Nativity;

Stephen the First Martyr

Orthros – 8:30 a.m. • Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

–Fr. Jason's article, continued from page 1

recipients was cancelled. The Metropolitan jokingly said, "normally we would have been doing this last May, at a boring banquet. This is so much more fun!"

It was a joyous event, but more important to highlight here is not the fun surprise, but rather, the wonderful example of stewardship of Paulette's time and talents for the upbuilding of our parish. It is worth reiterating Metropolitan's words here. "It is our hope that by highlighting their example, others will be inspired to imitate them." As we reflect on our stewardship commitment to St. Mary's of our time, talent, and treasure, let us look to Paulette's example of her beautiful stewardship to our community through the years.

Thank you, Paulette! Your stewardship is inspiring!

In Christ,

Fr. Jason Houck

Parish News & Events

Parish Council Voting Procedures

With the recommendation and blessing of the Metropolis of Chicago, Parish Council Elections will occur exclusively by mail. No in-person ballots will be distributed or accepted. Deadline for your mail-in ballot to be received by the Church Office is Friday, December 4, 2020. Our Board of Electors will count all ballots received by the deadline and send the results to the Metropolis for certification.

Thank you to all those who submitted applications to serve on the Parish Council. May God bless you for your love and dedication to St. Mary's.

Parishioner Reimbursements

Late last year our Parish Council passed a policy that allows for reimbursement within the year the expense was incurred. We will not accept any reimbursement requests after the close of the calendar year. Reimbursements for December 2020 purchases must be received in the church office by January 28 – expenses submitted beyond January 28 will not be accepted. We process all our expenses each week on Tuesday mornings. If you submit an expense after 5:00 p.m. on Monday, it will be held until the following week. Once all invoices are entered into the system, expenses are electronically approved and checks are generated and mailed directly to your home.

Angel Tree Program

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the purchasing and delivery of individual gifts has been suspended this year. Each of us who wish to support a child this Christmas is asked to send \$22.00 to St. Mary's (marked "Angel Tree" in the memo line). The child will receive from Angel Tree a gift card with a message from the incarcerated parent. The child will also get a coupon for a complimentary Bible which they can obtain online. Please send your donation early in order for it to arrive at St. Mary's by December 1. Questions may be directed to *Bob Kennedy*, 952.941.5311.

Parish-Night Week: 2020-2021

The Church Facing the World

Parish-Night Week continues this month on the week of December 13. During the week, the HOPE/JOY (kindergarten-grade 5) will be meeting virtually on Tuesday from 6:30-7:15 p.m., the adults and Senior GOYAns (grades 9-12) will be meeting virtually on Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 p.m., and the Junior GOYAns (grades 6-8) will be meeting virtually on Thursday from 6:30-7:15 p.m. The adults and Senior GOYA group must register by going to the URL below.

- November 17-19: Deacon Philip Wagner presents on "Prisoners Outside of Prisons: Still Paying the Price" <https://tinyurl.com/NovemberPNRegistration>. A link is also on our website.
- December 15-17: Fr. George Parsenios will present on the topic: "The Nativity and the Biblical Narratives."

Year-End Giving Guidelines

It is hard to believe that we are in the final month of 2020. So many things have happened this past year, not the least of it the generosity of our parishioners. As we approach the end of both our calendar and fiscal year, it is important that the parish correctly record your stewardship gifts. Every dollar we receive **before 3:00 p.m. on Monday, December 28**, will be recorded and reflected on your year-end Contribution Statement, and matched against your yearly pledge, as stewardship income for 2020. Donations received after the deadline will be counted towards our budget for next year.

On occasion, a parishioner may choose to provide additional funds to the church, indicating these dollars should be recorded as a donation for a "future year." While we can make a notation of this request, the funds will still be recorded and reported as income for 2020. Your Statement of Financial Giving will accurately reflect all income received in a particular calendar year. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please see our Parish Council Treasurer, Michael Rakes, for clarification.

Philoptochos



As we move through the Christmas Advent Season, Philoptochos thanks you for your support of our work all year long. We extend our best wishes to the parish for health, spiritual growth, and time with those you love, even if it's from afar.

Operation Classroom

Operation Classroom is a national Philoptochos initiative that encourages local chapters to connect with a neighborhood school to assist them in whatever way we can. At St. Mary's, we have initiated a relationship with Jefferson Community School, a PreK-Grade 8 school with 517 students, of whom 83% are eligible for free lunches and 9% for reduced price lunches.

Our first project is a collection of new and clean, gently used winter outerwear, specifically:

- Winter Jackets (Sizes 3T – Appropriate Adult)
- Waterproof Mittens
- Hats

The collection will run through Tuesday, December 15. Donations can be brought to the bin in the south entrance of St. Mary's. Chairs: Jayne Klatt and Paulette Hastings.

Women's Book Club Discussion

Tuesday, December 8, 7:00 p.m.

The discussion of "The Life of Saint Macrina" will be on Tuesday, December 8, and all women are welcome. We plan to have options to attend via Zoom or in person, weather permitting. Copies of the book can be purchased from the St. Mary's office for \$12.00. Chairs: Katherine Boosalis and Diakonissa Alexandria Kalina.

Cookbooks Make Great Gifts!

There is a limited quantity of the St. Mary's cookbook "Come Sit at Our Table: A Celebration of Food," so consider getting one this holiday season! They make a great gift for a godchild, friend or relative! For contactless delivery through the mail, send \$20 + \$4 shipping by mailing a check payable to St. Mary's Philoptochos (please write cookbook in the memo line) at 3450 Irving Avenue S, Minneapolis 55408.

Vasilopita for the New Year and St. Basil Academy

Pending approval by the COVID Safety Committee, Philoptochos' Annual Vasilopita (Sweet Bread) Sale is a go! Our intent is to have all orders placed through the church office or via an online option with delivery on Sunday, January 10. Cost is \$15 per loaf. Please watch for more information in other church communications. Chairs: Toni Bazakos and Tina Menter.

Proceeds from the Vasilopita Sale will go to St. Basil Academy. The National Philoptochos Society purchased the estate that became St. Basil Academy in 1944, and has responded to the needs of the Academy and its children for more than 70 years. Located in Garrison, NY, St. Basil Academy is a home for children in need. The academy provides a loving Christian environment where resident children are nurtured to adulthood.

Thank You...

To all who made the **Olive Oil Sale** a success, including all who purchased bottles and the organizing committee of co-chairs Stephanie George and Paulette Hastings, Cathy Forchas, Vicki Hanson, Jayne Klatt, Annette Legeros, and Dena Tortorelis. Nearly \$2,000 was raised for Philoxenia Charities.

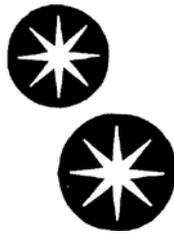
To Presvytera Alexandra Houck for baking five loaves of artoclasia to celebrate **Philoptochos Sunday** on November 1.

To Sofia Johnson for organizing another **Days for Girls** service event and for all who participated with donations and/or working on making reusable menstruation kits. At the time of this writing, we are reaching out to local social service agencies to provide finished kits to girls and women in the Twin Cities.

To Kally Youngdahl for leading another rousing **Greek Zumba** session!

To Carol Smith for organizing the hearty meal for **FOCUS Minnesota** guests, and to all who contributed to the dinner and helped serve: Mary Anderson, Sandra Anderson, Julie Anderson-Smith, Olga Berkovskaya,

Presvytera Christa Dokos, Kathy Economou, Cathy Forchas, Elena Gabor, Georgia B. George, Stephanie George, Paulette Hastings, Linda Hodge, Erlene Holman, Presvytera Alexandra Houck, Jayne Klatt, Hope Kennedy, Fifi Kafkas, Mary Kafkas, Carol Karos, Demetra Kordopitoulas, Connie Kouzes, Kathy Martin, Kristina Matsch, Lani McCollar, Tia Muchulas, Mary Pappas, Yana Patridge, Anna Paulson, Popie Rakes, Julie Rist, Georgia and Sophia Rouman, Krissa Rovolis, Photine Saar, Sarah Schwark, Cathy Selin, Victoria Shields, Ann Theodotou.



Happy 100, Bill Kordaris!



Bill (Vasilis) Kordaris was born on November 25, 1920, in the Village of Makri, just outside of Tripolis in southern Greece. After serving in the Greek army during the Greek Civil War, he came to America in late 1950. After a brief stay with his uncles in Montevideo, Minnesota, Bill settled in downtown Minneapolis working for his future father-in-law, George Kosmas. He married Evelyn Kosmas in 1953. Sons Peter and Jim arrived in 1954 and 1956 respectively. Bill worked as maître d' at the Park Terrace Supper Club in Saint Louis Park, then owned the Gopher Cafe on 9th and Hennepin. After selling the Gopher, Bill purchased the Bridge Cafe in Dinkytown on the U of M campus. In the early 1970s, Bill went to work for Byerly's Restaurants until he retired at age 65. Bill and Evelyn then spent winters in Florida and were also active at St. Nicholas Church in Ft. Pierce. Bill enjoys his garden and occasionally goes fishing with his son Peter. He loves spending time with his three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Thank You from FOCUS Minnesota

Another successful trip to Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and school in Onamia, MN.

Eight vehicles left FOCUS House on Saturday, October 17, filled to the brim with generous donations of goods for our brothers and sisters in Mille Lacs County. Nearly 50 coats were donated along with winter outerwear, household goods, over 1000 diapers and wipes, school supplies and much more. This is a growing relationship for FOCUS Minnesota and we thank GOD for the opportunity and all of you for your heartfelt outpouring of love.

Vera Proctor

Thank You from the Kouzes and Houck Families

The family of Christina Kouzes Houck is deeply grateful for the kindness and compassion extended to our family during this difficult time, whether you kept us in your prayers, sent some lovely flowers, or performed other acts of kindness, you have touched our hearts. Christina was grateful to God for her life. May her memory be eternal. God bless you all.

St. Mary's was and has been a very generous partner in this opportunity and many other service opportunities to FOCUS House. Winter outerwear for all ages is still welcomed for all ages, men, women and children. Boots are especially welcomed. As you can imagine, there is a greater need this year.

You can bring your clothes to St. Mary's Church and put in the baskets by the office or by the food bags during church services. Or you can take a drive to FOCUS House at 550 Rice Street, St. Paul, Mondays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Thank you very much.

Thank You from Metro Hope Ministries

Dear St. Mary's,

Thank you so much for all of the backpacks and school supplies you gave to our kiddos! You sent them off to a new year of school filled with joy over your gifts. Thank you for all of the ways you bless Metro Hope!

God bless you—
Cammy Oren
(Metro Hope Ministries)

Mission & Outreach

It is December 2020, "what a year." We are grateful for our blessings and look forward to our growth as Christians as we choose to do good things in 2021. "I love St. Mary's..." what is your thought(s). Can you take a moment (7 seconds) to share a short fun video and send it to Fr. Jason?

St. Nicholas Day Harvest Pack

Sunday, December 6



*Share the Harvest Meal Packing Event
Sunday, June 28*

You can make a difference through a second 2020 Missions and Outreach event. St. Mary's goal is to fund and pack 15,000 meals. St. Mary's is privileged to have two donors fund Breakfast with St. Nicholas. We and other Greek Orthodox churches support the fight against hunger! St. Mary's and the Metropolis of Chicago safety committees have approved.

Where and When: 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 6, in the Great Hall.

What we're packing: We'll pack food that is nut-free, gluten-free, vegan, and U.S. sourced ingredients that are full of carbohydrates, protein, vitamins, and easily digestible to meet the needs of people with different needs and food restrictions. There are volunteers to help you with any questions. Join us as we work together to fight the #1 health risk: hunger and food insecurity. Share the Harvest!

SignUp Genius:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4ca4ac2da5fa7-share>



Scan this code for more information.

This volunteer effort to put together meals is especially important as the "COVID-19 crisis is growing," Hennepin County spokesperson.

Simpson House and CES food shelves have stated that the oat meals were a favorite of their clients. CES shares a box a day with their clients.

P.S.: the meals are a hit at our local food shelves.

ProLife March, January 22, 2021

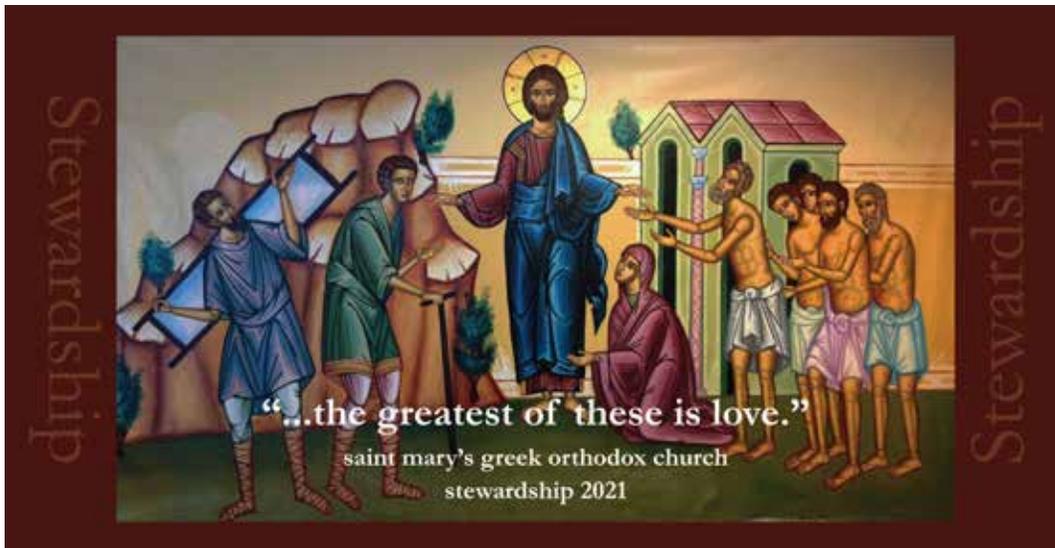
This heartfelt event with a small service takes place at the Cathedral of Saint Paul, then a march/walk to the Minnesota State Capital steps. Last year (below photo) shows the large number of younger people attending. Reading the signs and singing "Amazing Grace" is truly an ardent, devout morning to think about how we can help give tiny unborn and born lives a chance. Please plan to prayerfully attend this emotional event, always a very special March for Life. And while attending, take a moment to read the signs that people are holding so dearly. The signs share and confess their regret.

Orthodox Christians for Life Motto: "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you." –Jeremiah 1:5



2020 ProLife March

Stewardship



As we close out 2020, we want to thank you all for your support of St. Mary's. You have all collectively allowed us to care for the facility, for the staff, for our parishioners, and for the community, all the while increasing our liturgical and spiritual education efforts, during a most challenging time. What a year it has been, and yet, here we are, better and stronger for our struggles.

You will be receiving your 2021 Stewardship packet soon, if you haven't already done so. Our challenge for 2021 is to continue to glorify God with our time, talent and treasure, and to be cheerful givers. The church may survive without your support, but your soul will greatly benefit from your commitment of time, talent and, not insignificantly, your treasure. It's what we are called to do as faithful Orthodox Christians. Please fill out your pledge cards prayerfully and return them timely, so that we may plan for 2021!

Please very carefully read the testimonial below of a wonderful young adolescent in our parish, Lucas Hanna, who spoke in church a few weeks ago. His words are beautiful and incredibly powerful. He speaks of a faith that is unwavering, and he represents, along with many other young people, the future of our church.

May God bless you during this Nativity Season, and may He bring you health and happiness in the New Year!

Some words from Scripture and the Holy Fathers to ponder and pray about:

"None of us lives to himself and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord and if we die, we die to the Lord; so whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's" –Romans 14:7-8

"Without charity, virtue is an illusion"
—from Abba Isaiah, *Ascetic Discourse*

"Our money is the Lord's, however we may have gathered it." –St. John Chrysostom

"...Send your treasures to the heavenly storage room. Deposit your wealth in God's Bank, distributing it to the poor, the orphans and the widows, so that you can receive a million times more in the Second coming of Christ" –Elder Joseph the Hesychast

Lucas Hanna's Testimonial

Hi, my name is Lucas Hanna

I am here to talk about the church and how COVID has affected all of us. Before COVID we were just getting into lent, it's my favorite time of the year, because it really allows me to look back in the past and see what I can improve on and seek repentance. So we come upon our first lent service and we were getting ready for another month of preparation for the Resurrection, and then we heard about the virus, and then the books went away, the pamphlets went away, the Bibles went away, and then the church

shut down, and as of that Sunday the Metropolitan called church off, and then we realized what we lost. We lost the choir, we lost the altar, we lost the congregation, and Sunday school. All of those things were taken from us. And we started celebrating liturgy in our house and before I knew it, Holy Week came. And I remember thinking, I hope that the Lord will resurrect not only himself at the end of this week but also lift the virus up away from us and break free our chains that are keeping us inside our houses. And I realized, this week was going to be different.

So I lit candles, I sang hymns, I tuned into the Facebook page every day of Holy Week. and every service. I lit candles for the twelve gospels on Thursday, I made an epitaphion, and decorated it with flowers and bay leaves, and we found the big candles that were my Yiayia and Papou's wedding candles on Holy Friday. We sang hymns and we processed around the house and stopped at each corner, and then we went back in and finished the service. Then Saturday came. Overnight I changed the scenery of our whole house, and dusted all the icons and wiped them clear of all the dirt and dust and put up white pure cloths and curtains all around the house in the middle of the night so it would be ready for tomorrow's service. Then on Saturday morning I threw rose petals and holy water all over and sang "arise oh God" and although it was different I really, really, really in that moment missed our church, and the joy that we felt back then. Then I went out and dug up lilies and daffodils and all different flowers, and placed them on the mantel for the midnight service and we turned off the lights and waited for the holy flame to be lit and before we knew it, there was joy in the air and Christ had truly been risen, and in that moment, I cried a little. It was very emotional for me this year to be away from the church and not be able to sing Christ is risen with the congregation and the choir. And enjoy the festivities after the service, and enjoy the lamb burgers and the never ending

trays of bacon, and then finally carrying the lamb for our feast tomorrow out of the kitchen and into the car, and being scared that we would get pulled over and think that a person was in the backseat! And I stayed up all night, participating in the services.

At this time I would like to note that even after all that... Jesus was with us in the difficult time, and it was definitely different, and I realized how much I missed my church. Now I want you all to think about what you missed during the time away from the parish. I know I missed the choir, and singing on Sunday mornings and late night choir rehearsals with Despina, and GOYA, and being in the altar, and talking with my friends.

Most of the things that are important in the church are back, such as the congregation and serving in the altar and communion. And although they are vital to the church, there are still some things that aren't there for me yet such as the choir, the festival, and we had a trip to a monastery this year too that was called off, and even chant group and coffee hour. Those are still things that are still not back for me yet, and I'm sure you all miss them too.

So I want everyone to be thankful for the things that are back. We are strong, this epidemic has strengthened us to be more thankful and persevere more, and really enjoy what we had and will hopefully continue to have in the future. I encourage you all to make a big step in your faith and be more a part of the parish, so maybe next service, sing a little louder, be a little more bold, show that you are strong and that we as humans can persevere from this. And always be proud of our faith. So next time you wake up and think "ughhh I have to go to church tomorrow" or "I don't want to get out of bed" think about how bad it was before and be thankful that we still have church today and the ability to worship in this troubling time in our society. Be thankful, I can, and you can. We can persevere.

Thank you.

Percentage	GIVING CHART: Household Annual Income				
	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	\$250,000	\$400,000
4%	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$10,000	\$16,000
5%	\$1,250	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$12,500	\$20,000
10%	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$40,000

In the Bookstore

by Rebecca Myerly

Prayer is the light and life of the soul.

It is an everlasting bond uniting us to Christ...

[A]ll human beings need prayer no less than plants
and trees need water.

And just as they cannot grow and bear fruit if they
are not receiving

water and nourishment through their roots,
neither can we bring forth the fruit of piety, godli-
ness, and a life pleasing to God

if we are not watered by the grace of the
Holy Spirit in prayer. (x, xi)

~ Saint John Chrysostom

*The Light of the World: Prayers to Our Lord and
Savior Jesus Christ*, translated by the Very Rever-

end Archimandrite Maximos
Constas, is a source and well
of nourishing spiritual water.
Archimandrite Maximos ex-
plains in his introduction:

[T]he prayers in this volume
take the form of confessional
meditations, in which readers
are invited to speak directly
to Christ, and at the same

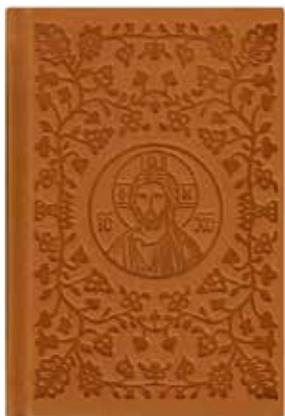
time reflect on the nature of their life in relation
to him.... These prayers consequently invite and
require the reader to ask: "Who am I in this world?
Where is my place within it? How am I oriented to
it, and what is the nature of my relationship to it?
What is my response to this world—the nature and
degree of my 'responsiveness' to it?" From this
point of view, the prayers function as a mirror in
which the self is reflected in the text, external-
ized and made available to the reader for self-re-
flection, examination of conscience, and height-
ened self-knowledge. To read these prayers with
devotion is to surrender oneself to the world of
the prayer; it means to consent to lose oneself, to
allow oneself to be reconfigured within that world
and restored on a higher level. These dynamics of
reading and reflection—a movement of self-loss

and self-discovery—provide the conditions for the
possibility of a spiritual exercise which, in the
framework of these prayers, is a process that en-
courages heartfelt confession through a genuine
dialogue with Christ. (xvi-xviii)

Elder Aimilianos of Simonopetra describes prayer
as "the journey of the soul toward God" (xi). *The
Light of the World* is filled with prayers to Christ to
help the reader on this journey. Composed of prayers
from many Saints, including Basil of Caesarea,
Ephraim the Syrian, Gregory Palamas, Gregory the
Theologian, Isaac the Syrian, John Chrysostom, and
Maximos the Confessor, all translated and presented
in a way that invites meditative reading, this book is
one the attentive reader will find to be like Scripture,
which always speaks anew with every reading—with
every prayer.

Newly published (November 2020), *The Light of the
World* is another vital book from Newrome Press for
people seeking prayer in the patristic tradition. This
book is truly a lasting gift to give to anyone, includ-
ing oneself. It is a gift of grace.

"Jesus, Son of God, open the eyes of my heart,
so that I might know the benefits
of prayer and spiritual reading" (27-28).



Children & Youth

Our Children and Youth Mission Statement

To cultivate a safe and welcoming environment for kids by nurturing healthy relationships within the church family. We will teach the youth by building a strong foundation of knowledge, and together, we will experience the Orthodox tradition by following the four circles of youth ministry: **Liturgia** (Worship), **Diakonia** (Service), **Martyria** (Witness), and **Koinonia** (Fellowship), leading our youth to develop, by their own free will, a personal relationship with God and to pursue union with Him.

HOPE and JOY

Kindergarten-Grade 2 and Grades 3-5

- ▶ Sunday, December 13, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
HOPE/JOY in the Great Hall
We will be listening to Christmas songs and decorating cards for our VIPs. Watch Jon's e-mails to sign up.
- ▶ Tuesday, December 15, 6:30-7:15 p.m.
Parish-Night Week
"Offering Our Talents and Gifts"
Watch your emails for the Zoom link!

Junior GOYA

Grades 6-8

- ▶ Wednesday, December 2, 6:45-8:00 p.m.
Junior GOYA Christmas Party in the Great Hall
Watch Jon's e-mails to sign up.
- ▶ Thursday, December 17, 7:00-8:00 p.m.
Parish-Night Week
"Offering Our Talents and Gifts"
Watch your emails for the Zoom link!

Senior GOYA

Grades 9-12

- ▶ Wednesday, December 9, 6:45-8:00 p.m.
Senior GOYA Christmas Party in the Great Hall
Watch Jon's e-mails to sign up.
- ▶ Wednesday, December 16, 7:00-8:00 p.m.
Parish-Night Week
Senior GOYAns and Adults: Fr. Geroge Parsenios presents on The Nativity and the Biblical Narratives!
Register for meeting:
<https://tinyurl.com/DecemberPNRegistration>

Winter Outing

Be sure to check your emails for information regarding our winter outing that will take place over Christmas break!

In-Person Youth Activities

It is important for us to follow social distancing measures throughout our in-person activities. Below are the safety precautions:

- Masks must be worn properly by everyone for the duration of the event
- Practice social distancing (at least 6 feet apart from each other)
- Avoid touching each other
- Sanitize hands frequently. Everyone will be required to sanitize your hands when you arrive and encouraged throughout the evening.

Please note that while the Church has taken steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19, it cannot guarantee safety. Attending this activity may increase your child's risk of contracting the disease. By attending these events for which you are making a reservation, you acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and assume the risk of becoming ill. Further, you agree to release, covenant not to sue, discharge, and hold harmless the Church, its employees, agents, and representatives, of and from all liabilities, claims, actions, damages, costs or expenses of any kind arising out of or relating to COVID-19. You understand and agree that this release includes any claims based on the actions, omissions, or negligence of the Church, its employees, agents, and representatives.

When should I stay home? For the well-being of others, you should stay home if you are displaying COVID-19 symptoms, test positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone with symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case. Click this link if you need help discerning whether you are sick: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html>.



Follow the GOYAns on Instagram: **St_Marys_GOYA**

October Recap

The Junior GOYAns gathered out in the Courtyard and played Jeopardy: Boys vs. Girls. The girls were up the whole game and then the boys came back to win! The Senior GOYAns participated in a Paraklesis Service in the Church followed by a campfire in our parking lot on the windiest day of the year! We still stayed warm and made a few s'mores together! The HOPE/JOY kids were planning on attending the Sever's Fall Festival but were unable to make it there this year.

Youth Feedback

If you have any comments, suggestions, or concerns regarding our youth program(s) please let us know. To access our formal feedback process, go to our St. Mary's home page-Click on "Youth," then "Youth Program Feedback." Your comments will be forwarded to a member of the Parish Council and will be reviewed for follow up.



*By God's Grace, Summer Camp 2021 will be held July 3-9, 2021.
Please prayerfully consider this amazing ministry.*

Summer Camp Staff Applications are due November 30, 2020

Questions? Contact Doria at 612.825.9595 or doria@stmarysgoc.org.

To apply...

Go to <http://youth.stmarysgoc.org/> or www.stmaryscamp.com (St. Mary's Camp website's home page) and click on the link at the bottom of the page.

There are 3 steps:

1. If new to this site, please create a NEW account using a NEW password. If returning, please sign in with your username and password. Please remember that the "forgot your password" link will send your password to the same e-mail that you initially used when you set up your account. The retrieved password frequently ends up in spam or junk mail. If you still don't receive your password within a couple of hours either Jon Klein or Doria Saros can reset it for you.
2. Create/Update a Profile.
3. Register for Summer Camp 2021

Saint Mary's Greek Orthodox Church
3450 Irving Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Twin Cities, MN
Permit #3735

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



“Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord;
let it be to me according to your word.”

**St. Mary's
Greek Orthodox Church**

The Messenger is published
monthly by St. Mary's
Greek Orthodox Church,
3450 Irving Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55408
December 2020

Telephone
612.825.9595

Fax
612.825.9283

Email
stmarysgoc@stmarysgoc.org

Website
www.stmarysgoc.org

Facebook
 www.facebook.com/stmarysgoc/

Publication Deadlines
The Messenger—
First Sunday of each month.

Sunday Bulletin—
Preceding Thursday,
12:00 Noon

December 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Habakkuk the Prophet; St. Porphyrios 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-Small Blessing of Water 6:45pm-Junior GOYA in the Great Hall	3	4 Saint Barbara 7:00am-Men's Fellowship 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	5 Saint Savas 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 5:00pm-Great Vespers
6 Tenth Sunday of Luke Saint Nicholas "The Messenger" Deadline 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	7	8 6:15pm-Parish Council 7:00pm-Women's Book Club	9 Conception of the Theotokos 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 6:45pm-Senior GOYA in the Great Hall	10	11	12 Saint Spyridon 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 5:00pm-Great Vespers
13 Eleventh Sunday of Luke 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 11:30am-HOPE/JOY in the Great Hall	14	15 Saint Eleutherios 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 6:30pm-Parish-Night Week <i>HOPE/JOY</i>	16 9:00am-"The Messenger" Mailing 7:00pm-Parish-Night Week <i>Senior GOYA & Adults</i>	17 Prophet Daniel Saint Dionysios 6:00pm-Evening Divine Liturgy 6:30pm-Stewardship Com. 7:00pm-Parish-Night Week <i>Junior GOYA</i>	18	19 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 5:00pm-Great Vespers
20 Sunday before Nativity 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	21	22	23	24 Eve of Nativity <i>Office Closed</i> 9:00am-Royal Hours 4:00pm- Vesperal Divine Liturgy	25 Holy Nativity <i>Office Closed</i> 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy	26 Synaxis of the Theotokos 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 5:00pm-Great Vespers
27 Sunday after Nativity Stephen, First Martyr 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	28	29	30	31 Leave-Taking of Holy Nativity <i>Office Closes at Noon</i>		

Parish Christmas Decorations

Name of Contributor(s): _____

In memory of: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Contributions will be acknowledged in the Christmas bulletins.

Please return this form and your donation to the Church Office no later than Sunday, December 20.