

The Messenger

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

June 2021

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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

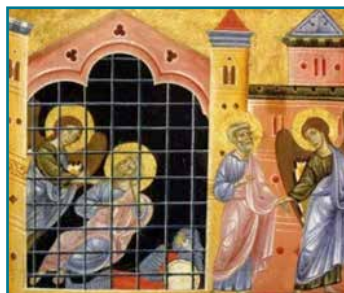
The Apostles Peter and Paul sharing the Good News



Saints Peter and Paul

Lately, many of us have been talking about good news. Decreases in COVID-19 infections, less restrictions related to the virus, and increasing economic and social activity. We may be chatting with relatives and friends about improving conditions. We might feel freer than we have felt in a year! But what about something that is far, far more important? What about something that is far more freedom-giving than changes in the pandemic? What about the Good News, the Gospel, and Christ's victory over sin and death?

On June 29, we celebrate two of the most important saints, Saints Peter and Paul, who are the chief of the Apostles and sharers of the Good News. Saints Peter and Paul depicted in the icon on the top are symbolically pillars and foundations of the Church. Our Orthodox Faith is founded on the Good News these Apostles brought to the masses. The Good News spread due to their self-sacrifice and love for God, for the truth, and for others.



St. Peter freed from prison, Acts 12

We may ask, what if Saints Peter and Paul and the other Apostles never spoke about their newfound faith? What if they just stayed "comfortable" and never shared their faith with others? Would the Church have grown? Obviously not. God has given us the Good News, the Gospel, not to simply keep to ourselves, but to share with others. This is one challenge to us today. As we celebrate this big feast day, the feast of Saints Peter & Paul—and similarly the feast of the Holy Apostles on June 30th—we ought not only to

honor them by singing hymns, but also by being imitators of the Apostles by sharing our faith with others. St. Paul wrote, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, so that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ (1 Corinthians 10:33-11:1). St. Paul asked the Corinthians to imitate his efforts to save others.

This June, let us imitate the Apostles' efforts to share the Gospel with others! But what might sharing the Gospel be in our context? Let us consider some of the following ideas. Being more open about your faith at your workplace. Making the sign of the Cross in public places—like in restaurants. Being vocal in a loving way about certain moral boundaries due to your faith.

—article continues on page 3.

Our Life Together

Birth

Kyra Kay

Parents: David & Jenna George

April 21, 2021

Madeline

Parents: Andrew & Amy Gruber

April 27, 2021

Baptisms

Audrey Ingram

April 24, 2021

Joel Soto

May 1, 2021

Marriage

Nikolas Kouzes to Alicia Vouk

May 8, 2021

Death

Christos A. Bakritges

April 29, 2021

May his memory be eternal.



Memorial Prayers

Sunday, June 6

Bill K. Nicklow (6 months)

Sunday, June 13

Koula Triantafyllou (1 year)

Betty Andrews (1 year)

*Epaminondas "Peter" Triantafyllou
(29 years)*

Andrew "Andy" Andrews (40 years)

Our Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to George Martin and family on the passing of his nephew, Christopher Paletta, on May 14.

Share YourShelf

June's recipient of Share YourShelf contributions is Simpson Food Pantry.

Sunday, June 6

Canned meals – large cans
(e.g. chili, pork & beans)

Sunday, June 13

Potatoes – boxed, instant, or canned

Sunday, June 20

Cereal – hot and cold

Sunday, June 27

Hygiene items
(e.g. toothpaste, soap, shampoo, etc.)

It is not enough to help the poor. We must help them with generosity and without grumbling. And it is not enough to help them without grumbling. We must help them gladly and happily. When the poor are helped, there ought to be these two conditions: generosity and joy.
—Saint John Chrysostom

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

Naira Istephanous

Vice President

William M. Hoeft

Secretary

Paul Hastings

Treasurer

Thomas Hainlin

Assistant Treasurer

Michael Rakes

Members

John Beauchamp

Daniel Buss

Ina Dunham

Nicholas Legeros

Dean Psychogios

Maria Smith

Andrew Twito

Education • Fellowship • Worship

Fellowship and Study Groups

Men's Fellowship

Friday, June 4

7:00 a.m., Zoom and in person

Friday, June 18 (Psalms)

7:00 a.m., Zoom only

Saturday Bible Study

Every Saturday

(beginning June 5)

9:00 a.m., **Lecture Room**

- Please use the south parking lot entrance by the flag pole.

Saturday Bible Study is led by Fr. John Kostas. The topic will be "The Eleven Resurrectional Gospel Readings."

Saturday Liturgies End

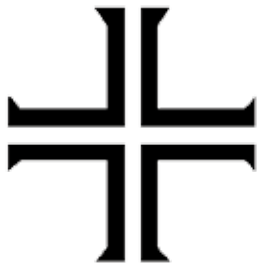
Beginning Memorial Day Weekend, we will no longer have the regularly scheduled Divine Liturgy on Saturdays due to the distancing restrictions being lifted at the end of May.

The Saturday morning Bible Study will resume on the first Saturday of June.

Senior Citizens

Calling ALL Seniors!...

We're back in business! Our first meeting in over a year and a half will be Tuesday, June 8, 12:00 noon, at St. Mary's. We'll begin with lunch, have ample time to catch up with each other, and play a few games of Bingo.



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



St. Paul preaches in Athens, Acts 17

Reflecting the joy of Christ to others. Saying to someone, "I am a Christian, too." Giving words of encouragement to others. Calling a relative or friend who has been missing from the Church and invite him or her to join you one Sunday. Financially supporting foreign mission efforts through the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. Joining the Missions and Outreach Committee. Praying for missionaries and for the growth of the Church. Or

simply being warm and welcoming to those visiting our parish. The Apostles took action. With God's help, let us take action too.

In Christ,
Fr. Jason Houck

Weekend Schedule

Saturday

Great Vespers – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday (live-streamed)

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Weekday Schedule

Wednesday, June 2

Observance

Small Blessing of Water – 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, June 10

Leave-Taking of Holy Pascha

Holy Ascension

Evening Divine Liturgy – 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 19

Saturday of Souls

Orthros – 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, June 20

Holy Pentecost

Pan-Orthodox Vespers – 4:00 p.m.

St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church

Monday, June 21

The Holy Spirit

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, June 24

Nativity of John the Baptist

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, June 29

Saints Peter and Paul

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, June 30

Twelve Holy Apostles

Orthros – 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Parish News & Events

Safety at St. Mary's

With the coming of warmer weather, we have seen an increase in children running and playing in the parking lot after services. Out of concern for all our families, both those playing and those driving their vehicles, please help keep everyone safe by reminding your children not to play in the parking lot especially as people are leaving.

College Graduate Recognition

All proud parents, grandparents and relatives of graduating college seniors including those finishing higher degrees: masters, doctorate, or other achievements i.e. Peace Corp, military service, etc., please send us the graduates' name and degree and any other pertinent information. We would like to recognize our beloved St. Mary's members and their accomplishments as they will always be a part of our community even if they have moved away. Please send information to *Dena Tortorelis* at Churchschool@stmarysgoc.org

Festival Baklava Baking Project

It's that time of year! - Festival baking and we're baking baklava!

Here's the schedule

Monday, June 21

Assembling baklava

Come anytime from 2:00-8:00 p.m. to help.

Tuesday, June 22

Assembling baklava

Come anytime from 2:00-8:00 p.m. to help.

Wednesday, June 23

Cut, clove, and bake baklava: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon.

Please bring a small sauce pan and a brush for buttering if you are helping on Monday and Tuesday.

Wear a face covering all three days, please.

Many hands lighten the load!

The sign up link is in the Weekly Update e-mail sent on Fridays or contact David in the Church Office for assistance. For more information, contact Elena Gabor, 952.288.3011 or elenagabor14@gmail.com

2021 Minneapolis Missions 5k

Pentecost Sunday, June 20, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.

The Minneapolis Missions 5K is a fundraiser supporting OCMC's efforts to "make disciples of all nations." Join us for an enjoyable way to support missions by completing a lap(s) around Bde Maka Ska (Lake Calhoun). We will start by celebrating Pan-Orthodox Vespers at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church, followed by the 5K, and a dinner presentation from Dan Christopulos, OCMC Development Director and first missionary.

The afternoon's schedule is:

4:00 p.m. – Pan-Orthodox Vespers at St. Mary's

5:00 p.m. – Check-in/Registration

5:30 p.m. – Minneapolis Missions 5K starts

6:45 p.m. – Dinner and OCMC Presentation by

Dan Christopulos

Register online:

<http://secure.ocmc.org/OCMC-Minneapolis-5K>

Men In Black, Priests Who Cook

The Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos Philanthropy Fund

"Men in Black, Priests Who Cook" is a cooking series that includes approximately 40 clergy members (including Metropolitan Nathanael) representing all six states from the Metropolis of Chicago. It's a great way to see our clergy in a more relaxed fashion. The series will launch on YouTube on Father's Day, June 20, with a special link given to those that register/purchase the series. All proceeds will benefit The Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos Philanthropy Fund, which was a great help to many because of the pandemic last year.

Established in 1985, this fund has distributed more than \$800,000 and has helped hundreds of individuals and families through difficult circumstances. The Philanthropy Fund was created to care and assist those in need in a way that maintains their dignity, self-determination and independence. We strive to give hope and help rebuild the lives of Orthodox individuals and families in the Metropolis of Chicago whose lives are impacted by human suffering, including but not limited to poverty and income inadequacies, health, mental health, substance use disorders, hunger and food insecurity, inadequate housing and homelessness, domestic violence, family and older adult services. The Fund's work is conducted confidentially and within a faith-based and culturally sensitive context.

More information about the series can be found at:

<https://e.givesmart.com/events/lty/>

Dear Faithful Friends,



Greetings, Friends! Christ is in our midst! Thank you for making our ministries part of your support and for your gift of \$10,000.00 that we received for FOCUS Minnesota.

As the coronavirus continues to impact many of our communities, we are keeping doors open for those in need. Because of donor generosity, FOCUS is feeding hungry children who would otherwise go without. With your assistance, we are helping families gain financial security, giving shelter to those with no place to call home, and providing hope and healing to those who so desperately need self-sufficiency, sobriety, and dignity.

In this season of need and isolation, you are a partner in providing resources and joy to those we serve. Your gift is an offering of love and compassion to the brokenhearted to ensure that they have a hopeful future. We look forward to all that we can accomplish with this gift and future assistance.

Stay safe and healthy.
Your brother in Christ,
Kenneth Kidd

Police Foundation Recognizes St. Mary's



Saint Mary's recently received an Award of Appreciation from the Minneapolis Police Department. Our parish has a long history of supporting the MPD, including hosting their training sessions, meetings, and recruit graduation ceremonies. Last December our Parish Council approved a monetary donation to the Police Foundation.

Police Chief Medaria Arradondo stopped by the church to present the engraved plaque to Fr. George. We are grateful for our long-term partnership with local law-enforcement professionals and the work they perform in our community.



Dear Fr. George and St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church Community:

I greet you in this season of Paschal joy with our profound thanks for your financial gift to our ministry to the poor and needy in the Twin Cities. Again and again, you have stood with us, nurtured our work, and supported FOCUS Minnesota in our desire to follow the Gospel imperative of Christ, that is, to serve and to love one another.

We cannot do it alone! And you have made so much possible with your exceeding generosity:

- food to the hungry distributed weekly and monthly at our doors
- a new program of home grocery delivery to the ill and disabled
- an additional production day for weekly lunch bags
- support of the domestic abuse shelter on Ojibwe tribal lands
- reviving our laundry program as a simple act of mercy to restore dignity

Our work is never done, but with your steadfast support of our shared Orthodox ministry, we really can cooperate with the work of the Holy Spirit, to the Glory of God, and to the salvation of our souls. Thank you for all the opportunities you have provided for us to accomplish this work.

With love in Christ Jesus,
(signed) Matushka Vera Proctor, Director
FOCUS Minnesota



One single cemetery plot in Section 35 (original St. Mary's section) of Lakewood Cemetery is being offered for sale. Please contact David in the Church Office for more information, 612.825.9595.

I am looking to purchase a casket burial site(s) in the original St. Mary's area of Section 35 at Lakewood Cemetery - one plot permitting double-depth casket burials or two individual plots, ideally side-by-side or nearby. Please contact: (Greek Orthodox Christian raised at St. Mary's Church) Elizabeth, cell 240.678.3670 (call /text), or email: olympiasky@hotmail.com.

Philoptochos



The women of Philoptochos held their Spring Finale and Board Elections on May 25. At the time of this writing, we cannot provide names of the new board members, but anticipate them taking the oath of office in June. Thank you to all who take on leadership roles and to all Philoptochos members for their financial and hands-on support of our philanthropic endeavors!

Women's Book Club Discussion

Tuesday, June 8

The Women's Book Club discussion of "For the Life of the World" by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann will be on Tuesday, June 8. Books can be purchased in the church bookstore or office for \$18. Please make checks payable to St. Mary's Bookstore. For your future planning, the August book will be "Wounded by Love" by Elder Porphyrios.

Bake Sale Prep begins for the Greek Festival

Plans are moving forward for the Bake Sale at the Taste of Greece in September! While the event specifics are not finalized, Philoptochos will be doing some baking in smaller volumes than in past years. Here's what we know thus far:

- Bake Sale Co-Chairs are Cathy Forchas and Paulette Hastings.
- The number of pastry offerings will be reduced, with some being purchased and others made by parishioners.
- Baklava assembly will be in June with Elena Gabor leading this effort. See page 4 of this issue for details and contact information.
- As the festival plans are finalized, we will know better how to package and sell baked items, and will keep you informed.

Quilt Tops for People in Need

To date, 37 quilt tops have been turned in to St. Mary's Philoptochos as part of our project with the quilting women of Gethsemane Lutheran Church. Bins with quilt top kits remain in the main entry of St. Mary's south parking lot, and we continue to accept donations of old blankets, sheets, bedspreads and draperies and heavy tablecloths. Thank you for your support of this project!

Thank you...

To the Pascha egg dyeing crew, led by Connie Kouzes and Barbara Nichols and including Brad and Erline Holman, John Kafkas, Ernie Konstas, George Kouzes, Annette Legeros, and Costas Nichols.

To the Pascha koulouria bakers: Jamie Amacci, Kathy Boosalis, Jenn Coin, Elena Gabor, Vicki Hanson, Paulette Hastings, Presvytera Alexandra Houck, Mary and Fifi Kafkas, Jayne Klatt, Connie Kouzes, Kristina Matsch, Tina Menter, Popie Rakes, and Dana Zoupas.

To the team of people who wrapped eggs in red bags and placed koulouria in baskets for distribution: Paulette Hastings, Mary Kafkas, Donna Psihos, Elaine Smith, and Barb and Don Vanover.

To all who adorned the church and icons for Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha.

To all who helped with the Fr. Anthony and Presvytera Mary Coniaris' memorial weekend events, including Sandra Anderson, Georgia Andron, Olga Berkovskaya, Cathy Forchas, Paulette Hastings, Erline Holman, Mary Kafkas, Demetra Kordopitoulas, Pam Nelson, Gail Pappas, Peggy Sperides, Andrea Tiggas, Kathleen Wendland, and others.



Easter Eggs Preparation

l-r: Connie Kouzes, Annette Legeros, Ernie Konstas, George Kouzes, Erline Holman, Brad Holman, John Kafkas, Barbara Nichols, Costas Nichols

Mission & Outreach

Service to Man Is Service to God

*This is the mission statement of the
St. Barnabas Orthodox Mission in Kenya.*

Saint Mary's is blessed with faithful members, visitors, and those who transfer to our twin cities. Members ask us to call them when we see an opportunity to serve others. St. Mary's members want to know how they can contribute, "Service to man is service to God." Our fundraiser supports outreach and is a trusted source to guide us in our volunteer giving of time and talents.

St. Mary's has invited Bishop Neofitos Kongai of Nyeri and Mt. Kenya to our 2021 Missions and Outreach fundraiser. Bishop Neofitos has graciously accepted our invitation for Sunday, October 3, 2021.

St. Barnabas Orthodox Mission Kenya is a school and orphanage in Kenya. The St. Barnabas' website describes their vision to help "provide food, cloth-



ing, shelter, healthcare and education to over 180 children. Help us help poor families who have children with multiple disabilities by providing food on a monthly basis." Among St. Barnabas' goals is to build a dormitory to support and serve children. Children of the orphanage are in foster homes with minimal supervision for proper care.

St. Barnabas Orthodox Orphanage and school is educating children to give them a chance to "grow into responsible and fulfilled Christian adults."

Put Bishop Neofitos Kongai's visit on your calendar: Sunday, October 3, after Liturgy.

About Bishop Kongai



His Grace, Neofitos Kongai, Bishop of Nyeri and Mount Kenya Neofitos served in Parishes in Nairobi and at the Patriarchal Seminary as Deputy Dean. On February 27, 2003, he was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite by His Eminence Makarios, the Metropolitan of Kenya. In 2004, he graduated with a Masters of Theological Studies from Holy Cross School of Theology in Boston Massachusetts. He was also awarded Masters of Theology, a second Masters Degree in 2005. While in the United States, he was assigned as the Prois-tamenos at the Church of Holy Annunciation in Kansas City, Missouri, USA.

In 2007 through the blessing of Metropolitan Makarios of Kenya, he was tonsured a monk at the Holy Monastery of the Transfiguration under the spiritual and Pastoral leadership of Metropolitan Panteleimon of Veria-Thessaloniki. He is a doctoral candidate in Pastoral Theology at the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki. On November 26, 2014, by the proposal of His Beatitude he was elected by the Holy Synod as the Auxiliary Bishop of Nitria.

Bishop Neofitos is actively involved in mission work and transformative ministry in the Diocese. He has established a well-organized administrative structure for the Diocese which supports all her parishes and ministries and is nurturing the goal of being a self-supporting and self-determining local Church within the Holy Patriarchate of Alexandria.

St. Barnabas' website is: <https://orthodoxmissionkenya.org/>

Stewardship

Christ Is Risen! Truly He Is Risen!

We did it!!! After a year of careful coordination by clergy, staff, parish council, Covid Committee and Ministry heads, St. Mary's has been able to provide twelve months of safe worship, and we experienced a most magnificent Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha this year—prayerful, spiritually enriching, and safe!

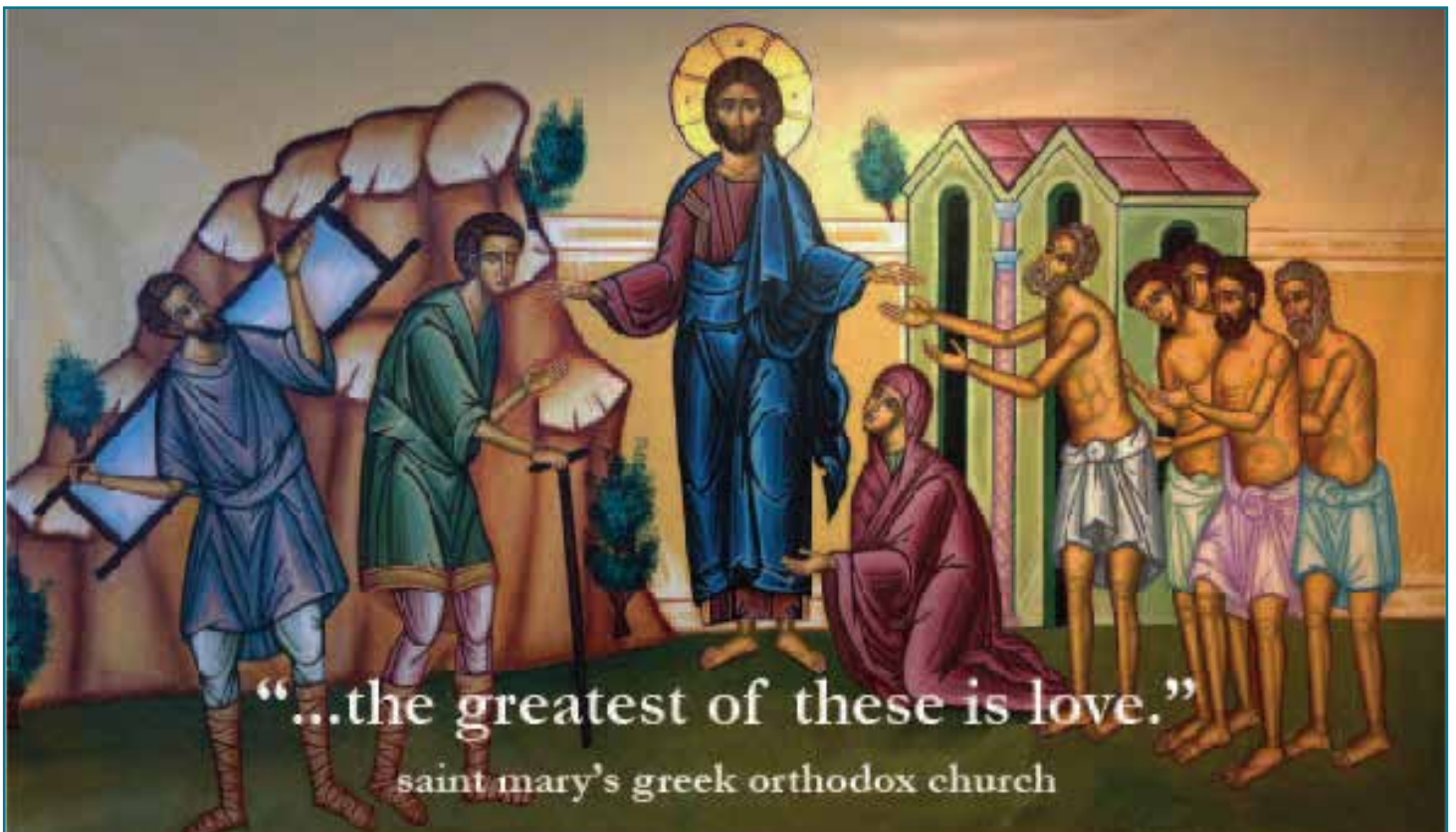
Seeing more and more people returning to church has been amazing. While attending virtually has been a blessing during the most dangerous period, nothing replaces physically being present in the Lord's house. The Holy Fathers tell us that we receive grace simply by being present in the sanctuary, and Fr. Maximus the Confessor tells us that being physically present at the Liturgy "alters us from a lower to a higher state." Receiving the Eucharist, smelling the incense, and having our other senses touched in church, is irreplaceable.

While virtual church was safest for a while, and remains "convenient" for some, it's time to get back to normal with in person worship and activities. To that end, we will be moving back to more "normal" in person events through summer and fall, and we can't wait to bring "our family" together again for social, educational, and spiritual events.

For this reason, if you haven't filled out your 2021 Time and Talent or Financial Commitment forms, please fill those out and return to our office. We have been working on a number of technological upgrades to our system with regards to personalized online accounts, as well as ability to give stewardship donations multiple ways, and register for events on our updated website. St. Mary's staff and volunteers have been very busy during the pandemic making digital improvements for our parishioners!

We hope to bring numerous "Welcome Back" events and activities this fall, so stay tuned. Meanwhile, happy one year WELCOME BACK anniversary, and we hope to see you all lots and lots going forward.

In Christ,
The Stewardship Committee



In the Bookstore

by Rebecca Myerly

bookstore@stmarysgoc.org



Living Prayer was written by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh (aka Anthony Bloom)—a man whose life story helps one understand and appreciate the depth and breadth of his writing. Born in Switzerland on June 19, 1914, he lived with his family in Russia and Iran as a young child before settling in Paris in 1923, where he was educated.

He graduated in physics, chemistry, and biology, and then went on to obtain his doctorate in medicine. Before he left for the front as a surgeon in the French army in 1939, Metropolitan Anthony professed monastic vows in the Russian Orthodox Church. During the occupation of France by Nazi Germany he worked as a doctor and took part in the French Resistance. After the war he continued to practice as a physician until 1948, when he was ordained to the presbyterate and sent to Britain as an Orthodox chaplain of the Fellowship of Saint Alban and Saint Sergius, which is a society established to foster understanding and friendship between the Russian Orthodox and Anglican churches. In 1950 he was appointed Vicar of the Russian Patriarchal Parish in London. He was consecrated Bishop in 1957 and Archbishop in charge of the Russian Orthodox Church in Great Britain and Ireland in 1962. Assigned the rank of Metropolitan Bishop in 1966, he remained in this position until mid 2003 when he resigned as diocesan Bishop. Metropolitan Anthony died on August 4, 2003.

Well known for his six books on prayer (written between 1966 and 1986) and his radio broadcasts, Metropolitan Anthony was a spiritual father for many Christians, not only in the Orthodox tradition but for many of other traditions and perhaps even of no tradition. He wrote and spoke to the mind and heart of each reader and listener.

Living Prayer is a short and succinct, yet broad and deep guide to—and for—living prayer. Metropolitan Anthony begins his book writing:

Worship to me means a relationship. I used not to be a believer, then one day I discovered God and immediately he appeared to me to be the supreme value and the total meaning of life, but at the same time a person... I would like to convey...my certitude in the personal reality of a God with whom a relationship can be established... One of the reasons why communal worship or private prayer seem to be so dead or so conventional is that the act of worship, which takes

place in the heart communing with God, is too often missing. Every expression, either verbal or in action, may help, but they are only expressions of what is essential, namely, a deep silence of communion.

We all know in human relationships that love and friendship are deep when we can be silent with someone. As long as we need to talk in order to keep in touch, we can safely and sadly assume that the relationship is still superficial; and so, if we want to worship God, we must first of all learn to feel happy, being silent together with him. This is an easier thing to do than one might think at first; it needs a little time, some confidence and the courage to start.

But how inspiring words can be once they are backed by silence and are infused with the right spirit... (vii-viii)

Metropolitan Anthony continues with chapters on the essence of prayer, the Lord's Prayer, the prayer of Bartimaeus, meditation and worship, unanswered prayer and petition, the Jesus Prayer, ascetic prayer, and the prayer of silence. He concludes with an epilogue titled "Prayer for Beginners," in which he wrote:

I remember that one of the first people who came to me for advice when I was ordained was an old lady who said: 'Father, I have been praying almost unceasingly for fourteen years, and I have never had any sense of God's presence.' So I said: 'Did you give him a chance to put in a word?' 'Oh well,' she said. 'No, I have been talking to him all the time, because is not that prayer?' I said: 'No, I do not think it is, and what I suggest is that you should set apart fifteen minutes a day, sit and just knit before the face of God.' And so she did. What was the result? Quite soon she came again and said: 'It is extraordinary, when I pray to God, in other words when I talk to him, I feel nothing, but when I sit quietly, face to face with him, then I feel wrapped in his presence.' You will never be able to pray to God really and from all your heart unless you learn to keep silent and rejoice in the miracle of his presence, or if you prefer, of your being face to face with him although you do not see him. (117)

Although it is only 123 pages long, *Living Prayer* contains and offers an inestimable wealth of wisdom, insight, and encouragement for living prayer.

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.

FAITH Group

0-5 Year Olds and Parents

Our FAITH Group is back in business!

After more than a year's break, we feel it is safe to gather again. We have three events planned for this summer.

▶ Wednesday, June 23, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

St. Mary's Great Hall and North Parking Lot

Trikes, Bikes, and Bubbles!

Come to St. Mary's where we will rope off the parking lot and have some outdoor fun and fellowship. Bring your own trike or use one that belongs to the church.

▶ Thursday, July 15, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Como Park Zoo

Meet at the main entrance of Como Zoo for a day at the zoo and conservatory. Please RSVP to Fr. Jason:

frjason@stmarysgoc.org or 612.401.0660

▶ Thursday, August 19, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Minnehaha Falls Gathering and Mini Hike

Meet at the Falls Overlook. Please RSVP to Fr. Jason:

frjason@stmarysgoc.org or 612.401.0660

Junior GOYA

Grades 6-8

▶ Wednesday, June 2; 6:45-8:00 p.m.

Junior GOYA end of year party in the Great Hall.

To sign up, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/JuniorGOYAJune2>

Senior GOYA

Grades 9-12

▶ Wednesday, June 9; 6:45-8:00 p.m.

Senior GOYA end of year party in the Great Hall.

To sign up, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/JuniorGOYAJune9>

April Recap

It was another busy month of April for our youth!

The HOPE/JOY kids met after Church on a Sunday and learned about St. Mary of Egypt and played some games in the Great Hall! The Junior GOYAnS asked good questions during our Q&A with Fr. Jason following the Pre-sanctified Liturgy. The Junior and Senior GOYAnS also met and listened to Fr. Sergius give a fruitful presentation on "Acquiring the Mind of Christ." It was a blessing we were able to enjoy a meal and have fellowship with one another!

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 six 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**

Vacation Church School

Put on the Full Armor of God!

June 14-18, 2021 ✠ 8:45 a.m.-12:00 noon

4 years old (if potty-trained) through entering 6th grade in the fall
7th grade and older needed as Squires (Helpers greatly needed!)



Calling all able-bodied Christian soldiers!
We need YOU for a week-long
training program where you will learn skills
and knowledge necessary to fight for
our Lord!

Questions? Contact...

Lady Krissa Rovolis

or

Lady Dena Tortorelis

churchschool@stmarysgoc.org

Online registration now open

Use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/StMarysVCS2021> or go to our website for the link.

St. Mary's Holy Week and Pascha decorations have been made possible through the generosity of the following:

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George, Athena, Andreas, and Peter Andrews in memory of Epaminondas (Peter), Koula, Andy, Betty, George, Efthimia, Triantafyllos, Athena, George, and Stella

Mateos Balafas in memory of Kostas, Maria, Sotirios, Kostoula, Vasilios, Zaharias, Doloris, Sherey

The Barakos family in memory of Dionysios & Genevieve Barakos; Leo, Pat, and Chris Fecht; Felicia Aguilar; Gerasimos Barakos; Joseph & Clara Fecht; Paul, Marie, and Betty Drennan; Michael & Elizabeth Gregorius

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The Economou family in memory of Pete, Tacia, John, Mike, Dina, Greg

Cathy & Don Forchas in memory of Forchas loved ones and Jorgenson loved ones

Dana & Eleni George in memory of John Passiales, Kay Passiales, David George, Dorothy George

Sam & Bettina Hanna in memory of our parents and family members

Paul & Jenny Hibberd in memory of Connie

Mary Kafkas in memory of Evangeline & Tom Kafkas; John Houpis, Basil and George

Deacon Paul & Diakonissa Alexandria Kalina and family in memory of Stephen & Helen Campbell; Harold & Elaine Kalina

Olga Berkovskaya & Peter Karachunski in memory of Yuri, Nikolai & Roza Ivanicek; Karina Berkovskaya; Aleksandra & Vladislav Palubinski; Isaak Wolfenzon; Eugenia Kudryashova

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Carol Karos in memory of John P. Karos

Bill & Demetra Kordopitoulas in memory of Ioannis & Katerena Karmalis; Georgia Papagiannopoulos

Margo Kosmas in memory of Baby Jimmy, Georgie, Aspasia, George Peter, Marguerite, Peter, Anthony, Elaine, Mr. & Mrs. John Kallas, William Kosmas

George & Connie Kouzes in memory of Christina, Nicholas, Aphrodite, Dena, Jacob

Nikolas Kouzes & Alicia Vouk in memory of Christina Houck, Aphrodite Kouzes

Annette Legeros in memory of Legeros family; Nashopulos family, and Ellis family

Brad & Erika, Angelina and Valerie in memory of William & Georgia Gavaras ~ *May their memories be eternal.*

Darlene Manzavrakos in memory of husband Jack

Kathy Karlos Moffat in memory of Karlos and Brantz families

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Tia Muchulas and family in memory of John Muchulas, Christ & Stamata Parthenios; George & Athanasia Grammas; Paul & Alexandria Muchulas; Jim Muchulas

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Louis, Mary, Katherine, and Kristina Pappas in memory of George, Cleo, Katherine, Richard, Despina, Theofanis, Helen, Alex, Anna, Kathy, Chris, Nick

Cora Pirvu in memory of Elena

Mike & Jeannie Possis in memory of Emmel & Della Possis

Veula Possis in memory of Milt, Christos, Theano, Zinon, Mary, Emmel, Della, Constantinos, Thalia, George, Paul, Carol, Robert, Virginia, Linnea, Cleo, John, Joann

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Elaine Theis in memory of Socrates & Evangeline Stoyanoglow (parents), Christos & Panagoula Mouroutsos (grandparents), John & Helen Stoyanoglow (grandparents)

Louis & Andrea Tiggas in memory of Gabriel, Michael, Demetra, Constantine, Andrew, Joy, George, Mary, Nicholas, Elias, Ioana, John, Pepitsa, Kyriakos, Constantina

Athena Togas in memory of Nick, George, Costa, Deno, Dynisia Papadakes; George, Dena, Tom Togas; Joann, Louis Mejias; Paul, Voula Papntonis; Spiro, Adam Thanos; Goerge, Nick, and Harry Albargoti; Adam, Gyota Thanos; Helen, Ted Theodor; Pat Riehm; Nancy Slaughter; Louis Papadakes

Effy Triantafyllou in memory of Koula, Epaminondas "Peter," Betty, Andy, Triantafylos, Athena, Efthimia, George, John, Vasiliki, John, George, Violetta, Andreas, Maria, Mary, Kyriakos, Ioanna, Gianitsa, Panagiotis, Maria, Efstathios, Asimoula, Peter, Pearl, Stella, George, Daisy, Effie, Thira, Helen and John.

Luke & Mary Kay Twito in memory of Pantages and Twito families

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Stephen Zis in memory of Spiro, Helen, James, and Jane Zis

On the Sacramental Mystery of the Divine Eucharist

by St. Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain

2. The love of the person giving the gift.

Consider, my brother, the love with which Jesus Christ gives you the gift of divine Communion. For in love is to be found the all of every benefaction, and love is like the soul of the gift, while the gift is like the body. Now this love of Christ which caused Him to give us this Mystery approached the extreme end and perfection, as the Evangelist John says: "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John 13:1). And just as the heat of a furnace is recognizable on account of the visible flames coming out of it, in like manner, the infinite love of Christ is recognizable from the following three things:

- 1) the time when He instituted this Mystery,
- 2) the manner in which He instituted it, and
- 3) the difficulties overcome by this institution.

The time was that evening of Great and Holy Thursday when the traitor Judas was planning on betraying Jesus, and the whole council of the Jews was planning on putting Him to a most heinous death. And when He decided to give the bread of life to men, it was then that those ingrates were scheming more than ever to remove Him from life and put Him to death. For this reason the Evangelist said: "Now when the evening was come, He sat down with the twelve... And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples... And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them" (Matthew 26:20,26-27). The manner in which He gave Communion to us is underneath the form of bread and wine, which is to say, in the form of food and drink. And not food and drink which are hard to find, but which are found in nearly every place where men are found. This is for two reasons. First, so that the Lord could become a part of us to such an extent that, just as there cannot be found any technique and method which can separate from our substance the food which, just a short while ago, was mixed with and changed into our whole body, in the same way, there could not be found any technique or any power which could separate us from the Lord. Second, so that we can easily and whenever we want receive Communion and become one with the Lord, just as it is easy for each person to find bread and wine.

More than anything else, the love of the Lord is made manifest from the difficulties He overcame in order to benefit us with this Mystery. For, although the Lord foresaw an infinite multitude of His priests and of His Christian people who would show such irreverence, dis-

dain, tepidity, or rather, coldness and thousands of other sacrileges towards His all-holy body and blood, His love still conquered all of these difficulties and obstacles: "For many waters," it says, "cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it" (Song of Songs 8:7). His love, I say, conquered all these things, and He condescended to endure everything, only so He could be able to become one with our soul. And what is more, on top of His patience He added desire, the most extreme of desires, desiring with all of His heart and all of His soul to unite with us even an hour earlier, for which reason He said: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15). In times past, all of the Forefathers, Prophets, all the nations, and all men desired and anticipated for five and a half thousand years His coming into the world and incarnation. Now, He desires to come into our heart by means of this Mystery, and He somehow constrains Himself to do this with a desire worthy only of His divine heart and His own Divinity. O love which is truly most God-befitting and invincible! Rather, O flames of love which have arisen even to heaven, as it is written: "Love is strong as death... her shafts are shafts of fire, even the flames thereof!" (Song of Songs 8:6). Who could ever comprehend such extravagances of God's love if faith did not reveal them to us?

But alas! How do you respond, my brother, to such love from your Lord? Whence arose in you such contrary actions? How is it that God so greatly desires to unite with your wretched soul, and you, on the contrary, so little desire to unite with Him, Who is the most supreme good? How is it that God displays such tender warmth towards you, and you, who are but clay, display such coldness towards Him? How is it that God deigns to seek to come and dwell in your heart by means of this Mystery, in order to enlighten you, in order to sanctify you, and you, the thankless creature, shut the door and do not allow Him to enter in? Woe to you my beloved! Do you any longer have a single right not to serve and thank such an excessive love of your God, but to serve and indulge your passions? Do you any longer have a right to turn back to Egypt with your heart and desire, like that thankless Hebrew people, the leeks, and the garlic, and the onions of Egypt, that is, the hedonistic pleasures of your senses and your carnal appetites, after you have received that divine manna as your food? What else must Christ do in order to overcome your great hardness and inhumanity, besides destroying you and casting your bones into Hades, as He strew the bones of

article continues on page 15.

the Hebrews in the wilderness, as it is written: "But with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?" (Hebrews 3:5).

For this reason come before the divine majesty and openly confess your inhumanity, and abhor it with all of your heart, and detest it many times over. Offer yourself completely to God through this Mystery, receiving Communion because of love and with love for the beloved Jesus, Who out of His extreme love for you instituted this beloved Mystery in order that there may be that greatly beloved and heavenly union between the loving God and you the beloved, as we previously said. And from now on, brother, wake up and cause yourself to fear with an extreme horror and terror every sin and every pollution of the flesh and spirit, saying this to yourself: "I have now become a dwelling place of God through partaking of the immaculate Mysteries, so how can I possibly become a dwelling place of sin? I have been united to Christ and have become one of His members, so how can I any longer make the members of Christ the members of a harlot and of the devil? 'Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid' (1 Corinthians 6:15)." Last of all, beseech the Lord, in Whom, because of Whom, and Whom you believe, hope, and love to give you grace so that you may render Him love for love, eros for eros, warmth for warmth, without ever being afraid of or conquered by any difficulty brought by the enemy on the way, trying to discourage you, just as the Lord was not overcome by any difficulty when benefiting you. And just as He is sacrificed daily on the Holy Table because of His love for you, so you are obligated to offer Him four sacrifices because of your love for Him.

1) The sacrifice of all of your thoughts, and of your will, and of your way of thinking, that is, humbling yourself before Him and sacrificing all of your notions and desires, concerning which it is written: "A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit" (Psalm 50:17).

2) You are to offer Him the sacrifice of your words, glorifying and thanking Him always for the love He shows to you in this Mystery: "Sacrifice unto God," he says, "a sacrifice of praise" (Psalm 49:15).

3) You must offer Him a sacrifice through works, doing charitable acts of mercy, offering hospitality, and other such good works, as it is written: "But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Hebrews 13:16).

4) The last sacrifice you are to offer is your body, sacrificing for God all of your carnal passions and appetites, just as the Apostle orders you, saying: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Rom. 12:1). Know that, according to the moral philosophers, the poetic cause of love is similarity – according to the song: "similarity, friendship." Rather, that love is again the cause of love, and whoever wishes to be loved must himself love. Wherefore, Wisdom said: "I love them that love me" (Proverbs 8:17). And the beloved disciple said: "We love Him, because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

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**When you had joined earth to heaven and fulfilled
your plan of redemption, you ascended in glory, O
Christ our God, while remaining in our midst.
For you assured us who love you that no one can
prevail against us since you yourself are with us.**

-Kontakion of the Ascension

St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church

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June 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 6:00pm-Small Blessing of Water 6:45pm-Junior GOYA	3	4 7:00am-Men's Fellowship	5 9:00am-Bible Study 5:00pm-Great Vespers
6 <i>Sunday of the Blind Man "The Messenger" Deadline</i> 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	7	8 12:00noon-Senior Citizens 6:15pm-Parish Council	9 <i>Leave-Taking of Pascha</i> 6:00pm-Evening Divine Liturgy 6:45pm-Senior GOYA	10 <i>Holy Ascension</i>	11 <i>Saint Nathanael (Bartholomew)</i>	12 9:00am-Bible Study 5:00pm-Great Vespers
13 <i>The Holy Fathers</i> 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	14	15	16 9:00am-"The Messenger" Mailing	17	18 7:00am-Men's Fellowship	19 <i>Saturday of Souls</i> 9:00am-Bible Study 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 5:00pm-Great Vespers
Vacation Church School • 8:45 a.m.-12:00 noon						
20 <i>Holy Pentecost Father's Day</i> 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 4:00pm-MEOCCA Kneeling Vespers 5:30pm-Mpls Missions 5K	21 <i>The Holy Spirit</i> 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 2:00pm-Baklava	22 2:00pm-Baklava	23 9:00am-Baklava 10:00am-FAITH Playgroup	24 <i>Nativity of John the Baptist</i> 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 6:30pm-Stewardship Com.	25	26 <i>Leave-Taking of Pentecost</i> 9:00am-Bible Study 5:00pm-Great Vespers
27 <i>All Saints</i> 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	28 <i>Apostles' Fast Begins</i>	29 <i>Saints Peter and Paul Apostles' Fast Ends</i> 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	30 <i>Twelve Holy Apostles</i> 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy			