

# SAINT MARY'S GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

December 18, 2022

*Sunday before Nativity*

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## The Divine Liturgy

**Commemoration:** Sunday before Nativity; Sebastian the Martyr and his Companions; Our Righteous Father Michael Syngellon the Confessor.

*Morning Gospel: Fifth*

*Tone: Second*

### Variable Hymns and Readings in the Liturgy

#### *At the Second Antiphon*

Save us, O Son of God, who rose from the dead, save us who sing to you: Alleluia!

#### *At the Small Entrance*

#### ***Resurrection Hymn, Second Tone***

When you descended into death, Life immortal, you vanquished the power of hell by your resplendent divinity, and when you raised the dead from the depths of darkness, all the heavenly powers cried out triumphantly: O giver of life, Christ our God, glory to you.

#### ***Hymn of Entrance***

Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, who rose from the dead, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!

*Repeat the Resurrection Hymn, above*

#### ***Hymn of the Forefeast of the Birth of Christ, Second Tone***

How great is the power of faith. By faith three young men rejoice in flames as if in refreshing water, and Daniel in the lions' den is like a shepherd with his sheep. Through their prayers, Christ our God, save our souls.

### ***Hymn of the Dormition of the Theotokos, First Tone***

In giving birth, you preserved your virginity, O Theotokos; in falling asleep you did not forsake the world. You passed over into life, O Mother of Life; and by your prayers you deliver our souls from death!

Ἐν τῇ γενήσῃ τὴν παρθενίαν ἐφύλαξας, ἐν τῇ κοιμήσῃ τὸν κόσμον  
En ti gennisi tin parthenian efilaxas en ti kimisi ton kosmon  
οὐ κατέλιπες, Θεοτόκε. Μετέστης πρὸς τὴν ζωὴν, μήτηρ ὑπάρχουσα  
u katelipes, Theotoke. Metestis pros tin zoin, mitir iparhousa  
τῆς ζωῆς, καὶ ταῖς πρεσβείαις ταῖς σοῖς λυτρουμένη ἐκ θανάτου τὰς  
tis zois, ke tes presvies tes ses litrumeni ek thanatu tas  
ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.  
psihas imon.

### ***Kontakion of Preparation for the Birth of Christ. Third Tone***

Today the Virgin cometh, cometh unto the cave to give birth to the Word who was born before all ages, Begotten in a manner that defies description. Rejoice, therefore, Oh universe if thou should hear and glorify with the angels and the shepherds. Glorify him who by his will shall become a new-born babe and who is our God before all ages.

### ***Epistle..... Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40***

Brethren, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the

world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

**Gospel.....Matthew 1:1-25**

The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel” (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

*The Communion Prayers are found on page 5 of this leaflet.*



## Today

Prosforo is provided by Barbara Nichols.

Memorial Prayers today are offered for **Barbara Apostolou** (1 year); **Loukas** (3 years) and **Angie** (10 years) **Angelus; Iakovos Iakovou; Polyxeni Andrea.**

The coffee hour today is hosted by the Apostolou family in memory of Barbara.



# THE COMMUNION PRAYERS

I believe and confess, Lord, that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. I also believe that this is truly Your pure Body and that this is truly Your precious Blood. Therefore, I pray to You, have mercy upon me, and forgive my transgressions, voluntary and involuntary, in word and deed, known and unknown. And make me worthy without condemnation to partake of Your pure Mysteries for the forgiveness of sins and for life eternal. Amen.

Behold, I approach for Divine Communion. O Maker, burn me not as I partake, for You are fire consuming the unworthy. But cleanse me from every stain.

Receive me today, O Son of God, as a partaker of Your mystical supper; for I will not betray Your mysteries to Your enemies, nor give You a kiss as did Judas, but as the thief I confess You: Remember me, O Lord, in Your kingdom.

Tremble, O man, as you behold the divine Blood. It is a burning coal that sears the unworthy. The Body of God both deifies and nourishes me: It deifies the spirit and wondrously nourishes the mind.

You have smitten me with yearning, O Christ, and by Your divine eros You have changed me. But burn up my sins with spiritual fire, and grant me to be filled with delight in You, so that, leaping for joy, I may magnify, O Good One, Your two comings.

How shall I, who am unworthy, enter into the splendor of Your saints? If I dare to enter into the bridal chamber, my clothing will accuse me, since it is not a wedding garment; and being bound up, I shall be cast out by the angels. In Your love, Lord, cleanse my soul and save me.

Loving Master, Lord Jesus Christ, my God, let not these holy Gifts be to my condemnation because of my unworthiness, but for the cleansing and sanctification of soul and body and the pledge of the future life and kingdom. It is good for me to cling to God and to place in Him the hope of my salvation.

*Approaching to receive, each makes a reverence and says:*

✠ Behold I approach Christ, our immortal King and God.

# AN ORTHODOX NATIVITY PROGRAM

## *Instrumental Selections*

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

*Benjamin Wehr, Cello*

O Holy Night

*Eva Barnes, Violin; Lucas Hanna, Clarinet;*

*Sammy Stephenson, Saxophone; Benjamin Wehr, Cello*

*Narrator 1: Lucas Hanna*

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord, as we tell about this mystery. Incarnating the Word of God into flesh, for God to become like one of us. The middle wall of separation has been broken down; the fiery sword has turned back, the Cherubim permits access to the Tree of Life; and we partake of the delight of Paradise, from which we were cast out because of disobedience. For the exact Image of the Father, the express Image of His eternity, takes the form of a servant, coming forth from a Virgin Mother; and He undergoes no change, He remained what He was, true God; and He took up what He was not, becoming human in His love for humanity. Let us cry out to Him: “You who were born from a Virgin, O God, have mercy on us.” —*Hymn from Vespers of Christmas*

Carol..... Go, Tell it on the Mountain

*3, 4, and 5 year olds, Kindergarten, and First Grade*

*Narrator 2: Angelina Young*

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed... And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem... to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child. —*Luke 2:1-5*

*Narrator 3: Johnny Checheris*

Tell us, O Joseph, how is it that you bring to Bethlehem great with Child the Maiden whom from the sanctuary you received? I, says he, have searched the Prophets and received a revelation from an Angel; and convinced am I that Mary shall give birth to God in ways surpassing all interpretation. And to worship Him shall Magi

from the east come with precious gifts to pay homage unto Him.

O Lord who for our sake have taken flesh, glory to You!

—*from the Royal Hours of the Nativity*

Carol.....Angels We Have Heard on High  
Grades 9-12

*Narrator 4: Sophia Katras*

On this day the Virgin Maid goes to the grotto to give birth to the <sup>1</sup>Pre-Eternal Word in an <sup>2</sup>ineffable manner. Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds Him who will that He appear as a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God. —*Kontakion of Advent*

Carol..... The First Noel  
Grades 6-8

*Narrator 5: Andrew Boldt*

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

—*Luke 2:6-7*

Come, let us extol and praise the Savior's Mother, who remained a virgin even after childbirth. <sup>3</sup>Animate City of our King and God, rejoice, for Christ having dwelt in you has wrought our salvation. Together with Gabriel we sing your praise, together with the shepherds we glorify you, crying out, "Theotokos, intercede with the Lord, who is incarnate from you, to save us."

—*The Praises, Orthros of the Nativity*

Carol..... Away in a Manger  
3, 4, and 5 year olds, Kindergarten, and First Grade

*Narrator 6: Nicholas Boldt*

Before Your birth, O Lord, the hosts of angels already perceived the mystery. They were struck with wonder and trembled, for though You adorn the heavens with stars, You are now well-pleased to be born as a Babe. You hold the ends of the earth in Your hands, but now You are laid in a manger of dumb beasts. Yet all these things fulfilled Your saving plan, by which Your compassion was revealed to us. Christ of great mercy, glory to You!

—*From the Royal Hours of the Nativity*

Carol..... Hark! the Herald Angels Sing  
*Grades 6-8*

*Narrator 7: Sammy Stephenson*

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they spread the word concerning all they had seen and which was told to them concerning this child. And all that heard it wondered at those things which were told to them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

Carol..... Do You Hear What I Hear  
*Grades 2-5*

*Narrator 8: Nicholas Houck*

The wise men concluded from their observations of the extraordinary path of the peculiar nova which had lately appeared and was shining more brightly than anything in outer space, that Christ the King was born on earth, in Bethlehem to save our souls.

—*Ninth Ode, Orthros of the Nativity*

*Narrator 9: Aspasia Rovolis*

Heaven called the Magi by a star, and thus it brought the first-fruits of Gentiles to You, the infant lying in the manger. And they were amazed, not by scepters and thrones, but by the utter poverty. For what is more shabby than a cave? And what is more humble than swaddling clothes? But it was through these that the riches of Your Divinity shone forth. Lord, glory to You!

—*Hypakoe from the Orthros of the Nativity*

*Narrator 10: George Daravingas*

You rose from the Virgin O Christ, the <sup>4</sup>noetic Sun of Righteousness, and a star pointed to You, the Uncontainable contained in a cave. It led the Magi to worship You; and with them we magnify You. O Giver of Life, glory to You! —*From Vespers of the Nativity*

Carol..... Oh Come, All Ye Faithful  
*Grades 9-12*



*Narrator 11: Eva Barnes*

What shall we offer you, O Christ, because You have appeared on earth as a man for our sakes? For each of the creatures made by You offers You its thanks: the Angels, their hymn; the heavens, the Star; the Shepherds, their wonder; the Magi, their gifts; the earth, the Cave; the desert the Manger; and we, a Virgin Mother. God before the ages, have mercy on us!

—*Stichera from the Vespers of the Nativity*

Carol..... Joy to the World

*Grades 2-5*

*Narrator 12: Kirubel Birhane*

As we see the twinkling Christmas lights, let us remember the star that led the Wise Men to seek the Savior. When we give and receive gifts, stop to ponder what gifts you can give to the Christ child. For, “The Spirit of Christmas is the spirit of love and of generosity and of goodness. It illuminates the picture windows of the soul, and we look out upon the world’s busy life and become more interested in people than in things. The spirit of Christmas is something I hope all of us would have within our hearts and within our lives, not only at this particular season but also throughout the years. A wise Christian once urged, ‘Let us not spend Christmas... but let us keep Christmas in our hearts and in our lives.’”

—*Thomas S. Monson, “Because He Came”*

Song..... Be Glorified

*All Students*

Shepherds watch their flocks by night  
Wise men bring their gifts to share  
A star to guide to Bethlehem  
Angels singing “Peace on Earth”

*Chorus:*

Emmanuel, God is with us  
Christ is born, be glorified. (*repeat*)

A manger and a baby lay  
Quietly by His mother’s side  
Angels sing to Him today  
Glory in the highest —*continued on next page.*

Unto us a Child is born  
Unto us a Son is given  
He's Wonderful, Counselor  
Mighty God, and Prince of Peace

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Carol..... Silent Night

*Students and Congregation*

Silent night, holy night,  
all is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin Mother and Child,  
holy Infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,  
shepherds quake at the sight,  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia.  
Christ the Saviour is born,  
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light,  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

**CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!**

<sup>1</sup>Pre-eternal: No beginning, always existing

<sup>2</sup>Ineffable: too great or extreme to be expressed or described in words

<sup>3</sup>Animate City of our King and God: She who brought to life to our King and God

<sup>4</sup>Noeti: relating to mental activity or understood only by the mind

All of the readings were translated by Fr. Seraphim Dedes and found in the book *Let All Creation Rejoice: Reflections for Advent, The Nativity, and Epiphany* by Fr. Stavros N. Akrotirianakis

## CAST

Theotokos – Lydia Houck

Joseph – Stelios Brilakas

Innkeeper #1 – Adrian Nelson

Innkeeper #2 – Andreas Apostolou

Innkeeper #3 – John Muchulas

Shepherd #1 – Michael McCollar

Shepherd #2 – Zack Magness

Shepherd #3 – Hermella Birhane

Angel#1 – Julia Simon

Angel #2 – Mary Bea Hoeft

Angel #3 – Valerie Young

Wise Man #1 – Alexander Hoeft

Wise Men #2 – Panayioti Rovolis

Wise Man #3 – Christopher Hoffines

Speaking Animals – Katia Weiring, Eleni Theodotou, Kasion Luker



## Prayer Ministry

***Please remember the sick, the suffering, and those in need, especially:*** Those suffering from COVID-19 and those who care for them; for the people of Ukraine; our brothers and sisters living through the aftermath of disaster; for the victims of violence; Metro Hope Ministries; Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry; Families Moving Forward; FOCUS Minnesota; Our brothers and sisters serving in the Armed Forces throughout the world especially John Ellis; San Miguel Del Lago Orphanage; Jennifer, John S., Becky, Kristina, Noel, Stephen, John K., Alexey, Alexandra, Ray, Christina, Joanne, Athena, the Muñoz family, Charlie, Nuala, Pamela, Avgi, Elena, Speranta, Maria, Dave Ruesink, Liz, Efstratia, Jordan, David, Nino, Joe, Tom, Gigi, Zossima, Donnarae, Samira, Mary K., Monte, Bethany, Mark, Owen, Chrysanthy, Estelle, Justine, Melissa, Megan, Dallas, Lenzie, Lisa, Michael, Robbie, Judi, Evonne, James, Nichole, Constantine, Theodora, Mary, Irene Maria, Marion, Apostolos, Olivia, Lincoln, Carole, Patty, Karrisra, Corina, Tom, George R., Ken, Nancy and Tim, Olga, Peter, Cora and family, Bo, Tom, Lynn, Deb, Sarah, Maia, Travis, Kassie, Tahnlee, Lois, Kalli, Annie, Sue & Jim, Steve, Sue, Jane, Rifka, Pat, Nancy, Dave, Pam, Gilbert, George P., Danielle, Jenny, John L., Steven E., Julia, Presvytera Janis, Sandra, Sophia, Rick, Nancy, Alex, Eryn, Phil, Karen, Dorla, Linda, Fr. Elias, Vicki, Bill, Diana, Elpis Fotini, Doria, Mike, Stephanie, Tyler, Ben, Amy, Christy, Karen, Anastasia, Jamie, Alex and Alexander, Toni, Gina, Julie, R.J., Allie, Vickie, Petra, Bob, Joseph, Christopher, Elizabeth, Jaxon, Judi, Bodil, Ole, and others known to you.



### ***Text to Give***

Text **smgoc** to 73256

*This number will never send unsolicited texts.*



***Scan the QR code to give through Venmo.***

*When giving through Venmo, please provide both your first AND last name in order to receive proper credit for your contribution.*

# Calendar of the Week

## Sunday, December 18: Sunday before Nativity

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

*Church School Christmas Program*

12:45 p.m. – JOY Basketball Practice, Great Hall

1:00 p.m. – Telos Gamma Baklava Baking Workshop, Kitchen

2:00 p.m. – Boys' GOYA Basketball Practice, Great Hall

## Monday, December 19

7:00 p.m. – Akathist to the Mother of God, Nurturer of Children

## Tuesday, December 20

6:00 p.m. – Adult Open Gym, Great Hall

6:15 p.m. – Parish Council Meeting (*rescheduled*), Fireside Room

## Wednesday, December 21

9:00 a.m. – “The Messenger” Christmas Mailing, Terrace Room

6:15 p.m. – Parish Night

6:30 p.m. – Choir Rehearsal, Nave

## Thursday, December 22

12:00 noon – *Church office closes for Christmas holiday.*

## Friday, December 23

9:00 a.m. – Royal Hours

*Church office closed*

## Saturday, December 24: Eve of Nativity

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

5:00 p.m. – Great Vespers

## Sunday, December 25: Holy Nativity

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

*No Church School*

## Monday, December 26

*Church office closed*

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# Announcements

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## Food Shelf Needs for December 25

Baby Formula

*December's recipient is Community Emergency Service (CES).  
Please do not bring opened packages. They will be discarded.*



## Christmas Worship Schedule

This year, due to Christmas Day occurring on Sunday, the Christmas worship schedule in the Orthodox Church is somewhat different from other years. Saint Mary's schedule is as follows:

### ***Friday, December 23***

9:00 a.m. – Royal Hours

### ***Saturday, December 24: Eve of Nativity***

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

5:00 p.m. – Great Vespers

### ***Sunday, December 25: Holy Nativity***

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



## FOCUS Winter Needs

*Thank you for all of the generous clothing donations over the past several months. We and our clients appreciate this abundance so very much.*

We are now so well supplied that, effective immediately, **we will no longer be taking clothing donations until April 1. Two exceptions to this request are men's coats and boots.** We are essentially out of these items. Also, we continue to gratefully accept nonperishable food items. The demand for food continues to increase.

## Year-End Giving Guidelines

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 Wednesday, December 28, will be recorded and reflected on your Contribution Statement as stewardship income for 2022. Electronic donations, via online giving or Venmo, **must be received by Monday, December 26.** Donations received after the deadline will be counted towards our budget for next year.

## **Stewardship 2023**

Our 2023 Stewardship Drive is underway. Please take a few minutes to fill out the 2023 time, talent, and treasure form and return it to the church as soon as possible. We hope to hear from everyone by December 31! Thank you for your support of St. Mary's!

## **Parishioner Reimbursements**

Saint Mary's has a policy that allows for reimbursements only within the year the expense happened and within 30 days of incurring the expense. Should you have made an approved purchase on behalf of the parish, please submit your request for reimbursement today. We are only accepting requests from October and November currently, as the deadline for previous months has passed. Reimbursements for December 2022 purchases must be received in the church office by January 20 - expenses submitted beyond January 20 will not be accepted.

## **Online Giving for 2023**

Next Saturday, December 31, our current online giving platform will be retired. Parishioners who set up an online giving subscription prior to October 1, 2022, will need to go to our website's giving page and set up a new subscription for 2023. We hope everyone will find the new site easy to navigate and use.

## **Christmas Décor Contributions**

Forms and a drop box for your submission and contribution for our parish Christmas decorations are available in the narthex. Contributions toward the decorations are due next Sunday, December 18.

## **2023 Basketball Tournament**

Saint Mary's is hosting the 2023 Western Region Family Basketball Tournament this February 3-5 and we are looking for athletes, both young and old! If you or your child are interested in playing, please complete the designated interest form.

Adult Interest Form: <https://tinyurl.com/BballAdult>

Youth Interest Form (ages 7-18 in high school):

<https://tinyurl.com/BballYouth>

If you have any questions, please contact either Jon Klein ([jon@stmarysgoc.org](mailto:jon@stmarysgoc.org)) or Theo Boosalis ([theo@boosalis.net](mailto:theo@boosalis.net)).

All the links above can be found in the Weekly Update e-mail.

## In the Bookstore

Please visit the bookstore for your Christmas gift giving. You will find a large selection of books, icons, and many other items from which to choose gifts that are truly meaningful for people of all ages.

Of special note is the arrival of *Wisdom from the Holy Mountain: Life Lessons from the Monks of Mt. Athos* by Dr. Steven Rakes. This small book is an immense treasure trove of spiritual wisdom. It is a collection of the life lessons Dr. Rakes heard from monks on Mount Athos during the many pilgrimages to the Holy Mountain he made with other men from St. Mary's. Organized by topic with wisdom, stories, and counsels for people who live "in the world," this book is permeated with much that is relevant to all of us. 100% of the proceeds from this book sold in the bookstore goes to St. Mary's, so when you buy it as a gift (for yourself and/or others) you are also giving a gift to the church.

*More new arrivals in the bookstore—*

- \* Two new children's books written and illustrated by Presvytera Angela Alatzakis: *The Church and The Light*.
- \* The CD "Nativity Fire" by Graham Sparkman, a parishioner at Twelve Holy Apostles. (*Fr. Tim provided/recorded all the chanted liturgical prayers on the album.*)



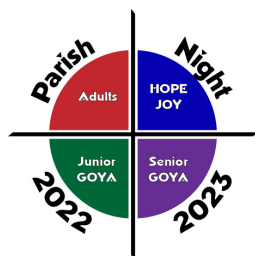
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## Parish Night

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### Parish Night 2022-2023

Don't miss our next Parish Night — this Wednesday, December 21, beginning in the Nave at 6:15 p.m. We continue our theme for the year, Living a Sacramental Life. Following our opening prayer service, will move to the Terrace Room for dinner and then we'll have breakout sessions for the adults and kids. Parish Night will end by 8:00 p.m.



*Parish Night is a parish-wide event for kindergarteners through adults that occurs monthly on a Wednesday from October through May, taking a hiatus during Great Lent.*



# Philoptochos News



## **Pick Up Your Christmas/New Year's Vasilopita**

Pick up your St. Basil Sweet Bread today in the Great Hall! If you didn't pre-order, you can purchase loaves for \$15. All bread is frozen and includes thawing procedures. All proceeds benefit St. Basil Academy for Children.

## **"Come Sit at Our Table" Cookbooks**

The final cookbook copies are for sale for \$20 in the bookstore. They make a great gift for yourself and others, and support FOCUS Minnesota.

## **Last Day for Winter Snow Gear Drop Off**

Through Sunday, December 18, we're collecting winter gear for Ella Baker Magnet School (preschool through grade 8). Thanks for bringing gently used or new jackets, snow pants, boots, hats and mittens to the Philoptochos table in the Great Hall.

## **Host Christmas Day Social Hour**

Join Connie and George Kouzes as hosts for the social hour after Liturgy on December 25. Stop by our table if you can help with set up, serving, and clean-up. (All treats will be provided by Philoptochos.)

## **Cut Vasilopita on January 7**

In preparation for Vasilopita Sunday, we're cutting dozens of loaves of St. Basil bread. Please plan to join us in the kitchen on Saturday, January 7 from 11:00 a.m. (after liturgy) until 1:00 p.m. Sign up at the Philoptochos table during the social hour.

## 2023 Winter Camp Save the Date!

January 13 - 16  
At Camp St. Croix

Youth 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

A weekend discussing how we can become better Orthodox Christians  
through practicing our faith and becoming vessels of the Holy Spirit.

Register by December 28: <https://bit.ly/wintercampreg>

Cost \$200 – To pay visit: <https://bit.ly/paywintercamp>

Questions? Contact Mat. Lisa Tucci at 612-599-0814 or [lisatucci71@gmail.com](mailto:lisatucci71@gmail.com)



St Mary's Youth Group  
[@stmarysocayouth](https://www.instagram.com/stmarysocayouth)



## Basketball Practices

To be ready for the upcoming basketball tournament in February, we've scheduled the following youth basketball practices:

***JOY Practices: Co-Ed ages 7-12 – 12:45-2:00 p.m.***

Sundays, December 18; January 8, 15, and 29

***Girls' GOYA Practices: Girls ages 12-18 (High School)***

Saturday, January 7: 12:00-2:00 p.m. \*\*

Sunday, January 8: 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 22: 12:45-2:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 28: 12:00-2:00 p.m. \*\*

Sunday, January 29: 2:00-3:30 p.m.

***Boys' GOYA Practices: Boys ages 12-18 (High School)***

Sunday, December 18: 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 7: 2:00-4:00 p.m. \*\*

Sunday, January 22: 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 28: 2:00-4:00 p.m.

(\* = Optional, coaches will let you know if practice is held.)

## **Church Cancellation Procedures for Winter**

Winter has arrived in Minnesota, and we want to remind all our parishioners to stay safe and not to attempt to travel during icy or severe conditions. Here is how we plan to keep you informed during this winter season.

- Cancellations of events, activities, and services will be announced a minimum of two hours prior to the start time.
- Committee/Ministry Heads only are the ones who can cancel on behalf of their group.
- All individual group leaders (choir, church school, senior citizens, etc.) must notify the church office of the decision to cancel so the necessary notifications can occur.
- Should a cancellation happen after office hours or on the weekend, you are encouraged to contact our Parish Administrator (612.503.0653) to inform them of the decision.
- We will update our website and social media platforms announcing the cancellation as another opportunity for you to be notified. We encourage you to take time now to follow us on Instagram and Facebook.
- The Parish Council President must also be notified of any cancellations, and no cancellations will occur without the blessing of our priests.
- For any scheduled worship services, only the Proistamenos has the authority to cancel.

We plan to serve all the scheduled worship services but urge you to use your best judgment to determine if the road conditions near you are safe for travel. We will live-stream our worship services to allow all to watch and pray along from your homes.

## **From the Fathers...on Jesus Christ**

The Word was not impaired in receiving a body,  
that He should seek to receive a grace,  
but rather He deified that which He put on, and more than that,  
gave it graciously to the human race.

—*Saint Athanasius*

### **Daily Bible Readings**

#### ***Monday, December 19***

II Timothy 2:20-26 • Mark 9:42—10:1

#### ***Tuesday, December 20***

Hebrews 10:32-38 • Mark 9:33-41

#### ***Wednesday, December 21***

II Timothy 4:9-22 • Mark 10:11-16

#### ***Thursday, December 22***

Titus 1:5-14 • Mark 10:17-27

#### ***Friday, December 23***

Titus 1:15—2:10 • Mark 10:24-32

#### ***Saturday, December 24***

#### ***Eve of Holy Nativity***

Galatians 3:8-12 • Luke 13:19-29

#### ***Sunday, December 25***

#### ***Holy Nativity***

Galatians 4:4-7 • Matthew 2:1-12

#### ***Saint Mary's Greek Orthodox Church***

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*Fr. Paul Kalina, Deacon; Fr. Luke Twito, Deacon*