

The Messenger

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

December 2022

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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



Family Camp Reflection

We drove away from Summer Camp 2022 with a joyful sorrow! During our three-hour drive back home, my four kids, ages 7 through 12, wondered how they could make this camp experience last forever. This was our first time at Summer Camp 2022, after our move to the US in 2020. I listened to them as they brainstormed ideas. "We could keep singing the campfire songs we learnt." "We could hang the key-chains we made on our school bags and 'take camp' to school with us everyday." "We could light those beeswax candles we made and keep the flame of our faith going." "We could sing the hymn Lord of the Powers every morning on our way to school and remember our time in chapel." "Will we ever see the friends we made, again?" one of them asked. "Will they even remember us, next time we see them?"

There was silence in the car. I wanted to tell my kids that we always meet our friends in prayer wherever we are, whenever we pray or go to church. But, I knew that they wanted more! How could I make their camp experience last forever? How could I nurture their Orthodox Christian faith and help them cultivate long-lasting friendships that would prove to be great supports in their lives as adults?

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7).

This prayer was not to remain unanswered. Our loving God heard my silent prayer. Our all-compassionate Lord acknowledged my kids' joyful sorrow and provided at the right time!

Through the Saint Mary's Orthodox Camp programs, I knew of St. Mary's Fall Family Camp offered every second weekend in October. This year, on Friday, October 7, 2022, God was about to give my children another one of His great blessings.

My eagerness to kindle my children's faith and to encourage true Orthodox Christian friendships was recognized by God. He purposefully laid out for us the opportunity to participate again in the activities of our greater Orthodox Christian family; to worship among friends; to break bread; to explore God's blessed nature; to experience the true Christian joy; to deepen our faith; to grow stronger in our relationship with God; to warm our hearts with Christ's light so that we may sustain ourselves throughout the colds months of winter, until spring comes again.

On October 7, we made the three-hour drive from our home to Camp Courage at Maple Lake for the St. Mary's Family Camp. The ride was magnificent there and back. The fall colors were at their glory.

—article continues on page 3.

Our Life Together

Births

Michael

Parents: Fotis & Anna Bazakos
October 6, 2022

SusieMarie

Parents: Greg & Briana Maimares
November 1, 2022



Share YourShelf

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

Sunday, December 4

Canned soup or vegetables

Sunday, December 11

Diapers (size 5)

Sunday, December 18

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

Sunday, December 25

Baby formula

Lord, you are our Father, a loving parent, who cares for us, your children. Here today we are just a few of your many million precious, loved and valued children. Help us to recognize the needs of our brothers and sisters - all made in your image. Hal-
lowed be your name, not my name or any other. May your justice and truth reign on this planet which is stricken with poverty. When we ask for your kingdom to come, we do so laying all our resources at your feet. Help us, as part of your church, to be obedient to your call to look after people in need in your name. Give us your daily bread, and help us to share abundantly the plenty that we have been blessed with. Amen.

—From Peter Shaw, Editor
Tear Times and Prayer Diary

Donate online:

<https://cesmn.org> then Make Donation

Memorial Prayers

Sunday, December 18

Barbara Apostolou (1 year)

Congratulations!

Congratulations to St. Mary's Youth Director Jon Klein who married Eleni Psihogios on Saturday, November 5, at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Portland, Oregon. May God grant you many years!

Thank You

I wish to thank everyone for your prayers, cards, and phone calls as I recovered from surgery. I greatly appreciated your support during this time. —Athena Andrews



News from Simpson Housing

Simpson Housing Services is looking for the following supplies to provide to their emergency shelter guests: gloves, hats, thermals, heat warmers, Twin XL fleece or cotton blankets, travel sized toiletries, and towels. Especially during the cold winter months, having supplies to warm and comfort guests is essential. All items must be of new quality.

Simpson Housing is in the process of rebuilding their shelter. This fall the shelter moved to Zion Church in Minneapolis as an interim site while construction takes place. Please contact Katelyn Jaksha at: kjaksha@simpsonhousing.org with any donation or volunteering questions.

St. Mary's Church Staff

Proistamenos

Fr. Timothy Sas

Associate Priest

Fr. Jason Houck

Attached Priest

Fr. John Kostas

Deacons

Fr. Paul Kalina

Fr. Luke Twito

Administrator

Julie Moricz

Parishioner Support Communications

David Mertesdorf

Ministry Support

Doria Saros

Youth Director

Jonathan Klein

Facilities Coordinator

Bob Yang

Music Director

Thespina Macres

Organist

Mark Macres

St. Mary's Parish Council

President

William M. Hoeft

Vice President

John Beauchamp

Secretary

Maria Smith

Treasurer

Thomas Hainlin

Assistant Treasurer

Andrew Twito

Members

Daniel Buss

Ina Dunham

Sam Hanna

Nicholas Legeros

Cristina Nicklow

Jeannie Possis

Dean Psihogios

Andrew Twito

—*Family Camp article, continued from page 1*

When we arrived at the camp site, I lost my children! I lost my children in the arms of our Lord and it was the most joyous feeling I had ever experienced: to see my children reunite with true friends; to recognize familiar faces in the care of camp counselors; to trust in the direction of father confessors!

This year's topic for the Family Camp was "Prayer." The program included sessions on what the Holy Fathers and Mothers say about prayer and practical advice on how to establish and strengthen the rule of prayer within the Orthodox Christian family.

- Take the time to pray.
- Keep to a rule.
- Prayer is a marathon; not a sprint
- Repetitions of prayers immunize against heresy.
- Prayers are active; God might choose to answer.
- Unanswered prayers are OK.
- Listen in the whisper!
- Expect attacks when you are praying.
- Stay vigilant.
- Pray the Psalter!

Adult and kids sessions were all structured around the practice of prayer in our faith and everybody was given opportunities to practice prayer: in the chapel; out in nature; by themselves or in groups with others. What a blessed opportunity to strengthen our communication with our heavenly Father! What a wonderful occasion to make resolutions on how to reinforce our family practices in order to make our homes "little Orthodox churches" for our Lord to abide.

We were the last ones to leave the camp site at the end of the program; we were probably the ones who had to drive the farthest to get home. My kids had already said goodbye to their friends but they still wanted to stay longer, enjoy the fall colors on that glorious Sunday of our Lord, and acknowledge the answers that God had provided to our prayers. St. Mary's Family Camp 2022 was over, but not quite...

About two weeks later, we received letters in the mail at our church's address. My kids' friends from camp initiated snail mail communication. And my kids reciprocated!

Orthodox Christian camp opportunities could be the start to wonderful, lasting connections and deep friendships for you, your children, your family! We hope to see you there next year, in the summer and the fall!

With love in Christ,

Presvytera Evangelia March

Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church, Mason City, Iowa



Education • Fellowship • Worship

Fellowship and Study Groups

Intercessory Prayer

Thursday, December 1
10:30 a.m., Nave Chapel

Men's Fellowship

Friday, December 2
The Book of Numbers
Friday, December 16
Psalm 119
7:00 a.m., Fireside Room

Saturday Bible Study

Every Saturday
(No class sessions December 24 and 31)
9:00 a.m., Fireside Room

Women's Bible Study

Thursdays, December 1 and 15
11:00 a.m., Fireside Room



Iconography Classes

Iconographer Debra Korluka will be offering iconography classes this winter. The proposed classes are:

Session 1

The Holy Face
Meeting at St. George Greek Orthodox Church and on Zoom
Tuesdays, January 10, 17, 24, and 31
6:00-9:00 p.m.

Session 2

Protection of the Theotokos
Meeting at St. George Greek Orthodox Church and on Zoom
Hosted by Wet Paint
Tuesdays, February 7, 21, 28, and March 7
6:00-9:00 p.m.

Session 3

Mother of God of Sorrows
The Basilica of Saint Mary
Saturdays, March 4, 11, 18, and 25
9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

For more information, contact
Deb Korluka: akorluka@aol.com or
612.889.5868

Christmas Worship Schedule

Friday, December 23

Royal Hours – 9:00 a.m.

Saturday, December 24

Eve of Holy Nativity
Orthros – 9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.
Great Vespers – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 25

Holy Nativity
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.



Akathist to the Mother of God

Given the spiritual challenges facing our youth, we are asking anyone interested to join us as we pray the Akathist to the Mother of God "Nurturer of Children."

We will continue meeting in the Nave on the first and third Mondays of each month. We will meet December 5 at 9:15 a.m. and December 19 at 7:00 p.m.

The Akathist prayer booklet may be purchased in the bookstore. All are welcome! Questions...call Cindy Karos 612.701.7320 or Popie Rakes 952.393.4180.



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

Monday, December 5

Akathist to the Mother of God
9:15 a.m.

Tuesday, December 6

Saint Nicholas
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Friday, December 9

Conception of the Theotokos
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Monday, December 12

Saint Spyridon
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, December 15

Saint Eleutherios
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Monday, December 19

Akathist to the Mother of God
7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 30

Saint Stephen
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.



Parish Night

Wednesday, December 15

Our December Parish Night, a parish-wide event for kindergartners through adult from our parish, is Wednesday, December 15, 6:15 p.m., beginning in the Nave with a brief prayer service, followed by dinner in the Terrace Room, and breakout sessions for the adults and kids. Parish Night ends by 8:00 p.m.

This year's theme is *Living in Sacramental Relationships*.

Upcoming Parish Nights: January 18, February 15, and May 17

Parish News & Events

Parishioner Reimbursements

As a reminder, St. Mary's has a policy that allows for reimbursement 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.

Expenses are processed weekly on Wednesday mornings. If you submit an expense after 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 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.

Year-End Giving Guidelines

It is hard to believe that we are in the final month of 2022. 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 year-end Contribution Statement, and matched against your yearly pledge, 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.

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 2022. Your Statement of Financial Giving will accurately reflect all income received within the calendar year.

2023 Basketball Tournament

The 2023 Western Region Family Basketball Tournament will be hosted by St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church in Minneapolis from February 3-5. Registration information will be available soon. Make plans to attend, even if you don't play basketball. It will be a fun filled weekend of hoops and fellowship.

Sacramental Preparation Classes

Baptism Class

Saturday, January 28, 2023 – 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Parents and Godparents of babies to be baptized in the next six months.

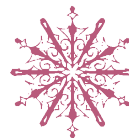
Welcoming a baby in the family is a momentous time for parents and, above all, it is the opportunity to grow closer to the Lord God as we prepare for the beautiful Mysteries of Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist. Starting in 2023 our parish will offer a short 1.5 hour class to study the church service of Baptism and Chrismation. All parents, or expectant parents, and hopefully the intended godparents are invited and expected to attend and learn together about the spiritual enrichment of the baby and all those involved in the sacramental services.

Marriage Class

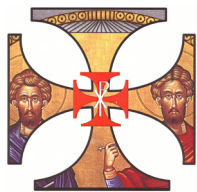
Wednesday, February 8, 2023 – 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Sponsors and couples who plan to be married in the next six months.

Weddings are incredibly beautiful and meaningful events for couples and the theology of our sacramental worship gathering is also filled with the richness of the blessings of God pouring out on the couple through the prayers of the Church. Particularly in a world where wedding reception preparations seem to take over our entire attention, energy, and finances. It is invaluable to take a moment to understand the prayers, hymns, and actions of the Mystery of Marriage. To that end, starting in 2023 all couples preparing for a wedding along with their sponsors/Godparents are invited and expected to attend a short 1.5 hour class to learn about the theology of our beautiful worship service.



Philoptochos



December Philoptochos Meetings

Please note that there are no Philoptochos Meetings in December. Watch for postings of the Advent activities in

the church weekly bulletins and on the church website. Please sign up to volunteer at the Philoptochos table on Sundays.

Women's Book Club Discussion

Book Club will meet on Thursday, December 1, to continue the discussion of *Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis. This month will be followed by a Lenten potluck supper. This will be a hybrid event with the in-person discussion at church and a call-in option. All are welcome. Closer to the event date, an e-mail will be sent to the distribution list. The book is available in the church bookstore.

Help Decorate the Church for Christmas

We will be decorating the trees, Terrace Room and Great Hall on December 3 from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome!

Healing House Gifts for AHEPA Children's Christmas Party

The families of Healing House have been invited once again to the AHEPA Children's Christmas Party, and Philoptochos is asking for help to purchase gifts for the kids and gift cards for the moms. Stop by the Philoptochos table to select a gift tag. Please return wrapped items by Sunday, December 11.

Vasilopita Pre-Sales

Order your Vasilopita (Sweet Bread) for Christmas or New Year's Day! Sales take place on Sundays, December 1-18 with pick up on December 18. All proceeds benefit St. Basil Academy for Children. Additional loaves will be available for sale on Vasilopita Sunday, January 8, 2023.

Philoptochos Hosts Christmas Coffee Hour

We are looking for a family or persons to help serve coffee and cookies on Christmas morning (December 25) after the Liturgy. All treats will be provided by Philoptochos. If you're interested, please contact Annette Legeros.

Thank You...

Thank you to everyone who helped with events that took place in November:

Prosforo Bakers – Thank you to all who helped bake bread this past month.

IOCC Hygiene Kits - Thank you Carol Smith for coordinating the project and all those who came to help with packaging.

Bluebirds and Blooms Bouquets – Thank you Jennifer Coin for coordinating this event at our November general meeting. Thank you to all those that helped with supplying vases and flowers and also with making and delivering these beautiful arrangements.

November 13 Ministry Fair – Thank you to all the ladies that helped staff our Philoptochos table.

Fillo Sales – Thank you to Andrea Tiggas for chairing this event and all those that helped with the sales and distribution.

Operation Classroom Winter Clothing Drive was a great success. Thank you all for your donations.

*Wishing everyone a Blessed Advent,
a Very Merry Christmas
and a Healthy and Happy New Year!*

Mission & Outreach

The Good News at Saint Mary's!



It has been a very good year, an amazing year in the Lord, and it is so very wonderful to see each and everyone.

St. Mary's Missions and Outreach would like to thank everyone who participated in the two Harvest Pack events during

2022 that helped provide a healthy breakfast for clients at food shelves. AND, with families new to St. Mary's families – folks of all ages packing meals. How wonderful to learn about our faith while we ask blessings for each other and help others. Photos of our December 4 event will be in the January 2023 issue.



Missions and Outreach would like to thank those who attended the Mission Take Heart fundraiser. May St. Mary's donations continue to help persecuted Christians in Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and Nigeria! My most very, very

worst day would be a 'sunny day'

take♥heart

for a persecuted Christian in these countries. We cannot even imagine and feel what it would be like to have everything taken away.

Missions and Outreach helped newcomers meet volun-



teer ambassadors at two mixers. Thank you to the new and newer parishioners who came, and the Ambassadors who shared their time with meeting in this smaller group for connection and fellow-

ship. Father Luke Twito spoke to us that we encourage one another; worship together in prayer and welcome. The mixer is a casual time together but turns out quite helpful to turn new faces into new friends. Be sure to stop by the Welcome Table to see photos of those new to St. Mary's. You may be surprised when you connect names and faces and share ways to be a family at St. Mary's.

Realm

What is Realm? *Realm is a real ministry tool.*

Realm is an online ministry tool designed for real time connection. It helps our church connect with you and you connect with us. If you consider yourself part of this church family, you'll love it. Realm allows you to manage your personal information and who is allowed to see it, control your giving, and keep in touch with the groups that matter to you.

Why use Realm? *Realm strengthens church connections.*

Being the church doesn't just happen at the church. Realm helps us serve you better and leads this church well between Sundays. Everyone can be connected from anywhere at any time, right from our mobile devices. It engages everyone in the life of our church by supporting the healthy relationships essential to our church's mission. We'll stay organized, and you'll stay informed about all of the opportunities for fellowship. When we share life together, we will grow together.

What about my privacy? *Realm is safe, private, and secure.*

Your privacy is one of our greatest concerns. Realm is only made up of the people in our church, it's not like a social network that's open to parishioners. Realm keeps your data safe and gives you control over what information you share and who can see it.

More information to come...watch for it!

Stewardship

Stewardship 2023

Ownership. Engagement. Generosity.

Commit Yourself to St. Mary's

Three pillars of Orthodox stewardship are

Ownership, Engagement, and Generosity.

There are numerous ways stewards can embrace these three principles.

◆ Ownership

- ◆ Your relationship with Christ belongs to you
- ◆ St. Mary's family is your family
- ◆ St. Mary's is your spiritual home

◆ Engagement

- ◆ Engage with your family in prayer at home
- ◆ Engage in relationships with your St. Mary's family
- ◆ Engage with your full being in the many worship opportunities
- ◆ Engage in studying your faith
- ◆ Engage in a ministry

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. —I Corinthians 15:58

Saint Mary's 2022 Stewardship Campaign Update

Our Church, Our Spiritual Home

Thank you for your participation in our 2022 Stewardship Campaign and your on-going support of St. Mary's through your gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

As of November 7, 2022, we have received \$812,076 in Stewardship Income.

- This represents only 64% of this year's budget for ministries and operating expenses and is slightly behind compared to where we were last year at this time.
- An additional \$457,724 is needed by year end to cover all our costs.

2022 Offering Income YTD vs Annual Budget

Offering Income As of Nov. 7, 2022	2022 YTD Actual	2022 Annual Budget	Additional Needed by December 31
Payments Received	\$812,076	\$1,269,800	\$457,724

◆ Generosity

- ◆ God's generosity is visible in His gifts to us
- ◆ Our generosity is love of God poured out toward our neighbor
- ◆ Our generosity should be purposeful and intentional
- ◆ Our generosity, as with everything in our spiritual life, must be disciplined

Give and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running all over will be out into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you. —Luke 6:38

Through your Ownership, Engagement, and Generosity, we encourage you to

◆ Commit to St. Mary's in 2023

- ◆ Commit to filling out the 2023 Time/Talent/Financial Commitment Form
- ◆ Commit to personal rule of prayer
- ◆ Commit to coming to church on time
- ◆ Commit to serving at least monthly
- ◆ Commit to bringing your children to Church School and GOYA
- ◆ Commit to fasting within the tradition of the church

* REMINDER: Goal increased this year to cover 100% of ministry and operating costs with Stewardship Income rather than relying on rental and festival income.

2022 Offering Income YTD vs YTD Budget

Offering Income As of Nov. 7, 2022	2022 YTD Actual	2022 YTD Budget	Variance from Budget
Payments Received	\$812,076	\$1,074,446	(\$262,370)

Compared to the year-to-date budget, we are behind by \$263,370.

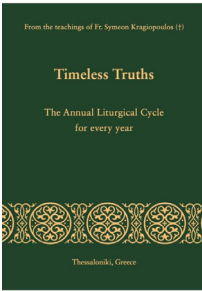
- Church costs per day for operating and ministries = \$3,479
- Actual average gifts per day = \$2,611

This means we are short each day by \$868 based on amount received year-to-date.

—Stewardship continues on page 9.

In the Bookstore

by Rebecca Myerly
bookstore@stmarysgoc.org



Timeless Truths: The Annual Liturgical Cycle for Every Year is composed of the teachings of Father Symeon Kragiopoulos (1926-2015), edited with a translation by Theophilos Lasswell. Two of Father Symeon's previous books—"May It Be Blessed" and *Anxiety (How It Is Created and How It Is Healed)*—have been best sellers in the bookstore. *Timeless Truths* gives readers the opportunity to listen to the wisdom of this elder for a whole year. Organized to follow the liturgical year, there is an introductory note that explains liturgical time and how to use this book in sync with the liturgical year. For each day, Father Symeon offers brief words of wisdom, humble advice, a thought to ponder....Each entry takes a minute or less to read, but often contains food for thought to nourish the reader throughout the day—and beyond.

One of the remarkable talents Father Symeon has in his writings is to begin with a sentence that immediately draws the reader in and focuses them to anticipate what is ahead. A few examples of these leading sentences are:

- *No one is put in order with a single confession. (70)
- *Everybody looks for joy. (83)
- *The entire life of a human being looks—paradoxical though it may seem—as if it is a battle against God. (104)
- *With sins, something analogous happens with what happens with grass. (106)
- *Every person, regardless of who he is and how old he might be, down to the child in his cradle, has within his being, within his constitution, this great truth: he wants to assert his existence. (107)

- *This is the major issue: Whether we want to or not—that is how God has arranged things—we will become martyrs, in one way for one person and in another for the next person. (118)
- *When a person has Christ, all things are simple, all things are easy. (126)
- *If a man understands that becoming humble is everything, he will desire to empty himself of all the bulk that exists within him. (171)
- *We think that we are going to meet Christ at very special moments. (180)
- *All things that happen to people have within them the mystery of salvation. (184)
- *Wake up and start your day with zeal. (200)
- *We all have a predisposition to appreciate certainty. (303)
- *Normally, one is a victim of one's feelings, thoughts, mindset, even of the coercive complexes that are in him. (386)

For each day, some of the saints celebrated are listed. Father Symeon occasionally bases his meditation on one of these saints, noting a characteristic of the saint and how that characteristic might be—or is—applicable to the reader.

Several themes are underlying and overarching in Father Symeon's writing, and the reader will meet them many times throughout the liturgical year. For example: the vital importance of prayer, humility, repentance, being always grateful, accepting pain, obedience, and parenting.

Read with openness, Father Symeon's thoughts and reflections in *Timeless Truths* are gifts to the reader for reflection, meditation, and perhaps action—all in the love and light of Christ. This book is a good Christmas gift looking to the year ahead.

Stewardship Article, concluded

2022 Offering Income vs Prior Year as of November 7

Offering Income As of Nov. 7, 2022	2022 YTD Actual	2021 YTD Budget	Decrease vs. Prior Year
Payments Received	\$812,076	\$819,807	(\$7,731)

Average per Week	\$18,456	\$18,632	(\$176)
Average per Month	\$79,977	\$80,739	(\$761)

As we approach the end of the year, please prayerfully consider St. Mary's in your holiday giving, and also consider increasing your Stewardship contribution this year

to help us reach our goal. Your stewardship giving to St. Mary's is one way to exhibit the principle of generosity.

Prior Year Metrics

2021 Average and Median Gifts

- Total Gifts = \$1,128,098
- Number of Gifts = 538
- Average Gift = \$2,097
- Median Gift = \$717

Thank you again for your on-going support of St. Mary's through your gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

The St. Mary's Stewardship Committee

Senior Citizens

Saint Mary's Seniors will gather in the Terrace Room on Tuesday, December 13, 11:00 a.m., for a festive Christmas celebration. This event will include a social hour, a delicious luncheon catered by Tony Nicklow, a no charge raffle for a variety of prizes, followed by entertainment with songstress Elena Biessener, accompanied by pianist Jon, who will perform holiday tunes. Stay tuned for further details from Tessie Bourdamis. We look forward to seeing all of our Seniors Club members at this holiday event.

Reminiscing Activity – A Synopsis:

In September the Senior group had a lively walk down "Memory Lane" mostly about past St. Mary's Festivals or events. The Festival began in the early 80's – one big day. There was the "Mr. & Mrs. Club" that prepared a chicken dinner called the "Greek Smorgasbord." Imagine a Swedish meal at the Greek church! The first Festival was advertised in the Star Tribune with a huge ad and in the Lake Street area. It was just food at first but later it became a three-day event.

Sad things happened around the time of the Festival. When September 11 happened right before the Festival it was a challenge. Mayor Sharon Sales Belson was supportive. When the I-35 Bridge fell, a parishioner who was very involved with the dancing was killed, costumes were lost, and groups from around the country offered to help.

Funny things happened too like when some wine accidentally was poured out during clean up. When the dancing and music moved outside, and the police showed up to

tell the church that they needed a permit to play music outside in the neighborhood. How some zealous campers 'swiped' some corn from a farmer's field. How Mary Kafkas helped catch a thief who almost sold her a stolen car! That a cotton ball ignited during the anointing service. And the altar boys had to read the Epistle in Greek.

John Kafkas shared an album of photos of members from past Senior meetings. People enjoyed the pictures, remembering many members who are no longer with us. Ernie Konstas shared pictures of his family and from his service in the U.S. Military. Linda Stanton passed around a watercolor she purchased of a monastery in Greece, as well as a cute tree ornament.

Annette Legeros thanked the Seniors for pouring coffee and listened to feedback about this year's Festival. She expressed how much she loves organizing the food service at the Festival.

Many thanks to everyone who participated and shared memories. It was a lot of fun.

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 Play Group

0-5 Year Olds and Parents

- ▶ Thursday, December 8
- ▶ Wednesday, December 14
9:30-11:00 a.m. – Great Hall and Terrace Room

HOPE and JOY

Kindergarten-Grade 2 and Grades 3-5

- ▶ Sunday, December 4 – 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
HOPE/JOY Kids Christmas Party in the Youth Room
To RSVP, please go to: <https://linktr.ee/stmarysgoya>
- ▶ Wednesday, December 21 – 6:15-8:00 p.m.
HOPE and JOY at Parish Night, gather in the Nave

Junior GOYA

Grades 6-8

- ▶ Wednesday, December 7 – 6:15-8:00 p.m.
Junior GOYA Christmas Party in the Terrace Room and
Great Hall
To RSVP, please go to: <https://linktr.ee/stmarysgoya>
- ▶ Wednesday, December 21 – 6:15-8:00 p.m.
Junior GOYA at Parish Night, gather in the Nave

Senior GOYA

Grades 9-12

- ▶ Wednesday, December 14 – 6:15-8:00 p.m.
Senior GOYA Christmas Party in the Terrace Room and
Great Hall
To RSVP, please go to: <https://linktr.ee/stmarysgoya>
- ▶ Wednesday, December 21 – 6:15-8:00 p.m.
Senior GOYA at Parish Night, gather in the Nave

Church School Events

- ▶ Sunday, December 4
St. Nicholas Celebration — please bring a small \$5 unwrapped toy to Liturgy. We will join in the Great Entrance procession and place our gift in front of the icon of St. Nicholas for the children at FOCUS Minnesota. We are hoping St. Nicholas will make an appearance that day to fill our shoes.
- ▶ Sunday, December 18
Church School Christmas Program in the Nave after Liturgy.

Western Region Family Basketball Tournament

Saint Mary's is hosting the 2023 Western Region Family Basketball Tournament February 3-5, 2023. Be on the lookout for volunteer opportunities and additional information!

Basketball Practices

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

- Sunday, December 11
- Sunday, December 18
- Sunday, January 8
- Sunday, January 15
- Sunday, January 29

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

- Sunday, December 4: 12:45-2:00 p.m.
- Sunday, December 11: 2:00-3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, January 7: 12:00-2:00 p.m.
(Optional, coaches will let you know if practice is held)
- 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.
(Optional, coaches will let you know if practice is held)
- Sunday, January 29: 2:00-3:30 p.m.

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

- Sunday, December 4: 2:00-3:30 p.m.
- Sunday, December 18: 2:00-3:30 p.m.
- Saturday, January 7: 2:00-4:00 p.m.
(Optional, coaches will let you know if practice is held)
- 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)

Winter Camp 2023

Friday, January 13-Monday, January 16 (MLK weekend)

Pan-Orthodox Winter Camp at Camp St. Croix in Wisconsin for the GOYAns (grades 6-12). Registration will begin in December, so watch your e-mails for the information!

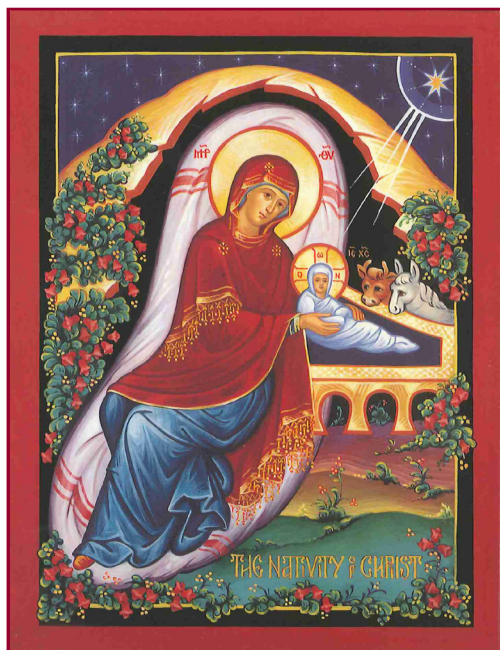
Youth Feedback

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.

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

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Today the Virgin comes to 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. —Kontakion of Preparation for the Birth of Christ, Third Tone

St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church

The Messenger is published
monthly by St. Mary's
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December 2022

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Publication Deadlines

The Messenger—

First Sunday of each month.

Sunday Bulletin—

Preceding Thursday,
12:00 Noon

December 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 10:30am-Intercessory Prayer 11:00am-Women's Bible Study 7:00pm-Philoptochos Book Club	2 7:00am-Men's Fellowship	3 9:00am-Bible Study 10:00am-Tree Trimming 5:00pm-Great Vespers
4 Tenth Sunday of Luke Saint Barbara "The Messenger" Deadline 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy after Liturgy-Harvest Pack 11:30am-HOPE/JOY Party 12:45pm-Girls' GOYA BB 2:00pm-Boys' GOYA BB	5 9:15am-Akathist	6 Saint Nicholas 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-Open Gym	7 6:15pm-Junior GOYA 6:30pm-Choir Rehearsal	8 9:30am-FAITH Play Group 6:00pm-Edina Koinonia	9 Conception of the Theotokos 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	10 9:00am-Bible Study 5:00pm-Great Vespers
11 Eleventh Sunday of Luke 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy after Liturgy-Parish Council Elections 12:45pm-JOY BB Practice 2:00pm-Girls' GOYA BB	12 Saint Spyridon 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	13 11:00am -Senior Citizens 6:00pm-Open Gym 6:15pm-Parish Council	14 9:30am-FAITH Play Group 6:15pm-Senior GOYA 6:30pm-Choir Rehearsal	15 Saint Eleutherios 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 11:00am-Women's Bible Study 7:00pm-Stewardship Com.	16 7:00am-Men's Fellowship	17 9:00am-Bible Study 11:00am-AHEPA Children's Christmas Party 5:00pm-Great Vespers
18 Sunday before Nativity 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy Church School Christmas Program 11:30am-Missions/Outreach 12:45pm-JOY BB Practice 2:00pm-Boys' GOYA BB	19 7:00pm-Akathist	20 6:00pm-Open Gym	21 9:00am-"The Messenger" Mailing 6:15pm-Parish Night 6:30pm-Choir Rehearsal	22 <i>Church Office closes at noon</i>	23 9:00am-Royal Hours <i>Church Office closed</i>	24 Eve of Nativity 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 5:00pm-Great Vespers
25 HOLY NATIVITY 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy <i>No Church School</i>	26 Synaxis of the Theotokos <i>Church Office closed</i>	27 Saint Stephen 9:30am-Divine Liturgy	28	29	30	31

Children's Christmas Party



Santa's visit and keepsake photo, caroling with Kally, entertainment, and lunch highlight this special, St. Mary's Community event.



Saturday, December 17th, 2022 11a.m.

***St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church
3450 Irving Ave, Minneapolis
Terrace Room***

*All for just \$12 / child**

All parents are encouraged to attend at no charge!

In the spirit of the season, please bring a donation for Food Shelves

RSVP by 12/12 to AHEPA,

3450 Irving Ave S, Mpls MN 55408

For more info mark.alevizos@gmail.com mobile 612.990.4211

Parent's name(s) _____

Telephone _____

Email _____



Children's names:

Boy/Girl

Age



Sponsored by Minneapolis AHEPA

**free for all children of Mpls AHEPA and Daughters of Penelope*

Parish Christmas Card

Send holiday greetings to your family and friends at St. Mary's!

Simply fill out this form and return it to the Church Office
with a contribution ***no later than*** Sunday, December 4.

Your name(s) as you want it listed in the card:

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

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 18.