



ST. MARY'S

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

January 5, 2025 — *The Sunday Before Theophany*

THE DIVINE LITURGY

Commemoration

Sunday before Theophany; Eve of the Theophany of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; The Holy Martyrs Theopemptus and Theonas; Righteous Syncletike of Alexandria; Gregory of Akrita; Apollinaria of Egypt.

Morning Gospel: Luke 24:36-53

Tone: Third Tone

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, Third Tone

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord has shown the mighty power of his arm. He has trampled down death by death, becoming the firstborn of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell and has granted to all the world his great mercy.

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 (Joseph Marveled), Fourth Tone

Jordan River once turned back when Elisha struck its stream with his mantle in the wake of Elias's ascent; and the water was parted to the one side and to the other. And thus the fluid stream became a dry way for him, a symbol and truly a type of Baptism, by which we now pass over the streaming passage of the present life. And Christ appeared at the Jordan River to sanctify the waters.

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 γενήσει τὴν παρθενίαν ἐφύλαξας, ἐν τῇ κοιμήσει τὸν κόσμον οὐ κατέλιπες,
En ti gennisi tin parthenian efilaxas en ti kimisi ton kosmon u katelipes,

Θεοτόκε. Μετέστης πρὸς τὴν ζώην, μήτηρ ὑπάρχουσα τῆς ζωῆς, καὶ ταῖς πρεσβείαις
Theotoke. Metestis pros tin zoin, mitir iparhousa tis zois, ke tes presvies

ταῖς σαῖς λυτρουμένη ἐκ θανάτου τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.
tes ses litrumeni ek thanatu tas psichas imon.

Kontakion of the Forefeast, *Fourth Tone*

To the flowing streams today of River Jordan comes the Lord and cries aloud to John the Baptist, and He says, "Be not afraid to baptize me now; for I have come to save Adam, the first-formed man."

Epistle..... *II Timothy 4:5-8*

TIMOTHY, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Gospel..... *Mark 1:1-8*

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, 'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' John was baptizing in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Litany for the Catechumens

Deacon: Catechumens, pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Let us, the faithful, pray for the catechumens.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the Lord will have mercy on them.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That He will teach them the word of truth.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That He will reveal to them the gospel
of righteousness.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That He will unite them to His holy,
catholic, and apostolic Church.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Save them, have mercy on them, help them, and
protect them, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Catechumens, bow your heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Prayer for the Catechumens

Priest: Lord our God, Who dwells on high and
watches over the humble, You sent forth
Your only-begotten Son and God, our Lord
Jesus Christ, for the salvation of the human
race. Look down upon Your servants, the
catechumens, who have inclined their necks
to You, and grant them at a proper time the
baptism of rebirth, the remission of sins, and
the garment of incorruption. Unite them to
Your holy, catholic, and apostolic Church,
and number them among Your chosen flock.

Priest: So that with us they also may glorify Your
most honorable and majestic name, of the
Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

.....
The Communion Prayers are found on page 40 of the hymnal.

Today

Prosforo is provided by **Ruta Kubits**.

Welcome visitors and guests!

Members of our Missions and Outreach Committee are at the welcome and information table in the Great Hall after Liturgy this morning to welcome you and answer your questions about St Mary's Greek Orthodox Church and the Orthodox faith. Join us for a cup of coffee and always enjoyable refreshments.

Announcements



Holy Theophany Worship Schedule

Sunday, January 5: Eve of Holy Theophany
Great Vespers – 5:00 p.m.

Monday, January 6: Holy Theophany
Orthros – 8:30 a.m. • Divine Liturgy and Great
Blessing of Waters – 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, January 7: Synaxis of John the Baptist
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.



House Blessings

During January and February, Fr. Tim and Fr. Jason will be doing house blessings. To schedule a blessing, please send an e-mail request to: stmarysgoc@stmarysgoc.org or call the parish office, 612.825.9595. Blessings take place between January 6-February 1. It is also within our Orthodox tradition for laypeople to bless their own homes with bottled Holy Water, as it states in the Great Blessing of the Waters service: *“For those who are sprinkled with it and take it for the blessing of homes; let us pray to the Lord.”*



Saint Mary's Digital Donation Options

Text to Give*: Text smgoc to 73256 • **or Scan to Give**

**This number will never send unsolicited texts.*





Saturday Bible Study

Saturday Bible Study is on break for a couple weeks. Watch the Sunday bulletin and your e-mail communications for startup date.



FOCUS Clothing Needs

FOCUS continues to need men's winter clothing, including jackets, boots, warm socks, and gloves. The men's closet continues to need these essential articles of clothing. As we move further into winter, the need increases all the more. Please bring these needed items to church and place them by the FOCUS sign in the hallway leading to the office.



Parish Night Returns

Wednesday, January 8, 6:15 p.m.

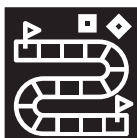
Parish Night is a monthly parish-wide event and everyone is welcome to attend! Our next Parish Night is Wednesday, January 8, beginning at 6:15 p.m. We'll discuss the major feast days of the Church. Parish Night has something to offer all ages. We wrap up for the evening at 8:00 p.m.



Blood Drive

Saturday, January 25

Hellenic Sons Squadron 129, Sons of the American Legion will host a blood Drive at St. Mary's on Saturday, January 25, 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Scan the QR code to sign-up or call MBC at 888.448.3253.



Orthodox Game League

Saturday, January 25

The winter Orthodox Game League get-together is Saturday, January 25, at St. Mary's OCA Cathedral Parish Center, 1701 5th St NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413. Arrive anytime after 6:00 p.m. and please bring a drink, snack, and/or game to share!



Greek Dance Practices Resume

Monday, January 27

The Greek dance program will resume practices starting Monday, January 27, 6:00-8:00 p.m., through March 22. We will be practicing for the Greek Independence Day program on Sunday, March 23. All children, ages 6 to 18 years old are welcome to join this program.

Please register with Tessie Bourdamis or Jim Canelake.

Philoptochos News



Vasilopita Sales Today

Our Vasilopita bakers have baked our annual New Year's bread for 2025 and we are still selling loaves every Sunday until January 12. Loaves are \$15 each on a first come first served basis...so buy them today!



Vasilopita Cutters and Baggers Needed

We are looking for ladies to help cut and bag Vasilopita bread on Saturday, January 11, at 10:00 a.m. We will be distributing the bread after Liturgy as well as to the Sunday School children on Sunday, January 12. Please sign up at the Philoptochos table in the Great Hall.



Our Little Orthodox Library Needs You in 2025

We are looking for more volunteers in 2025 to help with the management of our Little Library outside the church. Sign up for a month, check it weekly, make sure it is stocked and that only Orthodox materials are there. Please stop by the Philoptochos table on Sundays to see how you can help. We would also love additional Orthodox books to help keep our stock full.



Undecorating the Church – January 10 and 12

Mark your calendar to help undecorate the church. Friday, January 10, at 11:00 a.m., we will undecorate the trees and take down wreaths, etc. On Sunday, January 12, after Sunday school, we will join the St. Olympia girls in undecorating the nave. Please sign up at the Philoptochos to help or contact Andrea Tiggas, adtiggas@msn.com or 612.239.1522. Many hands make light work.



Timberwolves Game Cancelled

The Timberwolves game scheduled for Friday, March 21, has been cancelled and will be rescheduled for another date. Watch the church communications for updates.



Prayer Ministry

Please remember the sick, the suffering, and those in need, especially:

The family of William (Bo) Kozak; All victims of wars throughout the world; 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 and Jassir; San Miguel Del Lago Orphanage; Evdoxia, Sylvia, Pete, Maria, Karen, Steve A., Athena, Betty, Sean, Krisanne, Ann, Mark, Kostantinos & Georgia, Andreas, Jonathan, Jeanette, Mary, Ann, Marilyn, Donna, Dawn, Don, Nancy, Brad, Vangie, Jolene, Mikey, Aphrodite, James, Peter, Lyda, Owen, Michael, Johnny, Jaclyn Jereczek, Dena, Chris, Joy Rose, Nick, John, Demos and Eugenia, Ron, Matt, Laura, Susan, Elias, Constance, Marina, Dion, Annali, Sofia, Juan Cruz & family, Charlie, Stan, Helena, Byrdie, Jennifer, John S., Becky, Noel, Stephen, Alexey, Alexandra, Ray, Christina, Joanne, Charlie, Nuala, Pamela, Avgi, Elena, Speranta, Liz, Efstratia, Jordan, David, Nino, Joe, Donnarae, Samira, Mary K., Monte, Bethany, Mark, Owen, Chrysanthy, Estelle, Justine, Melissa, Megan, Lisa, Michael, Robbie, Judi, Evonne, James, Nichole, Constantine, Theodora, Irene Maria, Olivia, Lincoln, Carole, Patty, Karrisa, Corina, Tom, George R., Ken, Nancy and Tim, Olga, Peter, Cora and family, Bo, Lynn, Sue & Jim, Steve, Sue, Jane, Pat, Dave, Pam, Gilbert, George P., Danielle, Jenny, John L., Presvytera Janis, Sandra, Rick, Nancy, Alex, Eryn, Phil, Karen, Linda, Vicki, Bill, Diana, 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, Judi, Bodil, Ole, and others known to you.

Food Shelf Needs for January 12



Cereal (both hot and cold)

January's recipient is **Joyce Uptown Food Shelf**.

Please do not bring opened packages. They will be discarded.

Calendar of the Week

Sunday, January 5: Eve of Theophany

“The Messenger” News Item Deadline

8:30 a.m. – Matins; 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Waters

12:30 p.m. – HOPE/JOY Basketball Practice, *Great Hall*

5:00 p.m. – Great Vespers

Monday, January 6: Holy Theophany

8:30 a.m. – Matins; 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Waters

Tuesday, January 7: Synaxis of John the Baptist

9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy

5:00 p.m. – Adult Open Gym Basketball, *Great Hall*

Wednesday, January 8

6:15 p.m. – Parish Night

Thursday, January 9

4:00-7:00 p.m. – Visitation for William (Bo) Kozak

Washburn-McReavy Edina Chapel, Vernon Avenue & Highway 100

Friday, January 10

11:00 a.m. – Funeral Service for William (Bo) Kozak;

Visitation from 10:00 a.m., St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church

Saturday, January 11

No Bible Study

10:00 a.m. – FAITH Play Group, *Great Hall*

5:00 p.m. – Great Vespers

Sunday, January 12: Sunday After Theophany

8:30 a.m. – Matins; 9:30 a.m. – Divine Liturgy; Vasilopita Service

12:30 p.m. – HOPE/JOY Basketball Practice, *Great Hall*

COMMITMENT + 2025



2025 Stewardship Pledges

Thank you to everyone who has already completed a Time, Talent, and Financial Pledge Form for 2025. If you have not yet done so, please take a moment to prayerfully complete a 2025 pledge form and return it to the church office as soon as possible. If you need a form, scan the code or contact the church office. *Please remember that to be considered a Steward in good standing for 2025, you must return your pledge forms by March 31, 2025.*



Seeking the Faith

Just learning about Orthodoxy? Relatively new to Orthodoxy? Please join us for our Seekers group in the Fireside Room. This is a chance to get together to learn more. Led by Presvytera Alexandra Houck. This class is a supplement—not a substitute—to our MEOCCA Catechism Course* that meets at St. George Greek Orthodox Church.

MEETING DATES

- January 19
- February 2
- February 23
- March 16
- April 6

Meet in the Fireside Room, after Communion, about 10:45 to 11:15 a.m.

Topics will include:



Prayer life, how we read the Bible, various services of the Church, living the Church year/seasons of the Church, Church culture and etiquette, Lent, saints, icons, and building an Orthodox mindset.



ST. MARY'S
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*For the MEOCCA Catechism Course, visit: <https://meocca.org/our-faith/cooperative-catechism>

“When we continually force ourselves to bless and pray for others..., we will find that our Lord Jesus Christ will change, renew, and refresh our hearts. It make take some time and persistence, but gradually, almost imperceptibly, we will be changed. The poison of resentment, by the Grace of Christ, will leave our system.”

— *Saint Dorotheos of Gaza*

Daily Bible Readings

Monday, January 6: Holy Theophany

Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 • Matthew 3:13-17

Tuesday, January 7: Synaxis of John the Baptist

Acts 19:1-8 • John 1:29-34

Wednesday, January 8

Romans 6:3-11 • John 3:22-33

Thursday, January 9

Timothy 2:1-10 • Mark 1:9-15

Friday, January 10

Ephesians 4:7-13 • Luke 3:19-22

Saturday, January 11

Hebrews 13:7-16 • Matthew 4:1-11

Sunday, January 5: The Sunday after Theophany

Ephesians 4:7-13 • Matthew 4:12-17



Saint Mary's Greek Orthodox Church

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612.825.9595 | stmarysgoc.org | social: [@stmarysgoc](https://www.instagram.com/stmarysgoc)   

Fr. Timothy Sas, Fr. Jason Houck, Fr. Paul Kalina, Deacon; Fr. Luke Twito, Deacon

Weekly Bulletin Submissions to: Communications@stmarysgoc.org

Weekly Bulletin Submission Deadline: Mondays