A Message from Father Jason
Father Jason Houck, Associate

The Church's Advice Regarding Lent and our Spiritual Journey throughout the Year

Have you ever wanted advice on how to approach Lent? Have you ever wondered if there were any instructions about how to observe Lent with the correct approach? The four Sundays of Triodion period (January 28, February 4, 11, and 18, 2018) offer us solid advice on how to approach Lent and also how to approach our spiritual journey throughout the year.

The first Sunday of the Triodion period (the time leading up to Lent) is the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee (January 28). By reading Luke 18:10-14 that Sunday, the Church reminds us to pray in a humble manner as we increase our prayer during Lent. We must avoid being like the Pharisee, who compared himself with others and thought he was better than others (Luke 18:11-12). The Gospel reading also assures us that God forgives people who repent, even the publican (a tax collector for the Roman Empire), who was considered a traitor to his people. This reminder is encouraging to us, since we are assured that sincere prayer and repentance is not in vain.

The second Sunday of the Triodion period (February 4), is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24). This reading shows us that we need to return home, towards God, like the Prodigal Son. It also reiterates the previous week's theme that God can forgive us. This reading also prompts us to forgive others who have returned to God and not to be like the older, self-righteous son (Luke 15:28-30).

The third Sunday of the Triodion period (February 11) is the Judgment Sunday. The Gospel lesson counsels us that our service to God is not simply prayer, but that we must also help the poor and less fortunate (Matthew 25:31-46). We will be judged on whether we help the poor or not.

The fourth Sunday of the Triodion period (February 18) is Forgiveness Sunday. The Gospel lesson that day commands us that as we ask God’s forgiveness, we must forgive others (Matthew 6:14). Forgiveness Sunday also exhorts us to fast in an unpretentious manner, not trying to impress others (Matthew 6:16-18). Finally, Forgiveness Sunday reiterates the theme to be generous with our material goods (Matthew 6:18-21).

The Church, in her wisdom, places these four Gospel lessons in front of us as guiding principles as we approach Lent. Let us use these Gospel lessons to properly ground our prayer, fasting and almsgiving during Lent and throughout the year.

In Christ,
Fr. Jason Houck
Birth
Olivia
Parents: Andy & Kristi (Twito) Gatchell
December 13, 2017

Chrismation
Priya Backos
December 31, 2017

Death
Elaine Kallas
January 11, 2018
May her memory be eternal.

Our Sympathy
We extend our sympathy to Milton Psihos and family on the passing of his wife, Margaret (Maggie) Psihos, on December 20, 2017.

Thank You
The clergy and staff of St. Mary’s wish to thank everyone who remembered them with prayers, thoughts, cards, and gifts during this holiday season, as well as throughout the year. Your thoughtfulness is so much appreciated!

Thank You

Appreciation from our Neighbors
“Thank you for the year-round gift of space for the ECCO Playgroup. We are so appreciative of your generosity. It’s our favorite part of the week!”

“We really loved being able to use your beautiful space and we really value how much St. Mary’s gives back to the south Minneapolis community all year long and what a wonderfully welcoming place it is for any guests, on Sundays and at special events. So anyhow, many, many thanks.”

“Thank you for your support and generosity, and providing a home for us to celebrate our annual Holiday celebration!”

St. Mary’s Parish Council
President:
Joseph DiGiovanni
Vice President:
Dean Tortorelis
Secretary:
Andrew Theodotou
Treasurer:
Marshall Estep
Assistant Treasurer:
Steve Rakes
Members:
George Andreadakis
John Beauchamp
Paul Hastings
William M. Hoeft
Dean Murdakes
Pamela Nelson
Randy Twito

Thank You

St. Mary’s Church Staff
Priest:
Fr. George Dokos
Associate Priest:
Fr. Jason Houck
Emeriti:
Fr. Anthony Coniaris
Fr. Theodore Filandrinos
Deacon:
Deacon Paul Kalina
Administrator:
Julie Moricz
Administrative Assistant/Communications:
David Mertesdorf
Ministries Coordinator & Office Secretary:
Sandra Anderson
Facilities Coordinator
Sylvia Kafkas
Pastoral Assistant:
Doria Saros
Youth Director:
Jonathan Klein
Music Director:
Theospina Macres
Organist:
Mark Macres

Share YourShelf
February’s recipient of Share YourShelf contributions is Simpson Food Pantry.

Sunday, February 7
Canned Meal – large cans
(e.g. Chili / Pork and Beans)

Sunday, February 14
Potatoes
(boxed, instant, or canned)

Sunday, February 21
Pancake mix & syrup

Sunday, February 28
Hygiene items
(toothpaste, soap, shampoo, conditioner, razors)
Sunday Schedule
Saturday Great Vespers – 5:00 p.m.
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Weekday Worship Schedule
Friday, February 2
Presentation of Our Lord
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, February 10
First Saturday of Souls
Saint Haralambos
Orthros – 9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, February 17
Second Saturday of Souls
Orthros – 9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

Monday, February 19
Clean Monday: First Day of Great Lent
Great Compline – 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 20
Great Compline – 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 21
PreSanctified Liturgy – 5:45 p.m.

Thursday, February 22
Great Compline – 6:00 p.m.

Friday, February 23
Salutations to the Theotokos
– 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 24
Third Saturday of Souls
Orthros – 8:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:00 a.m.

Koinonia
Edina Koinonia
Thursday, February 22, 7:00 p.m.
Fireside Room, St. Mary’s Church
952.944.9397 (Joan Calott)

Northeast Metro Koinonia
Thursday, February 15, 7:00 p.m.
Costas & Barbara Nichols’ home
763.571.0460

South of the River Koinonia
Thursday, February 22, 6:30 p.m.
Mark & Elizabeth Skoog’s home
612.743.2789

West Metro Koinonia
Thursday, February 22, 7:00 p.m.
Gus & Cristina Nicklow’s home
952.476.7624

Fellowship and Study Groups
Adult Senior Bible Study
On Winter break

Intercessory Prayer
Wednesdays, February 7 and 21
10:30 a.m., Nave Chapel

Men’s Fellowship
Friday, February 1
7:00 a.m., Fireside Room

Evening Men’s Fellowship
Tuesday, February 6
6:30 p.m.
Andrew & Nancy LeRoy’s home
8505 Angus Avenue
Inver Grove Heights

Saturday Bible Study
Every Saturday
9:00 a.m., Fireside Room
No session on February 24

Senior Citizens
On Winter break

Women’s Bible Study
Wednesdays, February 7 and 21
11:00 a.m., Fireside Room

MEOCCA Pan-Orthodox Lenten Vespers
Sundays, 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 25
St. Mary’s Orthodox Cathedral
1629 Fifth Street NE
Minneapolis, MN 55413

Sunday, March 7
St. George Greek Orthodox Church
1111 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105

Sunday, March 14
St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church
3450 Irving Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Sunday, March 21
St. George Antiochian Orthodox
1250 Oakdale Avenue
West St. Paul, MN 55118

Sunday, March 28
St. Panteleimon Russian Orthodox
2210 Franklin Avenue SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Sunday, April 1
St. Herman’s Orthodox Church
5355 - 38th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55412

Lenten Schedule
Begins Monday, February 19

Mondays
6:00 p.m. - Compline

Wednesdays
4:00 - Confession
5:45 p.m. - Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
7:00 p.m. - Lenten Dinner
7:30 p.m. - Youth Groups and Activities
7:30 p.m. - Choir Rehearsal

Fridays
4:00 - Confession
6:00 - Salutations to the Theotokos (Akathist Hymn)
Guidelines for the Observance of Great Lent
February 19-April 1, 2018 • Holy Week: April 2-7, 2018

The guidelines for the observance of Great Lent, the 40-day period of preparation for Easter, include increased prayer, more intense fasting, and almsgiving to the poor and needy. Preparation for and reception of the Sacrament of Holy Confession is also strongly advised. The rules of the traditional physical fast are:

Saturday and Sunday we abstain from meat and meat products, dairy products, and fish.

Monday through Friday we abstain from meat and meat products, dairy products, fish, olive oil, and wine.

As always, the fast is modified or eliminated in the case of young children, pregnant women, the elderly, and infirm. Please feel free to consult a priest about your observance of this period if you have any questions or concerns. The preparation is definitely worthwhile when we willingly enter into it for the glory of God and the benefit of others around us.

Coffee Hour Hosts Needed

Coffee hour hosts are needed for Sundays January 28, February 11, 18, and 25. If you would like to host, please contact the Church Office to schedule a Sunday or for more information about hosting.

In the Bookstore for Great Lent

“The Church has specially provided the time of Great Lent so we can gather our thoughts, so we can focus, and so we can prepare ourselves to greet the day of Pascha (Easter). By way of Great Lent, we must try to grow in what is lacking and to fill in the blanks within our spiritual lives, which have suffered so much due to life’s messes, distractions, and laziness.”

—Father Alexander

“Men in An Inner Step Toward God”

To assist us in our spiritual growth, the bookstore has a space dedicated to books specially for Lenten reading and reflection. Also available in the bookstore, for free, is “A Rule of Prayer for Great Lent.” Please come in to pick up a copy and to look at books to inspire and accompany you through your Lenten journey.

Are You Missing Something?

Just a reminder that we have several Lost and Found, as well as FREE Items, on a cart outside the Church Office. If you believe you may have left something here, or are looking for some children’s games and books in Greek, we encourage you to stop by on Sunday at take a look. Items in good condition will be donated to FOCUS Minnesota, so don’t delay and stop by our cart today!

Souper Bowl Sunday
Sunday, February 4

We invite everyone to bring donations of soup or money to church on Sunday, February 4, as we observe Souper Bowl Sunday. The soup donations benefit Simpson Food Pantry (February’s Share Your Shelf recipient.) Monetary contributions are given to IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities) to help feed the hungry in other parts of our world. Please make checks payable to St. Mary’s, marked for IOCC.

Annunciation/Greek Independence Day Program
Sunday, March 25

We’re holding our Annunciation/Greek Independence Day Program on Sunday, March 25, 2018, and are looking for children of all ages to participate in reciting Greek poems, short stories, or a song referencing Greek Independence Day or inspired by Greek culture. If you would like to sign up your child for this event or are interested in further information, please contact Kally Youngdahl, 612.701.2279, or Krissa Rovolis, 612.237.6482.

Godparent Sunday
Sunday, February 4

Sunday, February 4, is designated as Godparent Sunday. Our church school children will have a special invitation that can be sent to their godparents, but we ask all of you to invite your nounas and nounos to sit with you for Liturgy. Before receiving communion, Father will give the Renewal of Baptism prayer that we may recite together.

2018 Parish Council

Sunday of Orthodoxy YAL Event  
**Sunday, February 25**

Get to know other young adults (ages 18-35) from around the Metro area as we begin our Lenten observance. The Young Adult League (YAL) is invited to an afternoon at the St. Mary’s OCA Cathedral on Sunday, February 25 (Sunday of Orthodoxy). The Cathedral is located at 1701 Fifth Street NE, Minneapolis. Meet in the upstairs Ministry Room of the Parish Center (across the street from the Cathedral). The schedule is as follows:

- 2:00 p.m. – Icebreakers
- 2:15 p.m. – Discussion on observing Great Lent
- 3:30 p.m. – Break
- 4:00 p.m. – Pan-Orthodox Vespers for the Sunday of Orthodoxy
- 5:15 p.m. – Lenten dinner at the Cathedral

Please RSVP to kaypapps@gmail.com.

Visitation Ministry

We need your help! A visitation training session for new and returning visitors will be held on Sunday, April 29, 2018, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., in the Fireside Room. A light lunch will be served. Current Visitation Team members are welcomed and encouraged to attend. We have a new gift for all of our VIPs…(Very Important Parishioners! — The term “shut-in” has lost favor with our senior citizens). Please at least stop by and pick one up for your VIP. Our only Visitation Team expectation is to visit one VIP, once per month. Please respond to Doria@stmarysgoc.org or at 612.825.9595, to sign-up for our training session.

Our desire is to have you attend a short training session and an occasional meeting, just to help facilitate communication, so that we can better track our visits and insure that all our VIPs are truly being visited. We are a very large parish at the height of the Silver Tsunami. Baby Boomers are turning 65 at a rate of 10,000 per day! If we can continue to build our visitation team, more and more of our VIPs will have multiple visits each month!

Common Questions:

1. I can’t drive, do phone calls and cards count? YES! Phone calls and cards are a wonderful way to reach out and touch our VIPs, especially on snowy days!
2. Does it count if I happen to be related to the person(s) I visit? YES! We’re a Greek Orthodox parish! Most of us a related somehow!

Thank you so much for your consideration of this vital ministry!

Holy Land Pilgrimage  
**September 1-10, 2018**

Tom and Mary Rudquist, of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church in West St. Paul, will be leading their second pilgrimage to the Holy Land from September 1-10, 2018. The cost is $1400.00 plus airfare and includes land transportation, hotels, all entrance fees, tips, breakfasts, dinners, two lunches (at Dead Sea and Galilee), earphone intercom system (for easy understanding of guide), cable car to Mount of Temptation, a Dead Sea swim, and a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee.

For more information contact Tom and Mary Rudquist, 651.890.6817, or email abousean@yahoo.com. Itineraries are available on request.

Greek Interpreters Needed

The University of Minnesota Language Center’s Interpreting Services Department is looking to work with local Greek speakers for paid interpreting assignments. Community needs are growing, and they’ve had more and more requests coming in. The majority of the Greek requests are for medical and education interpreting. Specifically, the department has been looking to staff interpreting for several patients, with immediate weekday and weekend appointments. They work with interpreters as independent contractors, meaning they would be able to accept or decline appointments per their own schedule. The process is quick and convenient, calling and/or texting appointment requests to interpreters so that they can easily accept or decline. This can be a fantastic and easy way to earn some extra income on your own time, while helping the community. You can reached a contact person by calling 952.224.5600, or interpreting@ulanguage.com.

Child Care Opportunity

A Greek-speaking couple living in Southwest Minneapolis is looking for someone to care for their two little children (a baby and a toddler) while at work (3 days per week, 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.). They have no family in the Twin Cities and we would prefer to find a caregiver who has a Greek background. The couple may be contacted at: mina_syrira@yahoo.gr
Behold the Beauty of the Lord
The Spiritual Nature of Icons

Saint Mary’s Lenten Retreat
Friday and Saturday, February 23 and 24

The Very Reverend Archimandrite Dr. Maximos Constas, Guest Speaker

Friday, February 23
6:00 p.m. - Salutations to the Theotokos
Father Constas will deliver the sermon during Salutations
Refreshments and youth activities follow

Saturday, February 24: Third Saturday of Souls
8:00 a.m. - Orthros; 9:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy
Breakfast and presentations follow Liturgy
Saturday talks will be:
• Understanding Orthodox Icons
• How to Look at Icons: The Iconography of the Annunciation

The Retreat will conclude at 2:30 p.m.

Lunch will be served, please RSVP to the Church Office
612.825.9595 or david@stmarysgoc.org

Father Maximos Constas is Senior Research Scholar at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, in Brookline, Mass. He holds a Ph.D. in Patristics and Historical Theology from the Catholic University of America, in Washington, D.C. For many years he was a professor of theology at Harvard Divinity School, after which he became a monk at the Holy Monastery of Simonopetra (Mt. Athos, Greece). He is the author of The Art of Seeing: Paradox and Perception in Orthodox Iconography (Alhambra, 2014); an edition and translation of St. Maximos the Confessor, On Difficulties in the Church Fathers: The Ambigua to Thomas and the Ambigua to John, two volumes (Cambridge, Mass., 2014); Proclus of Constantinople and the Cult of the Virgin in Late Antiquity (Leiden: Brill, 2003); as well as numerous scholarly articles and translations, including three volumes of the writings of the contemporary Athonite Elder Aimilianos of Simonopetra. His work focuses on the patristic and Byzantine theological tradition, the patristic interpretation of Scripture, the Philokalia and Orthodox spirituality, and the theological study of Byzantine art, icons and iconography. His translation of St Maximos the Confessor, Responses to the Questions of Thalassios, will be published in the spring of 2018.
Philoptochos is in the midst of its annual member drive. All women of the parish were mailed an invitation to join – if you didn’t receive yours, please let us know! We’re also highlighting a series of sacred baking workshops. Koliva is the focus in February and prosforo is in March. All parishioners are welcome to attend.

Membership Tea plus Sweet Sunday

Sunday, February 4

Join us after church on February 4 for two special events. First, it’s our Membership Tea, a time when women of the parish can join Philoptochos. Stop at our membership table to have your questions answered and to pay your self-determined dues.

Second, it’s Sweet Sunday, when we’ll offer a beautiful array of goodies for you to enjoy. You may also choose a selection of sweets to take home with you. Your free will offering will support a charitable organization (still to be determined at press time!).

Members, we’ll need your help with morning set-up and supplying of sweets! Please let us know how you can contribute by volunteering at our January 21st meeting or by contacting Paulette, MplsPhilo@gmail.com, or 952.564.8388.

Fillo Sale Returns

February 4-18

In preparation for Pascha, it’s time to place your order for fresh fillo. Cost is $4.00 per pound. Stop by the Philoptochos table on Sundays after church (February 4, 11, and 18) to place your order. Chair: Andrea Tiggas.

Koliva Workshop

Friday, February 16, 6:30-8:30pm

Register today for the Koliva Workshop on Friday, February 16, 6:30-8:30 p.m., led by Toni Bazakos. Koliva is used during the first Saturday of Lent and the two Saturday of Soul services prior to the start of Lent. Koliva made at the workshop will be used the following day at the February 17 Saturday of Souls service.

Koliva is also used during memorial services. Koliva is boiled wheat combined with ingredients such as almonds, walnuts, pomegranate seeds, raisins, parsley, and powdered sugar.

Space is limited! Please register by Monday, February 12, at the Philoptochos table during Sunday social hours or by calling the Church Office, 612.825.9595. Attendees should bring a shallow bowl or tray (7-8” diameter) and, if desired, a list of deceased loved ones who will be remembered at the Saturday of Souls service. A free will offering may be requested at the workshop.

Philoptochos Meeting

Sunday, February 25

Come to the Terrace Room immediately after Liturgy for our February Philoptochos meeting. We will start the Lenten Baby Bottle Coin Collection for Tandem and discuss other ideas for Lent. Refreshments will be served.

Coming Up...

• Sunday, March 4: Pick up your fillo after church
• Wednesday, March 7: Offer meal following 5:45 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy
• Sunday, March 11: Offer meal following 4:00 p.m. MEOCCA Vespers
• Sunday, March 18: Board meeting, 11:30 a.m.
• Tuesday, March 20: Prosforo workshop, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
• Tuesday, March 27: Prosforo workshop, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Thank You...

Much thanks to the parish for supporting our fundraiser for St. Basil Academy by purchasing Vasilopita and making donations. Over $2,000 was raised for the children living there! Special appreciation to chair Toni Bazakos, who baked Vasilopita for the blessing on Vasilopita Sunday and 116 additional loaves with Giannoula Bakritzes and Tina Menter, to Jamie Amacci, Linda Hodge, Sofia Johnson and Jayne Klatt for cutting bread for the parish, to Cris Regas and Barbara Nichols for baking loaves to sell, and to Alexandria Kalina, Barbara Nichols and Diana Santrizos, who helped collect donations.

To the Budget Committee, led by Barbara Nichols and including Jennifer Coin, Paulette Hastings, Connie Kouzes, Annette Legeros, Sofia Johnson, and Andrea Tiggas.

To Movie Night committee members Tessie Bourdamis, Paulette Hastings, Sofia Johnson, Jayne Klatt, Annette Legeros, Tina Menter, Alice Michail, and Peggy Sperides, members of Daughters of Penelope and Philoptochos, who worked together to raise funds for FOCUS MN.
**What Does Saint Mary’s and Stewardship Mean to You?**

Parishioner, Megan Twito, shared a personal testimonial with us on Sunday, November 12, 2017, telling us what St. Mary’s and the Orthodox faith means to her. Some excerpts of her testimonial are shared below:

Hello, my name is Megan Twito, and I’m new to this church. I recently was asked to participate in a focus group for St Mary’s, so thank you for the opportunity to share today.

So how did I wind up here? I married in. I’m originally from Wisconsin, and I met my husband, Andrew Twito, right outside in the social hall. I was visiting Minnesota for my cousin’s wedding, and I woke up that Sunday morning thinking, “I am so tired, I should just skip church.” That was an unusual thing for me to think, but it did occur to me. Still, I thought, “No, I should go so that my sister can see that church is important to me.” So, I got ready in five minutes and came to church. That particular Sunday, I had an urge to pray for my future husband. That was something I did a lot as a young woman, however, I had not done this for quite a few years because I figured the prayer for God’s will covered it. However, that day, I looked up at the icon of Christ here in the ceiling and uttered a very incoherent prayer, and all I can really remember is the feeling in my chest of deep yearning and longing. Well, about 15 minutes later, I met Andrew, and thank God I did!

Right away, I was wrapped up into the arms of this community. A story that most clearly illustrates the wonderful caring souls in the congregation is when I had a very serious car accident last summer. I was on the highway in Milwaukee, and crashed into the concrete median at 70 mph. Thank God and my guardian angel that I came away with only a broken ankle and nose, a fractured sternum, a collapsed lung and a brain hemorrhage. So many of you lifted me up in prayer as soon as the word spread. The choir prayed for me, priests, friends, and strangers, and for that, I am so grateful. I am confident that I have recovered so well, largely due to the beautiful blessing of prayers that surrounded me. Some of you hardly knew me, and yet you asked for God’s mercy on my behalf. Thank you.

Prayer is a beautiful example of one of the many ways to be truly participating in the church. I also believe that tithing is another way that God asks us to participate in His church. I was taught by my parents from a very young age, that it is God that gives me the ability to make wealth. That I should think of the money I earn as not even my own. That a gift of 10 percent teaches me to live on less than what I earn. It also allows the church to be the hands and feet of Christ and minister to our community, like IOCC is doing right now in the hurricane affected areas. I’d also say that having found Andrew through the church, tithing was the best investment I ever made. All kidding aside, generosity does not come naturally to me and is something I need to practice. Probably one of the most important parts to God is my attitude when I give. Like we heard in the epistle today, I should give “Not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

I will never be able to out-give God for the many blessings He’s given me throughout my life and through this community. —Megan Twito

**Stewardship Campaign 2017**

**Ark of the Covenant**

As we mentioned last month, we initiated a new stewardship approach this year, called the Ark of the Covenant. We have been delivering your 2018 stewardship packets to you through our Stewardship Captains.

As a reminder, the main objectives of our program are to:

- Educate and inspire members regarding the full meaning of Christian stewardship;
- Connect to each and every parishioner in a very personal way to demonstrate that “Christ is in our Midst;”
- And to inform parishioners of the importance of active participation in the life of the Church and the role your support plays.

Nearly all of the stewardship packets have been delivered directly to you or have been mailed. If you have not received your 2018 stewardship packet, please let the Church Office know and a packet will be mailed to you.

Thanks again to all of you that served as Captains for our 2018 Stewardship Campaign. We appreciate your dedication, positive attitude, and willingness to try something new. And thank you to all parishioners who have been willing to deliver the ARK to another parishioner. Our hope is that you all will have the opportunity to connect with another St. Mary’s member whom you do not know very well.

Thank you for your participation!

**CHRIST IS IN OUR MIDST!**
Singles Monthly Brunch Following Liturgy

As a result of feedback received from Focus Group participants this year, we have started a monthly brunch gathering for single, middle-aged adults to gather for fellowship following the Liturgy.

The brunch is scheduled for the third Sunday of each month and will take place at a nearby restaurant. The location may change each month. The first brunch took place on January 21 at Amore Victoria at the corner of Irving and Lake Street. The next Singles Brunch will be on the third Sunday in February:

Sunday, February 18, 2018
12:00 to whenever we are done
Meet outside of Great Hall following Liturgy
Restaurant Location to be Determined

We will meet outside of the Great Hall following the Liturgy and will then caravan to the restaurant. Look for details each month in Sunday Bulletins, email communications and on the calendar of events posted on the church website. If you have questions, please contact Athena Mihas at 612.387.3890 or athenamihas@gmail.com.

Stewardship Financial Update

Offering Income Total:
- 2017 Final Total: $918,896
- Last Year Total: $859,273
- Goal for 2017: $937,335
- Offering total increased by $59,623 compared to last year (a 6.9% increase)
- Offering total was short of goal for 2017 by $18,439

Thanks to the generosity of our parishioners, offering income in 2017 exceeded the offering total last year by $59,623. This is truly a blessing!

Thank you for your generous gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Know that your contributions make a difference every day to the St. Mary’s community.
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.

### What’s Happening?

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<th><strong>Basketball</strong></th>
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<td><strong>All practices at St. Mary’s</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sunday, February 4</strong></td>
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<td>Girls’ GOYA Basketball Practice: 12:45-1:45 p.m.</td>
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<td>Boys’ GOYA Basketball Practice: 1:45-2:45 p.m.</td>
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<td><strong>February 9-11</strong></td>
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<td>Basketball Tournament in Sioux City, Iowa</td>
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<td><strong>Wednesday, February 21</strong></td>
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<td>9:30-11:00 – Playgroup in Great Hall</td>
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<th><strong>HOPE/JOY</strong></th>
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<td><strong>February 17</strong></td>
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<td>1:00-3:00 p.m. – Ice Skating at Centennial Lakes</td>
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<td>6:15-8:00 p.m. at Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Date/time may change</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, February 23</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m. – Salutations to the Theotokos</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Come listen to Fr. Maximos Constas preach followed by light refreshments and games in the Great Hall</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Senior GOYA</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, February 14</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:15-8:00 p.m. at Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 23</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m. – Salutations to the Theotokos</td>
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<tr>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Greek Dance</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>February 26</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>after Compline – Great Hall</td>
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</table>

**Godparent Sunday**

Godparent Sunday at St. Mary’s is February 4. You’ll receive a special invitation to give to your nouna and nouno inviting them to sit with you during Liturgy. Before receiving Communion, Father will offer a special Baptismal prayer and blessing for us. Be sure to be in church on February 4!

*Photos may be viewed in print version of “The Messenger.”*
December Events

Saint Mary’s retiring Administrator, Sylvia Kafkas, was honored by the Hellenic Post 129 American Legion and Auxiliary at their Christmas dinner on December 11. Seated at the table in the photo to the right are: Fifi, Mary, Sylvia, Amy, Lee, and John Kafkas, Fr. George and Presbytera Christa Dokos.

Saint Mary’s senior citizens posing for a photo at their Christmas party on December 12.

AHEPA hosted the annual Minneapolis and St. Paul Hellenic Community Holiday Party at St. Mary’s on December 29. Pictured above are AHEPAns Michael Hasselstrom, Peter Dress, Nick Karos, Tom Angelus, Mark Tiggas, and Christ Angelos.

At right, dancing!
Forgiveness (Cheesefare) Sunday
February 18, 2018
Forgiveness Vespers – 4:00 p.m.
Everyone is encouraged to attend
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>February 2018</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday of the Prodigal Son</strong></td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Godparent Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>“The Messenger” Deadline</em></td>
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<td>First Saturday of Souls</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td></td>
<td>9:00am-Faith Group</td>
<td>9:00am-Orthros</td>
<td>6:00pm-Icon Class</td>
<td>Basketball Tournament</td>
<td>Saint Haralambos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>10:30am-Intercessory Prayer</td>
<td>10:00am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>6:00pm-Icon Class</td>
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<td>9:00am-Bible Study</td>
<td>10:00am-Divine Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after Liturgy</td>
<td>11:00am-Women’s Bible Study</td>
<td>5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
<td>6:00pm-Icon Class</td>
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<td>9:00am-Orthros</td>
<td>5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philoptochos Membership Tea</td>
<td>6:00pm-Small Blessing of Water</td>
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<td>Basketball Tournament</td>
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<td>Basketball Tournament</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:45pm-Girls’ GOYA BB Practice</td>
<td>6:15pm-Junior GOYA</td>
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<td>Sioux City, Iowa</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:45pm-Boys’ GOYA BB Practice</td>
<td>6:30pm-Choir Rehearsal</td>
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<td>6:00pm-Icon Class</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Judgment (Meatfare) Sunday</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>6:15pm-Parish Council</td>
<td>6:15pm-Senior GOYA</td>
<td>6:00pm-Icon Class</td>
<td>6:00pm-Koliva Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>6:30pm-Open Gym Basketball</td>
<td>6:00pm-Icon Class</td>
<td>6:30pm-Stewardship Committee</td>
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<td>9:00am-Bible Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basketball Tournament</td>
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<td>7:00pm-Northeast Metro Koinonia</td>
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<td>9:00am-Orthros</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Forgiveness (Cheesefare) Sunday</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>6:30pm-Open Gym Basketball</td>
<td>6:00pm-Icon Class</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>after Liturgy</td>
<td>after Liturgy</td>
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<td>after Liturgy</td>
<td>after Liturgy</td>
<td>Third Saturday of Souls</td>
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<tr>
<td>after Liturgy-Newcomers’ Lunch</td>
<td>6:15pm-Great Compline</td>
<td>6:00pm-Icon Class</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
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<td>8:00am-Orthros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:45am-Mission/Outreach</td>
<td>Church and Office Closed</td>
<td>6:30pm-Stewardship Committee</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
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<td>9:00am-Divine Liturgy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noon-Singles’ Brunch</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
<td>7:00pm-Northeast Metro Koinonia</td>
<td>6:00pm-Stewardship Committee</td>
<td>6:00pm-Stewardship Committee</td>
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<td>1:00pm-HOPE/JOY Ice Skating</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00pm-Forgiveness Vespers</td>
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<td>7:00pm-Northeast Metro Koinonia</td>
<td>7:00pm-Northeast Metro Koinonia</td>
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<td>5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday of Orthodoxy</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
<td>6:30pm-Open Gym Basketball</td>
<td>4:00pm-Holy Confession</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>after Compline-Greek Dance Practice</td>
<td>6:30pm-Open Gym Basketball</td>
<td>5:45pm-PreSanctified Liturgy</td>
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<tr>
<td>after Liturgy-Philoptochos Meeting</td>
<td>after Compline-Greek Dance Practice</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Compline</td>
<td>7:00pm-Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00pm-Lenten Vespers</td>
<td>Practice</td>
<td></td>
<td>Youth Activities</td>
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<td>Lenten Retreat follows Liturgy</td>
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<tr>
<td>–St. Mary’s OCA Cathedral</td>
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<td>Open Gym</td>
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<td>5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7:30pm-Choir Rehearsal</td>
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