A Message from Father George
Father George Dokos, Proistamenos

“The Third Hour was blessed with grace,
To indicate that we should worship
Three Persons in singleness of authority;
But now on the one Lord of days,
Son, Father, Spirit, blessed are You!”
-Canon of Pentecost (by St. John of Damascus)

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen!

As we continue to celebrate Pascha during these days, we also anticipate the sending of the Holy Spirit into the world on Pentecost, which occurred 50 days after the Resurrection of Jesus (therefore this year Pentecost is on May 27).

If we consider the hymn mentioned above, we will discover a few important themes of the Pentecost event. The hymn first mentions that the Third Hour of the day (about 9:00 a.m.) was filled with grace. This is because the Holy Spirit descended on the Church at that very time, while the Apostles and the people were gathered together in one place in prayer and worship. Acts 2:15 has St. Peter declare to the people: “These men are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the Third Hour of the day.” He said this because the Apostles were speaking in so many different languages that those present did not understand what was happening. Furthermore, the hymn references that this also took place “on the one Lord of days,” which means on the Lord’s Day, Kyriake, that is, Sunday. And so, from the very beginning, to the present day, the Church has celebrated the Divine Liturgy around the Third Hour every Lord’s Day, since that time and that day were especially consecrated by the descent of the Holy Spirit and filled with grace (not to mention that the universe was created on Sunday and recreated on the Sunday of the Lord’s Resurrection).

The hymn’s play on the numbers three and one is further expanded to initiate us into the theology of God the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit descended specifically at the Third Hour on the First Day of the week to instruct believers to worship and honor the Three Persons of the Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – in singleness of authority, namely, believing that They have one single authority, one lordship, one nature, and one essence. We worship one God in Trinity. St. Gregory the Theologian put it best when contemplating the mystery of our Triune God: “No sooner do I conceive of the One than I am illumined by the splendor of the Three; no sooner do I distinguish Them than I am carried back to the One. When I think of any One of the Three I think of Him as the Whole, and my eyes are filled, and the greater part of

Continued on page 2.
Our Life Together

Births
Alexandra
Parents: Peter & Tracy Kootsikas
December 22, 2017

Chrsimations
Duane Smith
Adele DeNicola
Wynter Gingery
April 7, 2018

Deaths
Akrivi Dereskos
March 21, 2018
Peter R. Theros
March 24, 2018
May their memory be eternal.

Our Sympathy
Our sympathy to Dena Angelos and family on the death of her father, Darrell (Panayoti) Helgens, on January 22, 2018.

Our sympathy to Robert Kolas on the death of his wife, Karen, on March 24, 2018.

Our sympathy to Mark Flumerfelt and family on the death of his father, Richard Loring Flumerfelt, on March 27, 2018.

Congratulations!
Congratulations to Leo and Cheryl Sioris who are celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary on May 21.

Congratulations to Anna Karos and Helena Lind on their accomplishments at the Metropolis of Chicago’s Oratorical Festival. Anna earned first place in the Senior Division and Helena earned second place in the Junior Division. Anna will be representing St. Mary’s and our Metropolis at the Archdiocesan Festival in June.

Share YourShelf
May’s recipient of Share YourShelf contributions is Joyce Uptown Food Shelf.

Sunday, May 6
Canned fruits and vegetables

Sunday, May 13
Cereal (both hot and cold)

Sunday, May 20
Canned meals – large cans (chili / pork and beans)

Sunday, May 27
Coffee and Tea

“There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore, I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.”

—Deuteronomy 15:11

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Fr. George’s column concluded.
what I am thinking of escapes me. I cannot grasp the greatness of That One so as to attribute a greater greatness to the Rest. When I contemplate the Three together, I see but one torch, and cannot divide or measure out the Undivided Light.”

May God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – bless you and keep you in His grace as we progress towards the Day of Holy Pentecost.

With love in Christ,

† Fr. George

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
Thespina Macres
Organist
Mark Macres

St. Mary’s Parish Council

President
Joseph DiGiovanni
Vice President
Dean Tortorelis
Secretary
Andrew Theodotou
Treasurer
Marshall (Mark) Estep
Assistant Treasurer
Steve Rakes
Members
George Andreadakis
John Beauchamp
Paul Hastings
William M. Hoef
Dean Murdakes
Pamela Nelson
Randy (Luke) Twito

2 | The Messenger
Sunday Schedule
Saturday Great Vespers – 5:00 p.m.
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Weekday Schedule
Wednesday, May 2
Mid-Pentecost
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, May 15
Leave-Taking of Holy Pascha
Evening Divine Liturgy – 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 17
Holy Ascension
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Monday, May 21
Saints Constantine and Helen
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, May 26
Saturday of Souls
Orthros – 9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, May 27
Memorial Day Commemoration
Cemetery Service – 12:00 noon
Lakewood Cemetery, St. Mary’s Section

Sunday, May 27
Holy Pentecost
Pan-Orthodox Kneeling Vespers – 4:00 p.m.
St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church

Monday, May 28
The Holy Spirit
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost
Saint Mary’s will host the MEOCCA-sponsored Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost on Pentecost Sunday, May 27, 4:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend. A reception will follow Vespers.

Fellowship and Study Groups
Adult Senior Bible Study
Tuesday, May 15
1:00 p.m., Fireside Room

Evening Men’s Fellowship
Thursday, May 17
6:30 p.m.
Sean & Elena Gabor’s home
13708 Parkwood Lane
Burnsville, MN 55337

Intercessory Prayer
Wednesday, May 16
10:30 a.m., Nave Chapel

Men’s Fellowship
Friday, May 4
7:00 a.m., Fireside Room

Saturday Bible Study
Every Saturday
9:00 a.m., Fireside Room

Senior Citizens
Tuesday, May 8
12:00 noon, Terrace Room

Women’s Bible Study
Wednesday, May 16
No session on May 2 due to Clergy Retreat.
11:00 a.m., Fireside Room

Orthodox Game League
Adults ages 18 years and older are invited to enjoy time with other Orthodox Christians and play games. Want to learn a new game? Want to play a classic? Want to teach a game? Then this is for you!

Our next game night is Saturday, May 12, 7:00 p.m., at St. George Greek Orthodox Church, 1111 Summit Avenue, St. Paul. Enter the main doors of the church and go upstairs to the social hall. Please bring a munchie and/or dessert to share. Please call Nikki Beauchamp, 612.910.2943, if you have questions.

The Parables of Jesus
A course on the Parables of Jesus will be presented by Tolly Kizilos and Fr. John Kostas in six sessions, Thursdays, 6:30-8:00 p.m., from May 3 to June 7.

The course will rely on short lectures by the course principals, video presentations by experts, and active discussion by the attendees. The Parables constitute roughly one third of our Lord’s teaching in the New Testament and their understanding and interpretation are an essential part of being a worker in the Kingdom of God.

Koinonia
Edina Koinonia
Thursday, May 24, 7:00 p.m.
Joan Calott’s home
952.944.9397

Lake Calhoun Koinonia
Sunday, May 20, 5:00 p.m.
Fr. George & Presbytera Christa’s home
612.825.1067

Northeast Metro Koinonia
Thursday, May 17, 7:00 p.m.
Costas & Barbara Nichols’ home
763.571.0460

South of the River Koinonia
Thursday, May 31, 6:30 p.m.
Mark & Elizabeth Skoog’s home
612.743.2789

West Metro Koinonia
Date and time to be announced.
Watch church notices.
Gus & Cristina Nicklow’s home
952.476.7624
Parish News & Events

Spring General Assembly
Saint Mary’s Spring General Assembly will take place on Sunday, May 6, 2018, 11:30 a.m., in the Great Hall. The agenda will consist of the following items: approval of the Winter General Assembly minutes, 2017 St. Mary’s financial reports, Board of Auditors’ report, vote on Amended Foundation Document with Giving Guidelines, and Election of Clergy Laity Delegates. All are invited to attend.

YAL Retreat
The YAL (Young Adult League, ages 18-35) Retreat takes place Friday-Sunday, May 18-20, Up North, at the Karos’ cabin. The Karos family has graciously offered their cabin for this retreat, and the weekend speaker will be Fr. Jonathan Proctor from Holy Trinity OCA. Registration for the retreat is found on St. Mary’s website, www.stmarysgoc.org. The fee for the weekend is $15.00 and can also be paid through the website. Questions? Contact Katherine Pappas, kaypapps@gmail.com

Saint Mary’s Hosts CPR Class
Saint Mary’s is sponsoring an opportunity to learn and receive certification in CPR on Sunday June 3, 11:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m., in the Lecture Room. The fee is $20.00 per person, including lunch (served at 11:30 a.m.). This American Heart Certified CPR course will also include rescue breathing, choking, obstructed airway, and AED training for infants, pediatrics, and adults, and will be a hands-on course, so please bring/wear comfortable clothing and shoes. We welcome all St. Mary’s parishioners, especially ushers, youth volunteers, camp staff, babysitters, and Church School teachers to join us!

Please email david@stmarysgoc.org or call the Church Office to reserve your spot (50 maximum), by Monday, May 14. Payment of $20.00 is due by May 14 as well. Please make checks payable to St Mary’s Church with CPR in the memo line.

Beautification Brigade
Would you like to see St Mary’s sparkle and shine all year long? Consider joining our “Beautification Brigade.” We plan to meet on a quarterly basis to ensure our beautiful facility always looks its best. Projects could include washing the pews, cleaning a storeroom, straightening a closet, or polishing brass. Our first gathering is tentatively scheduled for late June. If you are interested in helping keep St Mary’s clean and organized, please contact Julie in the Church Office at julie@stmarysgoc.org.

WHO IS GOD
Parish Night
2017-2018
Wednesdays
6:15-8:00 p.m.
Everyone is welcome to attend our monthly Parish Night. We begin with a brief prayer service at 6:15 p.m., followed by dinner and a breakout session and then wrap up. The evening will conclude by 8:00 p.m. The upcoming schedule is as follows:

Session 6 — May 16, 2018
I Am the Alpha and Omega
For more information, contact Jon Klein in the Church Office, jon@stmarysgoc.org, or 612.825.9595

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, May 28, in observance of Memorial Day.

In the Bookstore
In this season of graduations and weddings, please consider the bookstore as a resource for your gift giving. You will find many gifts to acknowledge and encourage the graduate’s faith life as they enter the next stage of their life—icons, a pocket New Testament and Psalms for Orthodox Christians, a variety of prayer books, prayer ropes, and incense burning kits made by Doria Saros, in addition to a wide variety of books. One new item in the bookstore is jewelry handmade by a parishioner featuring icons. Each piece is prayerfully made and would make a beautiful gift.

For the bride and groom there are several books that would be great blessings on their journey through life together. Two examples are “On Marriage and Family Life” by Saint John Chrysostom and “Marriage as a Path to Holiness: Lives of Married Saints” by David and Mary Ford. There are many icons in the bookstore which would be great blessings for the newlywed couple. An incense burning kit would also be a good wedding present.

Please come visit the bookstore for gifts that encourage a faith-filled journey through life.

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, May 28, in observance of Memorial Day.
Lazarus Saturday
We want to thank all of you that came for our Lazarus Saturday Service Day! We had so many people that came ready to work as soon as the Liturgy was completed. They got to work right away with cleaning jobs, plaishing palms, stripping the bay leaves and roses (for the First Resurrection Service on Holy Saturday). We had a potluck lunch, so our tables were filled with Lenten dishes for all to share. We were finished around 1:30 p.m. and the church looked (and smelled) clean and beautiful for Palm Sunday and Holy Week services, ending with our Pascha Liturgy and celebration burger bash after the midnight service.

Holy Friday Retreat
This year our theme was “The Life-Giving Cross and the Life-Giving Tomb.” It was such a wonderful day here at the church. Royal Hours began the day with our Junior and Senior GOYAns doing the readings. Then all the children had a snack and went into their separate groups for the lessons of the day. After lunch the JOY children made their own Kouvouklions, the Faith and HOPE kids made Easter wind socks and beautiful jeweled crosses.

All 76 students in attendance really enjoyed the day. (Look for photos of their work on the bulletin boards.) We want to say “thank you” to Michelle Rollins and Margie Makredes for all the work and sign-ups for Lazarus Saturday and the Pascha meal preparations; to Tina Menter, David Rist, and their crew for help with the Holy Friday retreat set up, clean up, and meal preparations; to Kathy Richardson, Bettina Hanna, and Birhane Baye (and of course Father George and Father Jason) for teaching the classes this year. A big shout-out to all the parents that stayed and helped the kids with their fun crafts. Forgive me if I forgot anyone!

Church School Graduation
Sunday, May 20, is the last day of Church School. It is also the day we honor our 2018 high school graduates. After Liturgy, Father will invite them to the Solea to receive their gift bag. Have your cameras ready! Our seniors will be easily recognizable with a great big pin that says “GRAD.” Please make sure you stop them in the Great Hall during our annual Fun Jam and wish them well. They will join the priests for a special lunch at Rudolph’s after a little fun in the Great Hall.

If you have a college student who is graduating soon, please drop us a note with when, where and what degree they have earned. We would love to honor your grad by publishing this information in “The Messenger.”

Fun Jam! for Everyone!
Sunday, May 20 after Liturgy
Dine on hot dogs & chips
Cupcakes and ice cream compliments of Harry Legeros Memorial
Hula hoops, bean bag toss, inflatable obstacle course, animal kingdom and sports
If you’d like to help staff a station, food, or clean up, please contact Georgia Andron:
greekborba@hotmail.com or 612.978.2793
By Paulette Hastings

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

During this time of celebrating the Resurrection, Philoptochos is hosting two May events in which the women of the church can gather for fellowship and fun. Plus, we continue to develop the St. Mary’s Cookbook, prepare for the Festival, and plan for a summer of helping women. Please join us when you can.

Saturday, May 5, 6:30 p.m.
Ladies Night Out!

Ladies of St. Mary’s, join us on Saturday night for Ladies Night Out! Dena Tortorelis is opening her home, Philoptochos is hosting the beverages, and we ask you to bring an appetizer or dessert to share. Please note that this is for all women in the parish, not only members of Philoptochos. Dena’s home address is 7441 West Shore Drive, Edina. For more information, contact her at 651.334.1842 or dtortorelis@comcast.net.

Tuesday, May 22, 6:00 p.m.
Philoptochos Spring Finale with Dinner, Terrace Room

Mark your calendar and plan to gather with your parish sisters for dinner, fellowship and our last meeting of spring. Please RSVP at the Philoptochos Table after Sunday liturgies, or by calling the church office at 612.825.9595.

St. Mary’s Cookbook Update

The Cookbook Committee is busy writing articles, creating graphics, and sorting through recipes in an effort to send the book to production in June. If you still have a recipe or story that the St. Mary’s Cookbook can’t go without, it MUST BE RECEIVED by Sunday, May 13, in order to be included.

The preferred method for submitting is through the form on the website recipes.stmarysgoc.org. If this is difficult for you to do, bring a copy of the recipe to the Philoptochos table, or email a scan, photo, or typed in recipe to Cookbook.StMarys@gmail.com.

Changes Without Challenges

At the January General Assembly Meeting, the approval of the budget brought a change in the administration of giving by St. Mary’s. In a nutshell, the check writing previously done by the church on behalf of the Missions and Outreach ministry is now being done by Philoptochos, the philanthropic arm of the church. The heads of each organization met to discuss the new process and budget, with the giving continuing without interruption or challenge.

The first checks have been written, and went to five community food shelves: Community Emergency Service, FOCUS Minnesota, Joyce Food Shelf, Simpson Food Pantry, and St. Stephen’s Food Shelter. In total, $7,400 is given annually to food shelves in addition to the Share Your Shelf and Taste of Greece food collections organized by Missions and Outreach.

Buy A Prosforo Seal

As a part of the sacred baking program, the church is selling prosforo seals (sfragida) at cost, for $12.00. Purchases can be made at the Philoptochos table, checks made out to St. Mary’s GOC with Prosforo in the memo line.

If you want your name added to the prosforo baking list so you can prepare the bread for a Liturgy, please contact Toni Bazakos at georg310@umn.edu.

Coming Up…

• Saturday, May 5, 6:30 p.m.
  Ladies Night Out!
• Tuesday, May 15, 7:00 p.m.
  Philoptochos Board Meeting
• Tuesday, May 22, 6:00 p.m.
  Philoptochos Spring Finale with Dinner
• Prepare Baklava for the Festival, Chair Elena Gabor
  • Wednesday, June 13, 3:00-9:00 p.m.
    Baklava assembly. 20 helpers needed.
  • Monday, June 18, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
    Baklava assembly. 20 helpers needed.
  • Tuesday, June 19, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
    Cut and clove, bake and honey. 12 helpers needed.
  • Wednesday, June 20, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
    Bake and honey. 1 helper needed
• Summer to Support Women and Children
  • June: Tour Tandem
  • Wednesday, July 11, 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
    Days for Girls – All-day event!
  • August: Backpacks for Healing House Children
• July-September
  Watch for Festival baking dates

Philoptochos News continues on page 9.
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.

Ark of the Covenant Stewardship Campaign

This year, we embarked on an ambitious and unique Stewardship 2018 campaign, entitled “Ark of The Covenant.” Our prayer was that this campaign would connect or reconnect parishioners in a very personal way, and ultimately draw us closer as a spiritual family. Throughout and after the process, we listened to those involved in the process and heard multiple comments. After concluding the “house to house” aspect of this campaign, the Stewardship Committee provides these observations:

1. We are very grateful for our highly engaged and passionate Ark Captains. Without their vision, hard work and resourcefulness, our campaign would surely have failed. (See list of Captains below.)

2. We heard numerous heartwarming stories of wonderful conversations and new friendships that developed between parishioners as a result of the Ark, some of whom did not know each other before this campaign. May God continue to allow you to strengthen these new friendships.

3. Many parishioners gladly transported the Ark to parishioner homes. In return, they were greeted with open arms and typical Greek hospitality, especially yummy sweets!

4. Some parishioners disliked the idea of changing the stewardship process and felt more comfortable with the “old way” of doing it. “Just mail me the card.”

We continue to welcome any and all comments as each is valuable to hear. As the body of Jesus Christ, each member of the church possesses unique gifts to offer. In our own households, we understand the need for communication and dialogue and the importance of working together. Our eternal salvation lies in community, not self. As a committee, we believe that change is not to be feared, but embraced. The potential for God to act in our lives and community has infinite possibilities, if we open our hearts and allow God to fill them. Only with change can we grow and thrive. As a committee, we feel that this year’s campaign was a nice starting point, but there’s room for improvement and growth. Our plan is to continue with a version of “The Ark” stewardship campaign for 2019, with some modifications based on the helpful feedback we have received from parishioners. Stay tuned. May God continue to richly bless our parish. For those of you that are not yet involved in the campaign, please join us, as each of you is vital in navigating the troubled waters of today’s world.

Thank you to the following parishioners who served as Captains for the 2018 Ark of the Covenant Stewardship Campaign:

Achterling, Diane Agnew, Mark & Michelle Rollins Alevizos, Glenna Amacci, Jamie Apostolou, George A. & Barbara Barnes, Philip & Erica Beauchamp, John & Nikki Boosalis, Nick T. & Katherine Checheris, Leonidas & Kristine Demou, George & Sheri DiGiovanni, Joseph & Vicky Dillon, Christopher & Angela Dunham, Larry & Ina Estep, Marshall D. & Maria G. Boosalis Gallos, Nancy Hanna, Sam & Bettina Hanson, Clint & Candace Hastings, Paul & Paulette Johnson, Mark & Sofia Karos, Carol Karos, Paul & Cindy Kaznessis, Yiannis & Elaine Kennedy, Robert & Hope Lind, Alex & Maria Makredes, Michael & Margery Murdakes, Dean & Melpomeni Nelson, Jerry & Pamela Nichols, Costas & Barbara O’Hara, Matthew & Anastasia Pappas, Katherine Psychogios, Dean Rennie, Christopher Rist, David & Julie Rovolis, George & Krissa Smith, Carol Sperides, Nicholas & Peggy Theodotou, Andrew & Ann Tiggas, Louis & Andrea Wahlers, Tim & Kathy

Stewardship News concludes on page 8.
Stewardship News continued.

Church Etiquette
Did you know……when is it NOT appropriate to enter the nave (church)?

• The Small Entrance procession
• The Gospel reading
• The Great Entrance procession
• The Creed
• The Consecration of Gifts
• The Lord’s Prayer
• The Sermon
• …or anytime the priest is facing the congregation while blessing, censing, or speaking.

Greek Word of the Month
Koinonia
Many of you have heard the word koinonia with our Koinonia Groups meeting all around the greater metro area. But what does koinonia really mean?

• Well, generosity was a hallmark of early Christians, even a way of identifying oneself as a follower of Jesus.
• The noun form of the verb “contribute” is increasingly used for a sharing community of believers, a koinonia.
• In Paul’s day, many of the believers were poor, so it was imperative for Christians to share with each other. 

(Romans CBS Commentary)

Stewardship Offering Update

Financial Commitments Year-to-Date as of Early March:
• 204 total number of completed financial commitment forms received to date (one less than last year)
• $423,753 total financial commitments as of early March compared to a total of $386,363 for the entire last year
• $55,390 increase in financial commitments vs. last year
• $15,000 increase from those that pledged both years
• 72 members that pledged this year so far but not last year (totaling $142,819)
• 72 members that pledged last year but have not yet year (totaling $102,866)
• $2,077 = average pledge vs. $1,797 last year

Total Offering Received to Date
• March Year-to-Date: $238,799.45
• Last Year March Year-to-Date: $181,320.45
• Offering income year-to-date exceeds last year at this time by $57,479.00
• Goal for 2018: $920,756
• Additional needed to reach goal: $681,957.00

Reminder: Middle-Aged Singles Monthly Brunch

Third Sunday of each Month following Liturgy

Some of you may have heard that 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 Singles Brunch event for May will take place on the following date:

Sunday, May 20, 2018
11:45 a.m. to whenever we are done
Meet outside of Great Hall at 11:30 following Liturgy
Look for Athena Mihas or Bill Shadid
Restaurant location to be determined

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 atenamihas@gmail.com.
By Father John Kostas

Christ the light illumines all. At his Resurrection, death is destroyed, and darkness dispelled, that Light shines with all its brightness.

The light of Christ illumines all. It illumines the Old Testament faith of Israel. All the events of Israel's salvation history are fulfilled in Christ. He is our Passover. He is our Lamb. He is the high priest who makes the perfect sacrifice, and he is the sacrifice itself.

He is our manna in the Wilderness, the Rock, and the Water that flowed from the Rock. He is the wine that gladdens the heart. He is the physician who healed the broken in Galilee and whose brokenness restored us at Calvary. He is the Light for those who sit in the region and the shadow of death.

Christ the light does illumine all -- not merely believers, or seekers, but all the nations of the world. Whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, excellent or worthy of praise is made manifest by the light of Christ, which illumines all.

The madness of the world is the misdirection of this desire for Christ's light into passions that cannot satisfy, and solutions that cannot work. Every person has that God-sized hole in their very being. For he made us for himself, and our hearts can find no peace until they find their rest in him.

Christ the light illumines all. Even Hell itself. Hell is not the absence of God. For those who have lived selfish, darkened lives, after all, the absence of God would be a blessing. No, there is no place that is not filled with all the fullness of God. But whether that light brings radiant joy, or a consuming fire of judgment depends on us.

Christ the Light illumines all. Will we let him illumine our lives? Will we live the coming year in the shadows, or in the radiant presence of the Resurrected Christ?

Let's not allow this radiant night to turn out to be merely some sort of spiritual high noon, before we return to that grayness of an everyday life. Rather, let us continue in communion with the God who said “Let light shine out of darkness” and who shines in our hearts, giving us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the radiant face of the Resurrected Christ.
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?

Youth Events for May

**Faith**
Wednesday, May 9: 9:30-11:00 a.m.
Final gathering in the Great Hall

**HOPE/JOY**
Wednesday, May 16: 6:15-8:00 p.m.
Parish Night: Who is God? I am the Alpha and Omega

Friday, May 18: 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Movie Night in Lecture Room
(Parents welcome to stay and snacks will be provided)

**Junior GOYA**
Wednesday, May 2: 6:15-8:00 p.m.
Meeting at Church

Friday-Sunday, May 4-6
Tulip Time Volunteering in Pella, Iowa
   Please let Jon know if you are planning to volunteer with St. Nicholas Orthodox Church during their Tulip Time Festival: jon@stmarysgoc.org
   We will leave after school on Friday and get home by 7:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Wednesday, May 16: 6:15-8:00 p.m.
Parish Night: Who is God? I am the Alpha and Omega

**Senior GOYA**
Wednesday, May 9: 6:15-8:00 p.m.
Meeting at Church

Wednesday, May 16: 6:15-8:00 p.m.
Parish Night: Who is God? I am the Alpha and Omega

Friday-Monday, May 25-28
Junior Olympics in Chicago
   Please let Jon know if you are planning on attending the Junior Olympics in Chicago over Memorial Day weekend (May 25-28): jon@stmarysgoc.org

Summer Camp
Early Bird Registration Now Open

**Registration Fees**
- Early Bird Discount: $430 until May 1, 2018
- Standard Fee: $480 from May 2-May 24, 2018, 4:30 p.m.

Please register at: www.stmaryscamp.com

**2018 Summer Camp Scholarship Contest for Grades 6-12**
The contest is open to our entire Pan-Orthodox community! Two Camp scholarship rebate coupons will be awarded in memory of Presbytera Mary Coniaris and James H. Zubulake. Camp registration fees will be rebated to two contest winners.

The 2018 theme for camp is:

**Fit**

This year’s essay question is, “Why go to Church Camp instead of other camps?”

There will be two divisions:

- **Junior Division**
  Junior Division is open to campers entering grades 6-8 this Fall, 2018. Contestants are required to submit a 250-word (typed) essay on the theme.

- **Senior Division**
  Senior Division is open to campers entering grades 9-12 this Fall, 2018. Contestants are required to submit a 500-word (typed) essay on the theme.

Entries must remain as close to the word limits (250 or 500) as possible.

**Entries are due no later than Sunday, May 20, 2018.**

Please submit entries to: stmaryscampscholarship@gmail.com
April Activities at St. Mary’s

Photos can be viewed in print version.
You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, having gladdened your disciples by your promise of the Holy Spirit. And your blessing confirmed their belief that you are indeed God’s Son, the Redeemer of the world.

—Apolitikon of the Ascension of Christ, 4th Tone
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