A Message from Father Jason

Father Jason Houck, Associate

How is your spiritual exercise regimen?

I am thankful to God as we enjoyed another wonderful week at St. Mary’s Summer Camp. This year at camp, we explored the theme “Cross Fit.” Cross Fit is a popular exercise regimen that makes a great analogy to Orthodox spiritual life. Of course, making the analogy between athletics and Christian life is not something new. A handful of Pauline writings made the comparison between athletics and the Christian life (see 1 Corinthians 9:25; 12:24-25, 2 Timothy 2:5) too. I’d like to give you a little taste of camp with this analogy.

The Cross Fit exercise program includes a number of principles that we applied to our Orthodox Christian life.

First, there is exercise. Just as an athlete exercises and exerts himself, so should the Christian. St. Paul wrote, “Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified.” In other words, St. Paul trains his body in order to control it. We have spiritual exercises like prayer, fasting, and doing good works. A Christian cannot be a Christian in word only. Christian life involves action.

Second, there is teamwork. You cannot win a baseball game with one player—it takes a whole team. Are we not all members of one team, the Church (see First Corinthians 12:12-31)? An ancient Christian saying was, “one Christian is no Christian.” We all are members of the Church, and it is through the Church—Christ’s body—we receive the benefits of being on a team.

Third, a healthy diet, is another important principle of the Cross Fit program. A spiritually healthy diet takes in good things like spiritual books and the sacraments. A spiritually healthy diet avoids impure and violent images. One cannot have the energy to run a marathon (the life-long Christian life) on a poor spiritual diet.

Fourth, there is disease resistance. St. Paul once quoted a line from an ancient Greek play “Bad company ruins good morals” (1 Corinthians 15:33). Avoidance of illness is a part of staying healthy; likewise, one needs to avoid bad influences in life in order to have a healthy spiritual life. Choosing the right friends and influences can make or break our spiritual lives.

Fifth, there is rest and recovery from injury. In sports, there are often injuries. As we pursue God, sometimes we are injured—by sin. The Church is a hospital for sinners. God offers His love and forgiveness to those who have been injured by sin. At St. Mary’s Summer Camp, the campers all participate in the sacrament of Confession as a way to recover from injury.

Continued on page 3.
**Our Life Together**

**Births**

Otto William  
Parents: Chris & Erin Grammas  
May 28, 2018

**Baptisms**

Alexandra Grace  
Parents: Peter & Tracy Kootsikas  
Jun 16, 2018

Nell Ethel  
Parents: Paul & Greta Peters  
July 7, 2018

Amelia Louise  
Parents: Alexander & Candace Michael  
July 8, 2018

Corbin Shoop  
Parent: Aaron Shoop  
July 12, 2018

**Christmation**

Aaron Shoop  
July 12, 2018

**Marriages**

Joseph Menter to Natalie Guertin  
June 2, 2018

George Hangistamoulos to Ydery Medina  
July 14, 2018

**Our Sympathy**

We extend our sympathy to Steven Koutroupas and family, on the passing of his father, Gust Koutroupas, on June 12, 2018. May his memory be eternal.

**Congratulations!**

Joe and Linda Hodge will married 56 years on August 18. May God grant them many years!

**Share Your Shelf**

August's recipient of Share Your Shelf contributions is Community Emergency Service.

- **August 5**  
  Canned soups or vegetables

- **August 12**  
  Diapers (size 5)

- **August 19**  
  Canned meat (tuna, chicken, etc.)

- **August 26**  
  Baby formula

  “You will never overcome God’s generosity, even if you give away all that you have…. And however much you bring to Him, always more remains. Nor will you give anything that is your own; for all things flow from God.” —St. Gregory the Theologian

**Thank You**

Thank you to all the volunteers that helped make VCS a success!


---

**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 Cooridinator & 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 Estep

**Assistant Treasurer**  
Steve Rakes

**Members**  
George Andreadakis  
John Beauchamp  
Paul Hastings  
William M. Hoef  
Dean Murdakes  
Pamela Nelson  
Randy Twito
Sunday Schedule
- Saturday Great Vespers – 5:00 p.m.
- Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
- Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Paraklesis Services
- 6:00 p.m.
- Weekdays, August 1-3; August 6-10; August 13

Weekday Schedule
Sunday, August 5
Eve of Transfiguration
- Great Vespers – 4:00 p.m.

Monday, August 6
Holy Transfiguration
- Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
- Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, August 14
Eve of Dormition
- Great Vespers – 6:00 p.m.
- Reception follows Vespers

Wednesday, August 15
Holy Dormition
- Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
- Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, August 29
Beheading of John the Baptist
- Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
- Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

Koinonia
Edina Koinonia
- Thursday, August 23, 7:00 p.m.
- Joan Calott’s home
  952.944.9397

Lake Calhoun Koinonia
- No August gathering

Northeast Metro Koinonia
- No August or September gatherings

South of the River Koinonia
- Meeting date to be announced
- Mark & Elizabeth Skoog’s home
  612.743.2789

West Metro Koinonia
- Meeting date to be announced
- Gus & Cristina Nicklow’s home
  952.476.7624

Education, Fellowship, and Worship

Fellowship and Study Groups
Adult Senior Bible Study
- Tuesdays, August 21 and 28
- 1:30 p.m., Fireside Room

Intercessory Prayer
On Summer Break.

Men’s Fellowship
- Friday, August 3
- 7:00 a.m., Fireside Room

Evening Men’s Fellowship
- date and location to be announced.

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

Senior Citizens
- Tuesday, August 14
- 12:00 noon, Terrace Room

Women’s Bible Study
On Summer Break.

Koinonia

Continued from page 1.

And finally, just as there is endurance training and goal-setting in the Cross Fit program, so there must be in our spiritual life. Although God did most of the work—by dying on the Cross for us—we too, have to endure the race. We have to do our part. Hebrews 10:36 reads, “For you have need of endurance, so that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised.” As Christians, we must endure to the end to reach the goal of our spiritual exercise regimen—to enjoy life with God—both in this life, and in the life to come. It is our prayer that the campers—and all of us—apply the principles of this analogy to our own spiritual lives.

Fr. Jason Houck

In the Bookstore
by Becky Myerly

It is with great joy that we announce the arrival of Presvytera Angela Alatzakis’s new book, The Story of You. Delightfully written and illustrated by Presvytera Angela, this is the story of every child born into an Orthodox family. As Presvytera Angela describes the book, “The Story of You is a parent’s retelling to their child, of their first steps into our beautiful Orthodox Christian faith. It walks the reader through praying for them before they were born, the prayers on their first day, special naming prayers on their eighth day, their entrance into the church on their fortieth day, choosing their godparents, the steps of their chrismation and baptism, and then beyond, as a member of the body of Christ.” The Story of You is the perfect gift for every couple expecting a child and for all parents with young children. It joins its older sibling, Every Time I Do My Cross, Presvytera Angela’s first book, in what will hopefully become a great family of books for children, all blessings!

It is also with great joy that we share with the St. Mary’s family—with Presvytera Angela and Father Thomas’s permission—the wonderful news that they are expecting the arrival of their first child in October. Please pray for the three of them.

Thanks be to God!
Parish News & Events

August Coffee Hour Hosts Needed
We are in need of hosts for our Sunday coffee hours during August. As of press time, all four Sundays are available. If you would like to host, please contact the Church Office, 612.825.9595.

Our Parish Feast Day Celebration
As we approach our Feast Day, The Dormition of the Theotokos, on August 15, we invite everyone to participate in the services on that day as well as leading up to it. During the first fifteen days of August, we offer the Paraklesis services (services of supplication for the living) each weekday evening at 6:00 p.m. Great Vespers for the Feast of the Transfiguration will be offered on Sunday, August 5, 4:00 p.m.

Our Feast Day celebration begins with Great Vespers on Tuesday, August 14, 6:00 p.m. followed by a reception hosted by St. Mary’s Philoptochos.

We continue our celebration on Wednesday, August 15, with Orthros at 8:30 a.m. and Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m. Philoptochos will host a festive reception following Liturgy. We thank them for their contribution to our Feastday! We encourage everyone to be with us on this holy and special day!

FOCUS Minnesota Fundraiser
Thursday, August 16, 6:30-9:30 p.m.
The annual FOCUS Fundraiser is set for Thursday, August 16, at St. Mary’s. What a time it’s been! Come and hear about all our news, what’s been going on this summer, and what we were looking towards for the future. Let’s celebrate eight years of service, as a strong community committed to serving the poor, - in love!

The evening will include a delicious appetizer buffet and dancing. It is free to all, but please RSVP so we can plan: focustwincities@gmail.com

If you are unable to attend and would like to make a donation, you may do so by sending a check to:
FOCUS Minnesota
PO Box #40116
St. Paul, MN 55104

Holy Dormition Pilgrimage
A pilgrimage to Holy Dormition Monastery in Rives Junction, Michigan, is planned for September 25-28. For details, please contact Mary Makres, 612.823.2254 or 612.619.0950.

Connect Conference for Young Adults
October 5-7, 2018
The Connect Conference, held in Atlanta, Georgia, is for Orthodox young adults in their 20s and 30s. Through learning, fellowship, and worship, the goal of the conference is to better connect us to our faith, the Church, and each other.

The format of the conference includes keynote addresses to the group, breakout sessions in smaller groups with time for questions and answers, worship times including the Divine Liturgy, and plenty of opportunities for fellowship! The theme of this year’s Connect 2018 will be “Understanding Our Purpose.”
For more information and to register visit: https://connectorthodoxy.org/

Medical Crisis Program Fundraiser
Save the date for the annual Lyn Olson Medical Crisis Program on Sunday, September 16, 4:00-7:00 p.m., on the Terrace of the Stillwater Public Library in Stillwater. More information will be forthcoming.

THE SAINT IAKOVOS RETREAT CENTER
SAVE THE DATE
Young at Heart Retreat
September 11-13, 2018

Mark your calendars for the next retreat hosted by the St. Iakovos Retreat Center!
The Young at Heart Retreat will take place September 11-13, 2018. This three day get-away will be an enjoyable and relaxing experience for individuals and couples of the same age and faith. Details and registration information will be forthcoming.
The Retreat Center is located at 920 - 224th Avenue, Kanasville, Wisconsin, 53139; 262.864.9090; www.GoSIRC.org
What’s New This Year?

A Festival Mission Statement
Bringing people together to experience Greek culture and faith while supporting philanthropy.

FOCUS Minnesota at the Festival
Philanthropy will be extended from supporting Chloe’s Fight (Friday Night 5K) and Joyce Food Shelf to also supporting FOCUS Minnesota. The new St. Mary’s Cookbook will be sold at the 2018 Taste of Greece, and net proceeds will be donated to FOCUS Minnesota.

Frozen Spanakopita and Tyropita for Sale
Did you enjoy the spanakopita and tyropita we served last year? You will have the opportunity to take home a package or two of each at this year’s Festival.

Outdoor Pop-Up Shop
A pop-up shop is a temporary retail spot that generates product excitement, provides exposure, and increases revenue. The Taste of Greece Pop-Up will only be open for a few hours on Friday and Saturday nights, will sell a limited number of products, and will make guests more aware of the many options through the front doors of the church, including the boutique, bake sale, loukoumathes, courtyard food and beverages, and baklava sundaes.

What Can You Do to Help?

Promote the Festival!
- Pick up a yard sign and fliers today. A prepared e-mail for you to send to friends is coming soon.
- Like the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/mplsgreekfest
- Invite your friends to the Facebook event
- Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/mplsgreekfest

Volunteer to Work During the Festival!

Pick Up a Baking Schedule!
Philoptochos sponsored Bake Sale preparations have already begun! Novice and seasoned bakers are welcome for part or all of the sessions. Pick up a full schedule...and see what’s coming.

Additionally, during the week of August 26, many food-related tasks are scheduled, things like filling tzatziki cups, salad dressing cups, and more. An hour or two of your time now greatly improves the efficiency of the food tents during the Festival!

Buy Your Festival Tickets!
Buy 50 tickets ($50) before July 29 and get 5 free! Tickets will be on sale each Sunday through Labor Day...but the bonus happens only until the end of July. No tickets will be sent to parishioner homes.
by Paulette Hastings, Philoptochos President

August brings many opportunities to serve the parish and others! Please check your calendars and join us when you can.

Festival Baking Session Schedule

The Taste of Greece Bake Sale is coordinated by Philoptochos with all parishioners invited to help at the baking sessions. Come for an hour or two or for the whole session to learn a new skill, enjoy fellowship, and support the festival. Volunteer during Sunday social hours, by calling the contacts listed below, or online at stmarysgoc.org.

Melomakarona
Tuesday, July 31: 1:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.
Chair: Paulette Hastings
MplsPhilo@gmail.com, 952.564.8388.

Baklava Sundae Topping
Friday, August 10: 3:00-8:00 p.m.
Chair: Naira Istephanous
n.istephanous@comcast.net, 651.484.4053.

Paximathia
Wednesday, August 22: 4:30-9:00 p.m.
Chair: Tia Muchulas
tmuchulas@comcast.net, 612.802.8999.

Koulouria
Friday, August 24: 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Chairs: Debbie Theros
debbie@therosgroup.com, 612.669.6113
Stephanie Panos

Diples
Tuesday, August 28 (fry): 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Thursday, August 30 (honey): 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Chairs: Anne Stundahl, Jamie Amacci, Tina Menter
chmenter@live.com, 612.270.1862

Bake Sale Set Up
Tuesday-Thursday, September 4-6.
Chair: Stephanie Panos
stephaniepanos22@gmail.com, 612.817.9129

Parish Feast Day Services
August 14-15
Philoptochos is hosting the receptions after the services of the Falling Asleep of the Virgin Mary (Dormition). Please join us for fellowship and celebration. If you are able to assist prior to the 6:00 p.m. Vespers on August 14 or 9:30 a.m. Liturgy on August 15, or during and after the receptions, please contact the chairs, Sandra Anderson (August 14), 612.825.9595, sandra@stmarysgoc.org and/or Linda Hodge (August 15), 952.457.0612, lindannjoe@comcast.net.

On Sale Now!
Come Sit at Our Table: A Celebration of Food

The new St. Mary’s Cookbook is available for $20, and is a compliment to established and new kitchens! Pick up your copy at the August 16 FOCUS Fundraiser, the Taste of Greece Festival, and after Sunday liturgies starting in late August.

Net proceeds will support FOCUS Minnesota, which continues to feed the poor and work toward completion of their Mobile Medical Clinic, all while looking for a new home. What will your purchase buy for FOCUS?

- 1 cookbook will buy 1 laundry voucher.
- 4 cookbooks will buy 1 food pack for 4.
- 5 cookbooks will buy 1 week’s shampoo distribution.
- 8 cookbooks will buy lunch for 80 at a teen youth shelter.
- 20 cookbooks will buy 1 full year of coffee for Sunday meals.
- 165 cookbooks will buy 1 month’s salary for the part-time medical clinic administrator.

Let us know if you can help with Cookbook Assembly on Tuesday, August 7, 4:00-8:00 p.m. in the Terrace Room.
Chair: Paulette Hastings
952.564.8388, MplsPhilo@gmail.com.

Continuing: Hands-On Summer for Women and Children!

All summer Philoptochos has been supporting women and children through a variety of activities. In August we will purchase and fill backpacks for the children of Healing House. If you would like to assist, please contact the chair, Sandra Anderson, 612.825.9595, sandra@stmarysgoc.org.

Bring Us Your Bling!

Returning in September is our Bling Sale to support Philoptochos’ philanthropic endeavors. What is it? A sale of once loved but now little worn jewelry, purses and scarves! Start collecting your once loved but little worn treasures to donate for the sale. Look for the donation box in the Great Hall on Sundays after Liturgy, starting in August.
Thank You…
To the **Baklava Team**: Elena Gabor, Chair, the June 13 Crew: Christine Gresser, Georgia Fisher, Bob Baffa, Rosanna Baffa, Lisa Mulcare, Jim Geogleris, Annette Legeros, Sean Gabor, Zoe Gabor, Mary Risacher, Kristina Matsch, Jayne Klatt, Krysta Legeros, Sue Legeros, Carol Smith, Tina Menter, Mary Pappas, Mary Kay Twito, Mary Kafkas, Fifi Kafkas, Popie Rakes, Jamie Amacci, Adeline Ciuta, Paulette Hastings, Nancy Hartwig, Anne Theodotou, Priya and Jon Backos; 
*June 18 Crew*: Kristina Matsch, Tina Menter, Jayne Klatt, Margie Makredes, Paul Makredes, Adeline Ciuta, Dena Tortorelis, Lisa Rose, Popie Rakes, Paulette Hastings, Antonia (Dimassis) Vandersteen, Sean Gabor; 
*June 19 Crew*: Erica Barnes, Jayne Klatt, Tina Menter, Fifi Kafkas, Adeline Ciuta, Dena Tortorelis, Elaine Smith, Nick J. Boosalis, Paulette Hastings, Sophia Rouman, Sophia’s friend Taylor. **Total number of baklava pieces**: 3,932

To the **Kourambiethes Team**: Tina Menter and Giannoula Bakritzes, Chairs, Diane Achterling, Jamie Amacci, Mary Anderson, Nick J. Boosalis, Harriet Cheolis, Athena Dascalos, Elena Gabor, Georgia George, Paulette Hastings, Melody Olsen, Fifi Kafkas, Mary Kafkas, Vangie Karakatsanis, Jayne Klatt, Kathy Moffat, Joanna Morgan, Helen Peters, Cathy Selin, Elaine Smith, Sandra Sperides, and Desi Tokar. **Total number of kourambiethes**: 3,156

To **Sofia Johnson** for organizing the July 11 Days for Girls Day of Service. This event brought together dozens of women from multiple Orthodox churches to help girls and women in Uganda.

To all Philoptochos members, for supporting Paulette Hastings, Andrea Tiggas, and Mary Kay Twito as your National Philoptochos Conference delegates. Some highlights from the week:

- Presentations were given on educational initiatives such as inclusion ministries, bullying, Alzheimer’s Disease, women’s cardiac health, technology safety, and more.
- Andrea Tiggas was one of nine women honored with the AGAPE (All Generations Accomplishing Philanthropic Endeavors) Award, which recognizes the outstanding contributions of those who embody the true spirit of Philoptochos.
- Donations made during the Convention totaled $340,868. Recipients included Orthodox (IOCC, Support a Mission Priest, OCMC Vulnerable Youth Initiative in Nairobi, OCF Summer Leadership Institute, National Sisterhood of Presbyteres Benevolent Fund, and more) as well as non-Orthodox organizations (THRIVE, a Florida clinic for trafficking survivors, Bone Marrow Foundations, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Greek American Rehab and Care Center, and more).
- St. Mary’s won the First Place Award for the Most Meaningful Chapter Program, our Days for Girls Service Project.
- The national Feed The Hungry program resulted in 1,343,734 meals being served in the last biennium. (St. Mary’s served 10,756 meals through our ministries with Simpson House Homeless Shelter, FOCUS Minnesota, Healing House, Families Moving Forward, Share Your Shelf, Taste of Greece food collection, and Care INC.)
Stewardship

by Athena Mihas, Stewardship Chair

Ark of the Covenant Stewardship Campaign Update

Thank you to all parishioners for your generous gifts! Due to your generosity, financial stewardship results for the first six months of the year are continuing to show very positive trends on all key metrics.

Financial Commitment (Pledge) Forms received to date reflect increases compared to last year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pledge Update as of 5/31/18</th>
<th>2018 YTD Pledges</th>
<th>2017 Total Pledges</th>
<th>Increase vs. Prior Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Pledges</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Pledges</td>
<td>$468,128</td>
<td>$367,373</td>
<td>$100,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Pledge</td>
<td>$2,035</td>
<td>$1,810</td>
<td>$225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Pledge</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$1,080</td>
<td>$120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: “Pledge” is referring to the financial annual commitment reflected on a completed Fair Share Financial Commitment Form.

In addition to the increase in pledge commitments that are summarized in the table above, the pledges to date also reflect the following:

- 66 members increased their annual pledge ($33,191)
- 35 members decreased their annual pledge ($9,497)
- 52 members pledged same amount as last year ($64,325)

Overall Offering Income payments received as of June 30, 2018, including both pledge payments and non-pledge offering income, reflect an increase of $86,190 compared to last year at this time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offering Income as of 6/30/18</th>
<th>2018 YTD</th>
<th>2017 YTD</th>
<th>Increase vs. Prior Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Payments Received</td>
<td>$454,412</td>
<td>$389,222</td>
<td>$86,190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table below shows how much more is needed by December 31 to reach our Stewardship goal for 2018:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Offering Gifts YTD vs. Budget</th>
<th>2018 Actual YTD</th>
<th>2018 Annual Budget</th>
<th>Additional Needed by Dec. 31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pledges</td>
<td>$468,128</td>
<td>$473,325</td>
<td>$5,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Offering Gifts</td>
<td>$192,935</td>
<td>$447,431</td>
<td>$254,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cash and Pledges</td>
<td>$661,063</td>
<td>$920,756</td>
<td>$259,693</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $282,477 of the $468,128 in total pledges has been paid to date.

Middle-Aged Singles Monthly Brunch
Third Sunday of the Month, following Liturgy

The monthly brunch gathering for single, middle-aged adults 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 August will take place on the following date:

Sunday, August 19, 2018
11:45 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 athenamihas@gmail.com.

July birthday and anniversary celebrations at the Senior Citizens’ meeting: Hope Kennedy, Angie Speliopoulos, Demos & Eugenia Hadjiyanis (60 years), John Kafkas, Barbara Burkstrand, Bea Murdakes, Louis Trigas, and Joan Calott.
Saint Mary’s Missions and Outreach Ministry Team has a long history of service to those in need. Fair warning - if you read on you may soon be serving and giving even more than you do and maybe even with Simpson Housing Services, Inc.

Simpson Housing Services, Inc.
by Hope Kennedy

In 1998, the Missions and Outreach Committee began a hands-on ministry (Simpson House) to illuminate our adults and youth to see people less fortunate and to serve as Christ instructed us in Matthew 25.

Simpson House provides housing and assistance to the homeless and working poor. On average we serve, cook, and clean up for 90 people plus an additional 31 people who work and come in late missing dinner. Frequently our guests return (two to three times) to the serving table for extra meals. We try to provide meals for everyone and normally go home with empty pans.

We are delighted to have GOYA serve on July 18 and thank Paulette Hastings for compiling the breakdown of all meals for those in need served by St. Mary’s since September 2017. The total is 3,458.

The following is the breakdown:
Healing House = 150
Simpson House = 520
FOCUS = 80
Care Inc. = 48
Food Shelf = 1,895
Families Moving Forward = 765

It is a privilege and honor to serve in this way.

My Experience at Simpson House
by Nikodimi Dokos, age 11

My experience there was something I’ll never forget. It all started when my friend from church invited me to go with her there. When we got there, we had to hold the door while people carried down food. (Simpson House is in the basement of a church.) After all the food was brought in, my friend and I went down to the kitchen to see what we could help with. We were assigned to serve milk and cookies.

Mealtime was at 7:00 p.m. People would go through the line and then come over to get their milk and a cookie. Sometimes they would wait till they were done eating. When they were done, most of the people would go back for seconds or thirds.

Half of the people usually came late, so we had to stay there for a while. One man came in asking for a meal. We could not serve him because he wasn’t on the list. I felt really bad because we couldn’t serve him. I think other people from the church were sad too.

Most of the people were very sweet. It was really hot in there.

I am so thankful that God has given me an opportunity to serve and help people.

What would it be like to relocate to Minnesota from Illinois, to a much larger city and a much larger Orthodox Parish? William Fazio shares his “Another First” story of his life after graduating from college and his recruitment to join a major corporation.

Another First
by William Fazio

My name is William Fazio and I am a relatively new member of the St. Mary’s parish. I moved to Minnesota from Illinois almost one year ago after graduating college and finding my first full-time job here. While it may not seem like a far move in terms of distance, it was tough leaving my family and the place I called home for the majority of my life.

Before moving to Minneapolis, I found St. Mary’s by searching for nearby Greek Orthodox churches online. I was baptized and raised Greek Orthodox, so I knew I was looking for an Orthodox church but had no idea just how many churches there are here in the Twin Cities. As St. Mary’s is only a 15 minute drive from my apartment, this is the first church I decided to visit. Having lived in much smaller communities, I am used to driving as far as 45 minutes to the closest church. During my first visit to St Mary’s, I was overwhelmed by both the size of the church and number of parishioners. I wondered whose usual spot I took while sitting in the pews. The rush of people filling the church hallways and the Great Hall after Liturgy left me in awe. At this point I found the welcome table, staffed by members of the Missions and Outreach Committee. I am used to churches where the parish is so small that everyone knows everyone else, making it easy to greet newcomers. The welcome table reminded me of that feeling. It would be difficult for me to feel comfortable and stay at such a large church had it not been for the outreach provided by the church. For me the welcome table served as a gateway into the church since those staffing the table helped introduce me to more people and activities at the church.

—Continued on next page.
Since moving to Minneapolis, I have noticed many intersections on my daily commute where people are standing with signs looking for money. Some signs mention being homeless, while others mention having lost their jobs or just state “Anything helps.” It is easy to just simply ignore this and try not to look at them until the light changes. Or maybe if you happen to have some change lying around and they look nice enough, you give them some change. This may help in the short term and make me feel better; however, I knew I wanted to do something more meaningful to help. I first learned about the Simpson House by reading an excerpt on their organization in the church bulletin. I found out about the dinners St. Mary’s cooks and serves at Simpson House because I decided to ask more about it. Different organizations volunteer to prepare, serve, and cleanup meals at Simpson House’s homeless shelter. St. Mary’s serves meals several times per year here. One thing lead to another, and I joined the group from St. Mary’s serving their next meal. I was surprised by how thankful and appreciative everyone was of us taking the time to prepare a home-cooked meal and serve it to them. To me it seemed like a relatively small task as it took only a couple hours of my time, but for everyone eating that night it was a huge deal. It showed we care enough to take the time and help them.

I am blessed to be a part of the vibrant and caring community here at St. Mary’s. I feel encouraged to grow and strengthen my faith by reaching out and serving others. It can be easy during a time of such a great life transition to lose focus on what is important in life. With the help of the St. Mary’s community, I have remained strong in my faith and done good works in the name of the Lord.

Family Camp

Save the Date . . . Friday-Sunday, October 12-14 . . . You Don’t Want to Miss!

Screens, Technology, and the Passions: Orthodox Christian Insights for Families

The pervasiveness of “screens” in our workplaces, schools, and homes presents new challenges for Christian families. While some these technologies’ effects are positive and promising, others present serious dangers to our physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Taking a holistic approach, and drawing extensively from the sources of Orthodox tradition as well as insights from medicine, psychology, and sociology, we will identify specific challenges families face, examine some of the less obvious effects of screens and technology upon our interior lives and faith, and discuss constructive steps we can take to remain connected to God, our family, and our neighbor in a “screened” society.

Presenter: Rev. Dr. Perry Hamalis
Professor of Religion at North Central College, Naperville, Illinois

Dr. Hamalis teaches courses in Christian Ethics, Philosophical Ethics, Religion and Politics. He has lectured across the U.S., Greece, Switzerland, Germany, Australia, Argentina, and Korea on topics pertaining to Eastern Orthodoxy and Social Ethics.
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?

Junior GOYA
Rising 6th-8th graders
Brainstorming Meeting: We will be getting together to discuss the Four Circles of Youth Ministry and plan some activities for the upcoming year. Be on the lookout for an email from Jon!

Senior GOYA
Rising 9th-12th graders
Brainstorming Meeting: We will be getting together to discuss the Four Circles of Youth Ministry and plan some activities for the upcoming year. Be on the lookout for an email from Jon!

Dormition Retreat
Kindergarten-12th graders
Tuesday, August 14, 4:00-6:00 p.m.
We will be decorating and learning about the Kouvouklion for the Theotokos. There will also be some other fun events leading up to the Vesper service. Following the retreat, Great Vespers will be held at 6:00 and we invite all of you to stay for the parish Lenten dinner. Please RSVP to Jon@stmarysgoc.org for this event. As always, if you forget to RSVP, you are still more than welcome to attend.

Follow the GOYAns on Instagram: St_Marys_GOYA

Youth Group Monthly Recap

June
We had a group of our Senior GOYAns team up with St. Mary’s Coptic Orthodox Church to build a house on their mission trip to Project Mexico. Our HOPE/JOY, Junior GOYA, and Senior GOYA groups all made turkey and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for SafeZone, a drop-in-center for kids.

July
Our youth went to Summer Camp in Wisconsin where they learned about how to be a “fit” Orthodox Christian. The Senior GOYAns volunteered at Simpson House by preparing and serving a meal to the homeless.

Church School
The first day of Sunday Church School is September 16. Registration will begin soon - watch upcoming communications for details.
For as the Mother of Life she has been transported into life by him who dwelt within her ever-virgin womb!

—from the Kontakion of the Dormition of the Theotokos. Second Tone.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Tenth Sunday of Matthew  &quot;The Messenger&quot; Deadline</td>
<td>6 Holy Transfiguration</td>
<td>7 Eve of Dormition</td>
<td>8 Dormition of the Theotokos</td>
<td>9 Dormition of the Theotokos</td>
<td>10 Eve of Dormition</td>
<td>11 Dormition of the Theotokos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 12:30pm-Greek Dance Practice 4:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy after Liturgy-Potluck Lunch 6:00pm-Paraklesis</td>
<td>4:00pm-Cookbook Assembly 6:00pm-Paraklesis 7:00pm-Parish Council 7:00pm-Open Gym</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy Festive Reception follows Liturgy</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy Festive Reception follows Vespers Office closed</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 11:45am-Mission &amp; Outreach 12:30pm-Greek Dance Practice</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 11:00am-Mission &amp; Outreach 12:30pm-Greek Dance Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 11:45am-Mission &amp; Outreach 12:30pm-Greek Dance Practice</td>
<td>6:00pm-Paraklesis</td>
<td>12:00noon-Senior Citizens 4:00pm-Dormition Retreat 6:00pm-Great Vespers Festive Reception follows Vespers</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy Festive Reception follows Liturgy</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy Festive Reception follows Liturgy</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy Festive Reception follows Liturgy</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy Festive Reception follows Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy after Liturgy-Singles Brunch</td>
<td>5:30pm-Greek Dance Practice 6:30pm-Greek Festival Meeting</td>
<td>1:30pm-Adult Senior Bible Study 6:30pm-Church School Teachers’ Meeting 6:30pm-Open Gym</td>
<td>4:30pm-Paximathia Project</td>
<td>7:00pm-Edina Koinonia</td>
<td>10:00am-Koulouria Project</td>
<td>9:00am-Bible Study 5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>5:00pm-Salad Dressing Prep. 5:30pm-Greek Dance Practice</td>
<td>9:00am-Diples Project 1:30pm-Adult Senior Bible Study 6:30pm-Open Gym</td>
<td>9:00am-Diples Project 1:30pm-Adult Senior Bible Study 6:30pm-Open Gym</td>
<td>9:00am-Diples Project 1:30pm-Adult Senior Bible Study 6:30pm-Open Gym</td>
<td>9:00am-Diples Project 1:30pm-Adult Senior Bible Study 6:30pm-Open Gym</td>
<td>9:00am-Diples Project 1:30pm-Adult Senior Bible Study 6:30pm-Open Gym</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>