A Message from Father John

Father John Kostas

The Light of Christ Illumines all

Christ the light illumines all. At his Resurrection, death is destroyed, darkness dispelled, and 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. After all, for those who have lived selfish, darkened lives, 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.
Memorial Prayers

**Sunday, May 12**
- Jim Muchulas (1 year)
- Vasiliki Caredis (1 year)
  - cousin of Jim Muchulas
- Departed members of AHEPA and Daughters of Penelope

**Sunday, May 19**
- Stavros Stavrou (1 year)

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**Saint Mary’s Visitation Ministry**

Our Visitation Ministry is continually updating its list of parishioners who are homebound or in care facilities and would like to be on our Visitation List. If you or your loved one is a member of St. Mary’s and physically unable to attend church and would enjoy a visit or a telephone call from either a member of our clergy and/or a member of our Visitation Committee, please notify the Church Office, 612.825.9595, or doria@stmarysgoc.org.

If you are interested in being trained as a member of our Visitation Team, please contact Doria.

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**Share YourShelf**

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

- **Sunday, May 5**
  - Canned fruits and vegetables

- **Sunday, May 12**
  - Cereal (hot and cold)

- **Sunday, May 19**
  - Canned meals – large cans
    - e.g. chili, pork and beans, etc.

- **Sunday, May 26**
  - Coffee and Tea

*Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time and always start with the person nearest you.*

—Mother Teresa

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**St. Mary’s Parish Council**

**President**
- Joseph DiGiovanni

**Vice President**
- Dean Murdakes

**Secretary**
- Andrew Theodotou

**Treasurer**
- Michael Rakes

**Assistant Treasurer**
- John Beauchamp

**Members**
- George Andreadakis
- Paul Hastings
- William Hoef
- Naira Istefhanous
- Pamela Nelson
- Dean Psychogios
- Randy (Luke) Twito
Education, Fellowship, & Worship

**Sunday Schedule**
Saturday Great Vespers – 5:00 p.m.
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

**Weekday Schedule**

**Friday, May 3**
*Life-Giving Font of the Theotokos*
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, May 8**
*Saint John the Theologian*
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

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

**Wednesday, May 22**
*Mid-Pentecost*
Evening Divine Liturgy – 6:00 p.m.

**Sunday, May 26**
*Memorial Day Commemoration*
Cemetery Service – 12:00 noon
Lakewood Cemetery, St. Mary’s Section

**Fellowship and Study Groups**

**Adult Senior Bible Study**
Adult Senior Bible Study resumes classes this month. We are meeting on a new day and time: the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 10:00 a.m. Starting May 8 and May 22.

**Intercessory Prayer**
Wednesdays, May 1 and 15
10:30 a.m., Nave Chapel

**Men’s Fellowship**
Friday, May 3
7:00 p.m., Nave Chapel

**Saturday Bible Study**
Every Saturday
9:00 a.m., Lakewood Cemetery, St. Mary’s Section

**Senior Citizens**
Tuesday, May 14
12:00 noon, Terrace Room

**Women’s Bible Study**
Wednesdays, May 1 and 15
11:00 a.m., Fireside Room

**Koinonia**

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

**Lake Calhoun Koinonia**
Sunday, May 26, 5:00 p.m.
Fr. George & Presbytera Christa’s home
612.825.1067

**Northeast Metro Koinonia**
Thursday, May 23, 7:00 p.m.
Gus & Cristina Nicklow’s home
952.476.7624

**West Metro Koinonia**
Wednesday, May 22, 7:00 p.m.
Costas & Barbara Nichols’ home
763.571.0460

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**American Legion Post 129**

100 Year Celebration!

Please save the date of Saturday, November 9, 2019, and celebrate with us the 100 year anniversary of our Post. Along with delicious hors d’oeuvres, dinner, and drinks, and a fabulous program, we have added a history display. This display will be very personal as family members will have their own area to put out photographs, metals, and memorabilia of war/service history in their family. It will be a perfect way of not only providing valuable history but also honoring our veterans and their families for their sacrifice.

**Christ Is Risen!**

Christos anesti!
Alithos anesti!
— Greek

Al-Masi-H Qam!
Hakan Qam!
— Arabic

Christos a inviat!
Adeverat a inviat!
— Romanian

Khristos Voskres!
Voistinu voskres!
— Slavonic

Khristos voskres!
Voistinu voskres!
— Ukrainian

Truly He Is Risen!

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Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs, bestowing life!

— Apolitikion of PASCHA, Plagal 1st Tone
May Parish Night
Wednesday, May 15

Join us from 6:15-8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 15! Dr. Philip Mamalakis, of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, will be with us through an interactive video call where he will be presenting on the topic: “Living in the Light of the Resurrection.” He will be speaking to the adults from 7:00-7:45 p.m. in the Nave. The youth in grades K-12 will be discussing the “Fruit of Faithfulness” with their respected groups. We look forward to having Dr. Mamalakis with us in May, as well as for the 2019-2020 Parish Nights!

Dr. Mamalakis directs the field education program and teaches classes on pastoral care, marriage and family, grief, death and dying, and topics related to pastoral counseling at Holy Cross.

Twin Cities YAL Retreat
Friday-Sunday, May 17-19

The Twin Cities YAL Retreat takes place the weekend of May 17-19. Enjoy friends, fellowship, worship, engaging discussion, and fun with fellow Orthodox young adults in northern Minnesota!

Young adults, single or married, ages 18-35, are invited to attend the second annual pan-Orthodox YAL retreat at the Karos’ cabin in Merrifield, Minnesota. The cost is $20 per person.

To register and make your online payment, go to our website, stmarysgoc.org, and follow the links.

Orthodox Game League

The Spring Game League night is Saturday, May 18, 7:00 p.m., at St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church, Lecture Room. Adults (age 18 years and older) are invited to enjoy time with each other and play games. Want to learn a new game? Want to play a classic? Want to teach a game? Then this is for you! Questions? Please contact Nikki Beauchamp, 612.910.2943. Please bring a munchie and/or dessert to share.

Why is it adults only?

After much consideration and input from attendees, it was decided that keeping this adults only allows for better adult fellowship and less distracted game playing. In addition, those with kids felt it would be fun to have some time with other adults.

Do I need to be a game expert to attend?

No! Come and learn a new game, learn to play one better, or teach one!

Educating Ourselves and Our Children in Godliness

A Church School Teacher Development Workshop

Saint George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church is hosting an all-day Church School Teacher Development Workshop on Saturday, May 4, 2019. The purpose of the workshop is to refresh our knowledge and provide new techniques for current Church School teachers as well as to inspire new Church School volunteers. We are honored to have Carole A. Buleza, Director of the Department of Christian Education for the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese, serve as our presenter. The workshop will take place in St. George’s Great Hall from 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Please reach out to Christina Worrall for registration details, worrall.christina@gmail.com or 571.334.2306.

A workshop flyer, a detailed schedule, including session descriptions, and a registration form are available on the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese website: http://www.antiochian.org/christianeducation.

There will be three sessions: Overview of Orthodoxy; New Methods in Teaching; Moral Issues.

Please register by Holy Friday, April 26, 2019. Contact Christina Worrall by email, phone, or text for registration questions or more information: worrall.christina@gmail.com or 571.334.2306

The cost is $10 per person or $15 per household.

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church is located at 1250 Oakdale Avenue, West St. Paul, MN.
Families Moving Forward – June 16-29, 2019
Families moving forward is a beautiful opportunity to show love and hospitality to three homeless families in need. We provide an evening meal, activities for the children, a place to sleep and breakfast on the run. This is a Pan-Orthodox ministry with St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church being the primary host—providing the Terrace Room for dinner, gymnasium for play, common room for games and arts and crafts. Three spacious Sunday school rooms overlooking the lake are converted into a comfortable efficiency for each family. The bus drops them off at our church at 6:00 p.m. each evening and picks them up again in the morning at 7:00 a.m.

Opportunities to Serve
• Dinner, 6:15-7:00 p.m. (approximately 25 guests)
  Food can be prepared at church or brought in.
• Evening Host, 5:30-8:30 p.m. (two per evening)
  Provide hospitality, assistance as needed, and leadership to ensure all is running smoothly for volunteers and guests.
• Childcare, 6:45-8:00 p.m.
  Activities provided. Play with the kids in the gym, read stories, do crafts, play board games. Bring your family and have fun with our guests.
• Overnight Hosts, 8:15 p.m.-7:00 a.m. (two adults)
  Quiet time with families in the lounge area (no later than 9:00 p.m. for the kids.)
  Wake up call for guests. Set out the morning breakfast (juice, coffee, and cereal.)

A Snapshot View
• One mom catches a bus to work at 4:00 a.m. She travels to St Paul and then back to our church again in the evening.
• A father just got out of heart surgery. He was so patient and kind with his kids and very grateful for our hospitality and shelter.
• Another young teen named Keisha loved to write poetry. Her mother was a hard worker, a maid in housekeeping. She was finally able to afford an apartment. We gave this lady and two kids Greek Festival tickets. They rode the bus back over to see us at the Festival and are still talking about it. Kiesha continues to call and check in with me. We simply talk, touch base. Have I given her money? No. I did take her to Olive Garden to celebrate her 16th birthday. Currently she is married and has one child, now age 8. Keisha holds a job at a fast food restaurant and her husband works at the airport.
• Boardgames and puzzles are a favorite. As we work and play with the children, parents will oftentimes decide to enter in the fun.
• Everyone loves shooting hoops in the gym.
• It’s a joy to see the delight on the faces when they walk into the dining area—tables nicely set and often a few flowers on the table. Father Thomas and Sandra served a waffle breakfast topped with strawberries, coffee, juice and milk. This was their last morning with us—a most pleasant summer morning in the Terrace Room overlooking the lake. They felt like royalty being served.
• In talking with a woman one evening, she said, “I love you Orthodox. My kids even take to you. Thank you for this. Our rooms are so nice and private. The food is great. I love looking out over the lake. I snapped a picture out the bedroom window and sent it to my cousin so she could see.” Are not you well received at all the churches? “I am always grateful for the shelter, a place to stay, but you treat us so well.”

A big thank you to all who have served prior with such great generosity and joy!

To learn more, stop by the FMF table in the Great Hall on Sundays, May 5-26.

This is a beautiful opportunity serve!

It is not enough to help the poor. We must help them with generosity and without grumbling. And it is not enough to help them without grumbling. We must help them gladly and happily. When the poor are helped, there ought to be these two conditions – generosity and joy.

—John Chrysostom
After the beautiful celebration of Christ’s Resurrection, Philoptochos is ready to have some fun in May! Join us for any and all of our upcoming events.

Also, a reminder that the St. Mary’s Cookbook “Come Sit at Our Table” makes a great hostess, Mother’s Day, graduation, and wedding gift! It’s filled with wonderful spring recipes like Asparagus appetizer wraps, Greek lamb stew, and rhubarb cobbler, and all profits benefit FOCUS Minnesota. Pick one up on Sunday for $20 at the Philoptochos table in the Great Hall or at the bookstore.

**Ladies Night Out!**
**Saturday, May 4, 6:30 p.m.**
Ladies of St. Mary’s, join us on Saturday night for Ladies Night Out! Philoptochos is hosting the beverages, and we ask you to bring an appetizer or dessert to share. Please note that this is fellowship for all women in the parish, not only Philoptochos members. Our thanks to Mary Kay Twito for hosting this event.

**Women’s Book Club**
**Monday, May 6, 7:00-9:00 p.m.**
All women are welcome to the Book Club discussion of “Beauty for Ashes: The Spiritual Transformation of a Modern Greek Community” by Stephen R. Lloyd-Moffett. Thank you to Julie Moricz, who is serving as discussion leader this month. We will meet at the home of Paulette Hastings. Light refreshments will be served. Books are available in the church Book Store for $21.

**Orthodox Women’s Pan Orthodox Tea**
**Saturday, May 18, 3:00-5:00 p.m.**
Come have fellowship with your Orthodox sisters at the next Women’s Pan Orthodox Tea. Our host is St. Michael’s and St. George’s Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 505 4th Street NE, Minneapolis. Please bring a dish to share, and plan to stay for Vespers.

**Philoptochos Spring Finale with Dinner and Elections**
**Tuesday, May 28, 6:00 p.m.**
Plan to attend our final meeting before summer! It’s always a fun one with good food, friends, and a look back at the Ecclesiastical Year through our camera lens. Please RSVP at the Philoptochos Table after church or by calling the church office, 612.825.9595.

The important business we will conduct is the election of the 2019-2021 Philoptochos Board. If you would like to be considered as a nominee, please contact Jeanne Forchas or Linda Hodge.

**Thank You**
Angela Kountzis, for serving as the new administrator of the **Women’s Book Club**, and to Elena Tudor and Rebecca Myerly, who make our book selections available in the church bookstore. To be added to the Book Club distribution list, stop by the Philoptochos table on Sunday or contact Angela.

Toni Bazakos and Tina Menter, who baked 75 loaves of prosforo plus a batch of gluten-free loaves as part of the Sacred Baking program of the church.

Jenny Hibberd and Linda Hodge, who chaired the **Reception after Salutations** on March 15, Terri Leckas, the Queen of Cakes, who donated the Lenten cake, and to all who helped: Katherine Boosalis, Maria Boosalis, Stephanie George, Paulette Hastings, Paul Hibberd, Tina Menter, and Carol Smith.

Toni Bazakos, who organized the **Lenten meal after the March 27 Presanctified Liturgy**; the Monday food prep team: Toni Bazakos, Maureen Borrell, Paulette Hastings, Naira Istephanous, Tina Menter, Tia Muchulas; the St. Barnabas Orphanage presenters: Carol and Dave Smith; the dessert providers: Jennifer Coin, Athena Dascalos, Elena Gabor, Alexandria Kalina; and the Wednesday workers: Julie Anderson-Smith, Maureen Borrell, Jenn Coin, Keith Collis, Athena Dascalos, Elena Gabor, Jim Geogleris, Paulette Hastings, Linda Hodge, Naira Istephanous, Cindy Karos, Jayne Klatt, Connie Kouzes, Tina Menter, Tia Muchulas, Lisa Rose, Carol Smith, Andrea Tiggas, Mary Kay Twito. Thank you to all who generously gave over $1200 to the St. Barnabas Orphanage and School in Kenya!

**Also Coming Up...**
**Tuesday, May 14, 6:30 p.m.**
**Board Meeting, Meeting Room 1**

Tuesday and Wednesday, June 12-13, 3:00-8:00 p.m.
**Festival Baklava!**

Sunday, June 16
**Host meal for Families Moving Forward**

Monday and Tuesday, June 17-18, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
**More Festival Baklava!**
Food Insecurity: Volunteer to Make a Difference
Sunday, June 23, after Liturgy

You can “Make a Difference” through a Missions and Outreach event called Harvest Pack. This is an inter-generational hands-on expression of our love for one another. Visit the website (harvest-pack.org) to see short videos and pictures of young and old giving their time together packing meals. Volunteer to join together at St. Mary’s on Sunday, June 23, after Liturgy.

The story of Harvest Pack began as William McNally was visiting the small town of San Ignacio, tucked into the jungle of Belize, Central America. One warm evening, the air heavy with tropical humidity, he came across a man playing his trumpet under a dim streetlight, on a broken sidewalk. The two exchanged conversation and it came up that the man hadn’t eaten that day. William took the few bills he had in his pocket and gave them to the man, “For playing your trumpet tonight,” William said. The man grasped William’s shoulder, called him “an angel,” immediately packed up his things, and walked down the street. From where he stood, William could see the man stop at a tiny street store and purchase a can of beans, a loaf of bread, and a roll of toilet paper, with the few bills William had offered. “If that’s all it takes to be an angel,” William thought, “I’m in.” When he returned to the U.S., William began volunteering at local food shelves, and Harvest Pack was born from there. You are invited to step into this story, to try on your wings and be the “angel” for those who need one.

Having meals available helps prevent health issues, and other issues that may cause struggles with housing, safety, education, mental health, community, and all other aspects of life. Harvest Pack is dedicated to partnering with volunteers and organizations to ensure meals get distributed to help the daily struggle in fighting hunger. Their primary focus is fighting hunger in the U.S., but do support global needs with selected international organizations also.

St. Mary’s is privileged to have resources to share with the hungry. We are among many Greek Orthodox churches that support the fight against hunger. How can you make a difference for the many children and families having food insecurity, affecting 607 million people worldwide? Sign up! For details, watch the Sunday bulletin, messages, and postings.

St. Mary’s is the site for an inter-generational ministry that is fun, high energy, powerful hands-on opportunity to provide food for the hungry. The date and time is just after Liturgy on Sunday, June 23.

What We’re Packing...
Food that is nut-free, gluten-free, vegan, U.S. sourced ingredients that are full of carbohydrates, proteins, and vitamins, easily digestible to meet the needs of people with different needs and food restrictions.

Where and When We’re Packing...
On Sunday, June 23, in the Terrace Room, we will offer 50 volunteers the training and guidance to prepare and package 15,000 meals in 2½ hours.

Funding...
Thank you to the St. Mary’s Foundation and the Parish Council for providing the funds for this service project.

Let’s work together to fight the #1 health risk...
Hunger/Food Insecurity.

Service Opportunities
Please contact coordinators by phone or e-mail.

Simpson House Dinners
Coordinator: Hope Kennedy, ehopek@gmail.com
Please help us with your cooking skills at these upcoming dinners.
Tuesdays, May 7, June 18, October 29
5:00-8:30 p.m.

Healing House
Coordinator: Sandra Anderson, asformess69@gmail.com
Saturdays, May 18, July 20, September 21, November 16

Families Moving Forward
Coordinator: Carol Karos, cmkaros@gmail.com
We need dinner preparers, evening and overnight hosts, hosts for children’s playtime
June 16-29
In addition to the blooming of spring into summer, the months of May and June are often full of celebrations for new stages of life. Whether you are celebrating a graduation or wedding, please consider visiting the bookstore for gifts and cards to mark these special occasions. We have a new collection of cards for any and all celebrations.

For the graduate in your life, we recommend the gift of a book that may serve as a good spiritual companion on their journey. A carefully chosen book can be a gift kept close for a lifetime. Icons are also great gifts, adding to the graduate’s spiritual support and encouragement with a visible reminder of the great cloud of witnesses and spiritual companions present to—and with—they in spirit. We also carry wearable reminders in the form of handmade icon jewelry and prayer ropes.

For couples who are engaged or married, the bookstore carries a good selection of books that bring to life the blessings of marriage rooted in the Orthodox tradition. Books that explain marriage in the Orthodox faith are intended to support a couple throughout their union, clarifying and encouraging them to journey with—and in—Christ. These books are often treasures of wisdom, insight, and the quiet counsel of the saints. The bookstore also has several versions of the traditional marriage icon of The Wedding at Cana. This icon is always a lovely gift for a newly married couple.

During this upcoming season of celebration, consider the bookstore as a resource for gifts to celebrate the special people in your life and the defining events of their lives and faith journeys.

Welcome to St Mary’s

We are pleased to announce that Health Point Cleaning Solutions has taken over the cleaning and meeting set-up needs for St. Mary’s. Hopefully you have noticed the building sparkling the past few weeks. Should you find an area that needs attention, please let the church office know. It is also important that we remember to clean up after ourselves. The church does not have a custodial staff, so it’s important that we all do our part to help keep our beautiful facility clean and in good repair for generations to come.

Guidelines for Giving

We are overjoyed that so many people respond to our requests for the local food shelves, coat drives, and FOCUS needs. But we have noticed that people frequently drop things off at the church which have not been requested – toys, books, used clothing, and recently a wine cooler. Our office staff takes time to sift through the articles, hoping to discover why they have been left at the church. After several weeks, these are items are tossed into the dumpster. Should you want to donate used items to those in need, please stop by the Welcome Table in the Great Hall and a member of our Missions and Outreach Committee can share with you organizations that are accepting donations, many which will pick them up directly from your home. Thank you in advance for helping keep our parish clean and organized.
Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

Our 2019 Stewardship effort has gone remarkably well once again and we thank you for your stewardship pledges. If you have not pledged yet, please prayerfully consider a pledge to St Mary’s. We continue to grow in leaps and bounds, offering more programming and opportunities for spiritual education and fellowship month after month. This would not be possible without your generous pledges. Together we are helping each other on our walk towards salvation!

This year, our Stewardship outreach will involve having small group dinners throughout the Twin Cities. Our goal is to bring parishioners together to enjoy food and fellowship and to learn more about each other’s lives. We hope this represents the beginning of a wonderful fall tradition. Our pot luck dinners will be scheduled throughout the fall, and we are seeking hosts to open their homes to a small group of people. If you would like to host a small dinner (potluck, so no cooking involved!) please contact St Mary’s office.

Stay tuned for information on our wildly popular Appreciation Glendi in October, and news about our new, technologically advanced, online giving options for 2020!

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Help IOCC Respond to Disaster

Volunteer for the Home Front Program

In the case of a local emergency or natural disaster in our area, we are working in conjunction with IOCC to create a plan in order to best respond and take action to both protect our church assets as well as to be able to assist others. The first step is to assemble a team of parishioners who are willing to assist as volunteers.

Hopefully we will never need to call on you for your assistance but we want to be prepared, just in case. If you are willing to add your name/area of expertise to the list, please e-mail Pam Nelson at pamnelson612@aol.com or by phone at 612.804.3662.

Train as an Emergency Response Team Leader

Want to help your neighbors get back on their feet? When disaster strikes, families often need help removing debris, tearing down water soaked walls, or ripping out buckled floors. Team leaders deploy to locations across the country and spearhead groups of IOCC volunteers.

Requirements

• Background in construction (personal or professional)
• At least 25 years old, valid driver’s license
• Able to sit for long periods and lift up to 50 pounds

Expectations

• Deploy on short notice to a disaster-affected area for up to a week
• Manage skilled and unskilled volunteers of all ages

Sign up at iocc.org/teamlead

Next training session: May 1-4 in Minneapolis, MN

For more information, please contact Arouches@iocc.org or 612.454.9452
March 12, 2019

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago exists to receive and share unconditional love, mercy, healing and peace, so that life has greater meaning and purpose.

To the beloved clergy and laity of the Holy Metropolis of Chicago,

I want to personally invite you to walk with me on an amazing journey. As we delve deeper into Holy and Great Lent, we encounter, time and time again, the significance of God’s mercy in our lives, especially in the various Lenten services and as reflected in our Metropolis’ Statement of Why. With this in mind, I invite you to the 2019 Metropolis of Chicago Clergy-Laity Assembly. This historic event will be held on September 25-29, 2019, in the Twin Cities of Minnesota and will be co-hosted by the parishes of St. George in Saint Paul and St. Mary in Minneapolis.

The theme of our assembly will draw inspiration from the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice” (Matthew 9:13; 12:7)

Our gathering will provide you the unique opportunity to actively shape the future of our Metropolis. In addition to numerous workshops and presentations, we are setting aside Friday, September 27, for an all-day interactive discussion of our Metropolis’ Strategic Plan. EVERYONE across our Metropolis is invited to participate in this work, even if they are not an official delegates to the Assembly. You’ll have the chance to define how our 16 Strategic Goals will help transform us into an even greater Christ-centered community that loves, guides, engages and serves all people.

Among key features of our Assembly are presentations and events for our young adults. The detailed schedule, agenda and registration information will be forthcoming; however, I wanted to make sure you save the dates and promote this event to everyone in your parish. As materials and updates become available, we will add them to the dedicated page for our Clergy-Laity Assembly: chicago.goarch.org/clergy-laity-2019.

As a reminder, each parish is encouraged to elect four (4) official delegates to our Assembly to vote on the various matters that require approval. In addition to the Parish Priest and the President of the Parish Council (or Vice President or another designated member of the Parish Council), each Parish Assembly is to elect two other members to serve as delegates.

I am eager to greet each of you personally at this historic gathering. If you have any immediate questions, please contact the Clergy-Laity co-chairs: Mrs. Alexis Bighley at St. George Church 651-222-6220 and Mr. Charles Theros at St. Mary Church 612-825-9595.

Extending to you my paternal love in Christ, I remain

In need of God’s mercy,

+ Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago
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.

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### What's Happening?

#### Faith Group
**0-5 Year Olds and Parents**
- **Wednesday, May 8**
- **Thursday, May 23**
  - 9:30-11:00 a.m.
  - Great Hall and Terrace Room

#### HOPE and JOY
**Kindergarten-Grade 2 and Grades 3-5**
- **Saturday, May 11**
  - 5:00-8:00 p.m.
End of year Family Movie Night in the Terrace Room.
*We will start with Vespers in the nave and then move into the Terrace Room. Pizza will be provided and some snacks as well.*
Please RSVP to jon@stmarysgoc.org.
- **Wednesday, May 15**
  - 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  - HOPE & JOY at Parish Night
  - Fruit of Faithfulness: In God We Trust

#### Junior GOYA
**Grades 6-8**
- **Wednesday, May 1**
  - 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  - Meet in the Terrace Room to decorate cards and put together care packages for a military troop overseas.
- **Wednesday, May 15**
  - 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  - Junior GOYA at Parish Night
  - Fruit of Faithfulness: In God We Trust

#### Senior GOYA
**Grades 9-12**
- **Wednesday, May 8**
  - 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  - Greek Pastry Baking at Church
- **Wednesday, May 15**
  - 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  - Senior GOYA at Parish Night: Fruit of Faithfulness: Stick to it
- **Friday, May 24-27**
  - Junior Olympics in Chicago

#### Greek Dance Practices Resume
  - Greek dance practices will be held on Monday evenings, 6:00-8 p.m., starting on July 8 and continuing through the months of July and August with final rehearsal on Wednesday, September 4. We will be rehearsing new and previous dances for performance at our Festival on September 6-8. All youth of St. Mary’s, ages 5-18 (and also college age who are in town) are welcome to participate. Please contact Tessie Bourdamis, tbourdamis@comcast.net, or 952.831.3529, by May 26 if you are interested in participating.

#### Thank You, Hellenic Post!
A big thank you to the Hellenic Post American Legion for financially supporting our basketball teams at the Western Region Basketball Tournament in Milwaukee back in February.

#### March Recap
Our youth groups began the month of March with our Junior GOYA lock-in where we played games, had fellowship with one another and discussed the Triodion and our goals for the upcoming Lenten Season. The HOPE/JOY group participated in two different service projects. They put together: care packages to pass out from their cars for people who are homeless and baby hygiene packets for the Bundles of Love Charity. The GOYAns also began their mini-meetings on the evenings of the Presanctified Liturgy. These mini-meetings consisted of Lenten topics discussions, Q&A and fellowship with their peers. The Senior GOYA group hosted the Lenten meal as a fundraiser for the Junior Olympics that some of the Senior GOYAns will be attending over Memorial Day weekend.

#### Youth Feedback
If you have any comments, suggestions, or concerns regarding our youth program(s) please let us know. We have a new formal feedback process. Go to our St Mary’s home page-Click on “Youth,” then “Youth Program Feedback” Your comments will be forwarded to a member of the Parish Council and will be reviewed for follow up.

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Follow the GOYAns on Instagram: [St_Marys.GOYA](https://www.instagram.com/St_Marys.GOYA)
Join us in the Great Northern Woods for Vacation Church School as we learn about God’s promises.

Hang out at the cabin
Walk down the dock
Make fun crafts
Sit by the campfire
Hear amazing stories of saints and events from long ago

Our week in the Woods is June 10-14, 8:45 a.m.-12:00 noon
VCS is for kids three-years old (toilet trained) to grade six in the fall.

RSVP on our website: stmarysgoc.org
Summer Camp Early Bird Registration opened April 16 and is currently underway.

This year’s registration fees are:
• Early Bird Discount: $445 from April 16-May 3, 2019
• Standard Fee: $495 from May 4-May 23, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.

Please register at: www.stmaryscamp.com

The 2019 Summer Camp Scholarship Contest for Grades 6-12
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 following Summer Camp.

The 2019 theme for camp is:
“Journey to the Joy of Pascha!”

This year’s essay question is, “What is your favorite part of Holy Week and Why?”

There will be two divisions:
• Junior Division - open to campers entering grades 6-8 this Fall, 2019.
  Contestants are required to submit a 250-word (typed) essay on the question.
• Senior Division - open to campers entering grades 9-12 this Fall, 2019.
  Contestants are required to submit a 500-word (typed) essay on the question.

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

ENTRIES ARE DUE NO LATER THAN SUNDAY MAY 19, 2019.

Please submit entries to: stmaryscampscholarship@gmail.com
This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

—Psalm 118:24
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