A Message from Father George

Father George Dokos, Proistamenos

“Saved through you, O pure Virgin, hence we do confess you to be most truly the birthgiver of our Lord; with choirs of bodiless Angels, you do we magnify.”

-Paraklesis Service to the Theotokos

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

August, in our Holy Tradition, is the month of the Theotokos. Although there are many feast days which celebrate the holy Virgin and her role in our salvation, the greatest of them in her honor is August 15, the day of her repose, which also happens to be the feast day of our parish. Leading up to August 15 is a two-week intense fast, during which time we also celebrate the beautiful Paraklesis Service to the Theotokos. But what is this service all about?

The word paraklesis can mean both supplication and comfort, and, indeed, the Paraklesis Service is exactly this: a supplicatory service to the Mother of God seeking her loving care, intercession, and healing. The hymns from this melodic service reflect all these elements, and more. Take, for example, the following hymn:

“The illnesses of body, and the soul’s ailing sickness, of those who run to you for divine protection; as God’s holy Mother, make them worthy of remedy, for the Savior Christ was born from you.”

This hymn acknowledges the Virgin Mary as the one who brought forth in the flesh the eternal Son of God, and as the Mother of the Savior she has compassion on her sick and suffering children – you and me – and comes to the aid of all those who are ill, both in body and in soul. Furthermore, many of the other poetic hymns stress that the Virgin protects us from harm and danger and is our companion in this life. She is our shelter, our joy, a deliverer from harm and from sin, and a constant intercessor on our behalf before the throne of Christ.

The Paraklesis Service will be offered from 6:00-7:00 p.m. on August 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, and 13. Plan on attending at least one of these in order —article continues on page 3.
Our Life Together

Baptisms
George (Jory) Apostolou
Parents: Aristides & Paige Apostolou
June 9, 2019

Marriages
Vasiliki Bakritges to Jason Willis
June 8, 2019
Jacklyn Gronholz to Alexander Amacci
June 22, 2019
Sylvia Mankarious to David Astramecki
June 23, 2019
Alexandra Richardson to Patrick Carroll
July 14, 2019

Deaths
Conn Legeros
June 19, 2019
May his memory be eternal.

Memorial Prayers
Sunday, August 25
Alexandra (Sandy) (4 years) and George (3 years) Geogleris

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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.

Thank You
Thank you to all who helped make our annual Fun Jam a success:
Crew - Aggie Koutroupas, Annette Legeros, Briana Maimares, Demetra Kordopitoulas, Don Forchas, Dick Andron, Jim Geogleris, Jon Klein, Liam McMonagle, and Stacy Vucenich
Office - David, Julie, Bob
We hope everyone had a fun time!—Georgia Andron

For more Thank You notes, please turn to page 11.

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Share YourShelf
August’s recipient of Share YourShelf contributions is Community Emergency Service (CES).

Sunday, August 4
Canned soups or vegetables

Sunday, August 11
Diapers (size 5)

Sunday, August 18
Canned meat (e.g. tuna and chicken)

Sunday, August 25
Baby formula

It’s good to be blessed.
It’s better to be a blessing.—Author Unknown

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College Student Addresses
Are you, or your child or grandchild, off to college this fall? Be sure to keep your church updated with your college address. We’d like to keep in touch with all our college students, and send them care packages! Please inform David in the church office of your address, david@stmarysgoc.org.

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St. Mary’s Church Staff
Priest
Fr. George Dokos
Associate Priest
Fr. Jason Houck
Attached Priest
Fr. John Kostas
Emeriti
Fr. Anthony Coniaris
Fr. Theodore Filandrinos
Deacon
Deacon Paul Kalina
Administrator
Julie Moricz
Parishioner Support Communications
David Mertesdorf
Youth Director
Jonathan Klein
Ministry Support
Doria Saros
Facilities Coordinator
Bob Yang
Music Director
Thespina Macres
Organist
Mark Macres

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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 Hoeft
Naira Istephanous
Pamela Nelson
Dean Psychogios
Randy (Luke) Twito

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2 | The Messenger

www.stmarysgoc.org
Fellowship and Study Groups

**Adult Senior Bible Study**
- Wednesdays, August 14 and 28
- 1:30 p.m., Fireside Room

**Intercessory Prayer**
- On Summer break

**Men’s Fellowship**
- Friday, August 2
- 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 13
- 12:00 noon, Terrace Room

**Women’s Bible Study**
- On Summer break

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**Men’s Retreat**
**September 20-22**

We are very much looking forward to this year’s Men’s Retreat, held on the weekend of September 20-22.

We are excited to have Father Jonathon Proctor as our retreat leader for the weekend.

The cost is $70 per person and your check (payable to St. Mary’s) is your firm reservation. It is a first come first served basis, remember we had a sellout crowd last year. We reserved another cabin about one mile down the road on our lake, so we again have room for overflow. Let me know if you have a strong preference for the other cabin. We will try our best, although we are all in it together!

If you have any questions contact Paul Karos or Steve Rakes:
ppkaros@gmail.com or stevenmrakes@gmail.com

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**Koinonia**

**Edina Koinonia**  
- Thursday, August 22, 7:00 p.m.  
- Joan Calott’s home  
- 952.944.9397

**Lake Calhoun Koinonia**  
- On Summer break

**Northeast Metro Koinonia**  
- On Summer break

**West Metro Koinonia**  
- On Summer break

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**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.
  - August 1 and 2
  - August 6-9
  - August 12 and 13

**Weekday Schedule**

**Monday, August 5**
- Eve of Holy Transfiguration
- Great Vespers – 6:00 p.m.

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

**Wednesday, August 14**
- Eve of Holy Dormition
- Great Vespers – 6:00 p.m.

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

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

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—to pray for those who are in need and to receive the comfort, protection, and healing that the holy Mother of God pours out on those who love her Son. As St. Theophilos of Alexandria wrote: “The Son is pleased that His Mother should pray to Him, because He wishes to grant her whatever she asks, in order to repay her for the favor He received from her giving Him a human body.”

Most Holy Theotokos, save us.

With love in Christ,

+Fr. George
Parish News & Events

Clergy-Laity Assembly
The 2019 Metropolis of Chicago Clergy-Laity Assembly takes place September 25-29 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel Bloomington near the Mall of America. It is co-hosted by St. Mary’s and St. George churches. An all-parish mailing was sent last week and consisted of registration and meal forms as well as sponsorship information and form. We hope as many parishioners as possible can join us for any portion of the clergy laity, but especially one or both of the evening banquets (Thursday or Friday), Thursday plenary and workshops, the Strategic Planning Retreat (Friday), and the Sunday Hierarchical Divine Liturgy (at St. Mary’s).

We would also like everyone to participate in some level of sponsorship. We are co-hosting this event and our goal is 100% member support as a gesture of Christian philoxenia/hospitality. Multiple persons/families can join together for larger sponsorships.

Finally, we also invite you to volunteer to help. Those opportunities are still evolving but we will communicate them to you as they are determined.

We thank everyone for their support. Please send in your sponsorship today!

Altar Servers’ Retreat
Saturday, August 24
Current altar servers are invited to a retreat at St. Mary’s on Saturday, August 24, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. More information will be available soon.

Twins Game Parish Outing
Sunday, August 25
Grab your glove and come on out to see the Twins win on Sunday, August 25, at 1:10! St. Mary’s will provide a bus to and from Target Field. The tickets are reserved for $25.00, which includes a hot dog and a soda. We will purchase the tickets so we all can sit near each other, but you are responsible to reimburse us for the ticket(s). Contact Jon Klein, jon@stmarysgoc.org, to reserve tickets.

American Legion Hellenic Post 129
100 Celebration Year!
Join us in celebrating 100 years with an outstanding dinner and program on Saturday, November 9, in St Mary’s Church Great Hall. Tickets for this event will go on sale in August. The cost of the $20 ticket is being underwritten by our Legion to keep prices affordable for everyone.

Catered by Georgia Sander, the sit-down Greek sampler plate dinner with wine will also include appetizers, champagne, and beer during cocktail hour.

Ticket chairmen for this event are Nick Kootsikas, 651.402.9777, and Joe Hodge, 952.546.0653.

Mark your calendars…you don’t want to miss a great evening!

Sunset Dinner Cruise
A summer fun event – American Legion Hellenic Post 129 members and Auxiliary, please watch your mail for specific information about our Lake Minnetonka sunset dinner cruise on Sunday, August 25.

Family Camp 2019

Saving Relationships:
How Marriage and Personhood Guided Us Toward the Kingdom
October 11-13, 2019
Do you love Summer Camp? Then join us for Family Camp!

Father Evan Armatas of Ancient Faith Radio’s “Orthodox Live,” and priest at Loveland, Colorado’s St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church, will be our guest presenter.

It is a wonderful way to learn, worship, and fellowship with our Twin Cities Orthodox family all while enjoying God’s awesome autumn! More information to follow.

Keep an eye on our camp website: www.stmaryscamp.com
by Paulette Hastings

In addition to the Philoptochos activities listed, there are teams of members working this month to buy and deliver school supplies to the children living at Healing House, design and set-up the children's area of the FOCUS House lobby, and make plans for another great year in Philoptochos. Your ideas are always welcome, too. Please share them with us!

Women's Book Club

August 7

The current read is Becoming Orthodox by Peter Gillquist, and books can be purchased in the church bookstore. The discussion will be held at church on Wednesday, August 7, after the Paraklesis Service, approximately 7:00 p.m.

NEW!

Suffering Presentation Rescheduled for August 13

Presvytera Thekla (Janis) Kostas will speak on suffering to a joint gathering of Senior Citizens and Philoptochos on Tuesday, August 13. Presvytera will talk about how to embrace suffering, learn from it, and see its purpose in life.

Lunch is served at 12:00 noon with the presentation starting by 12:45 p.m. Please RSVP at the Philoptochos table on Sundays or at MplsPhilo@gmail.com.

Feast Day Receptions on August 14 and 15

Philoptochos will host receptions after the evening Dormition Vespers and morning Liturgy. Stop by the Philoptochos table and offer your services to plan these events, and mark your calendar and attend the services: Vespers at 6:00 p.m. on August 14, Liturgy at 9:30 a.m. on August 15.

Festival Bake Sale Prep Continues

Summer is a time when Philoptochos gets support from so many people in (and outside of) the parish as we prepare for the Taste of Greece Bake Sale. We are so appreciative of the many people who attend our baking sessions in which we make thousands of cookies that are so loved by Festival guests. Thank you! Here's what's coming up in August:

- Baklava Sundae Baking: Saturday, August 17 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- Koulouria: Tuesday, August 20 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- Theples Fry Day: Monday, August 26 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
- Theples Honey Day: Wednesday, August 28 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- Baklava Sundae Grinding: Tuesday, August 29 3:00-6:00 p.m.

Additional help will be needed on September 3 and 4 as we package and set up the Bake Sale, plus during the Festival itself. Stop by the Philoptochos or Festival tables after church to volunteer, or via Sign-up Genius.

Upcoming Chicago Metropolis Events

Metropolis Philoptochos Conference Clergy-Laity Congress

- All are welcome to the observe meetings on September 26-28, 2019
- Location: Hyatt Regency Bloomington near Mall of America
- Hierarchical Liturgy and Luncheon at St. Mary’s on Sunday, September 29, 2019

Children’s Medical Fund Luncheon

Saturday, November 16

This year’s Children’s Medical Fund Luncheon will be held at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile. Tickets: $125 per person. Information: www.philoptochos.org/outreach/cmfsection/

Can't attend? Buy a raffle ticket ($10 each or three for $25) at the Philoptochos table, or make a personal or business donation. Donate online (www.philoptochos.org) or send checks payable to National Philoptochos (earmarked 2019 CMF) to National Philoptochos, 126 East 37th Street, New York, NY 10016. The Fund provides medical assistance to critically ill Greek, Greek American, and Orthodox children as well as grants for innovative research programs to pediatric hospitals throughout the United States and to organizations with special programs that care for children with critical and life threatening illnesses.

Thank You

- To Sandra Anderson, George Andreadakis, Lisa Gallmeyer, Paulette Hastings, Jayne Klatt and Willis Klatt, for hosting and providing dinner the first night of Families Moving Forward, and to the many friends who came to play with the children! A special shout-out to Philoptochos members Carol Karos

Continued on page 10.
Taste of Greece Mission Statement

*Bringing people together to experience Greek culture and faith while supporting philanthropy.*

We are in the home stretch of planning for the Taste of Greece 2019. Thank you for all the volunteers that have already given many hours to planning and baking!

**Volunteers – Volunteers – Volunteers**

As the Taste of Greece GROWS so does the need for VOLUNTEERS. The Festival is a fun way to come together as a parish community as well as to raise money for our charitable ministries. To make this all possible please help by finding a shift or two or three to sign up for. If you have a friend that would like to help please bring them with. With all our hard work we can make the Taste of Greece 2019 a success.

**All our hard work goes to support Philanthropy** – The Parable of the Good Samaritan *(Luke 10:25-37)*

- Feed the hungry - Joyce Food Shelf collects about a ton of food in exchange for food tickets.
- Welcome the stranger - All are welcome here!
- Clothe the naked - FOCUS Minnesota will be at the Festival to tell people about their work, plus cookbook sales will support their work.
- Visit the sick and imprisoned - Part of the money raised at the Festival supports our VIP and Prison Ministry programs, among many other things.

**Promote the Festival!**

- Pick up a yard sign and fliers
- Like the Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/mplsgreekfest](http://www.facebook.com/mplsgreekfest)
- Invite your friends to the Facebook event
- Follow us on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/mplsgreekfest](http://www.twitter.com/mplsgreekfest)

*Pray for a safe and fun weekend for all.*

*Thank you on behalf of the Festival Committee!*
Wouldn’t you love to spend a summer weekend getaway in beautiful Greece? Greece is a world famous summer vacation destination. People flock from all over the world to experience the amazing Mediterranean food, the music, the dancing, touring ancient Churches and Monasteries and spending time with Greek people.

This summer, experience a weekend getaway to Greece without leaving Minnesota at the St. George Greek Summer Festival in St. Paul, MN! Come and enjoy fresh baked Moussaka, Gyros, Lamb, Pork, and Chicken Souvlaki Dinners, Flaming Cheese (OPA!!!), and delectable Greek Pastries made with care by our wonderful bakers. Learn to Greek dance with the Greek Dancers of Minnesota, enjoy games for Kids, and tour the beautiful sanctuary of St. George Greek Orthodox Church.

FAITH DANCE FOOD MUSIC FUN!

for more info and to pre-order tickets

www.stgeorgegoc.org
Mission & Outreach

Kindness

We are all missionaries called to love one another in kindness and caring.

A Heart for Others

by Jean Bendaly, St. Mary’s Parishioner

“God bless you and your children and keep them safe.” Those are the words that I remember when I was about 8 or 10 years old, growing up in Tripoli, Lebanon, during the civil war. Those words were spoken by an elderly woman, a beggar sitting on the side of the street across from the church. My mother, my younger brother and I were just leaving after attending mass. She spotted the old woman and then decided to give my brother and I some change to give it to the elderly woman. I remember feeling sad after seeing the expression of pain and sadness on the face of the poor woman and how appreciative she was with the little change we had given her. “God bless you and your children and keep them safe,” she said lifting her head addressing my mother, her voice choking with emotion. My mother explained to my brother and I, after seeing the expression of confusion on our faces, that the old woman was most likely a homeless person who had lost her family and her house during the war. I understood somehow what she had said but it made me really sad and wished we could have done more. After that encounter, every time I was with my mother and we met a beggar, I would ask her to give me some change, so I could go and give it to that person in need. That made me feel good inside.

I finished high school in Lebanon but with the war still ongoing, I had decided to leave my home country to start college in the United States. I was 19 years old when I left, and as a young adult away from my parents, I recall one similar experience during my first year in college. One day, after finishing my lunch at a Subway restaurant and going to the parking lot to get into my car, I saw an elderly man pushing a cart very slowly, full of some personal belongings. He turned to me and asked if I could give him anything to eat. I held his arm, left his cart on the side and took him inside the Subway restaurant and bought him a sandwich while he was waiting for me at the table. I gave him the sandwich and took a few dollars from my wallet and gave it to him as well and told him to take care of himself. There were two or three young ladies, most probably college students sitting at the table next to where he was sitting. One of them told me that it was a very caring and nice gesture. I got into my car and left, but had the same feeling that I had before, wishing I could have done more but felt good that I did what I did.

Now, I am a 48-year-old married man with 10-year-old twin boys. I try as much as I can whenever I get the chance to make them understand that there are other people, including children, who are much less fortunate than they are; so, on occasions, when I see a homeless person on the street, I do the same thing that my mother has instilled in me by giving them change to hand it to them, hoping that one day when they grow up and become young adults they will be able to do that on their own and feel good by just helping the less fortunate when they have the opportunity to do so, even in the smallest way possible. Kindness doesn't cost a thing, yet it’s the richest gift you can give, its value is priceless.

Miremengjes!

(Good morning in Albanian)

It was our privilege to have as our guests on Sundays June 30 and July 7, Fr. Anastas and Presbytera Georgia Bendo and family, missionaries to Albania.

The Orthodox Church in Albania suffered persecution under Communist rule, but is no longer a Communist country and the right to worship has been restored with the help of missionaries. OCMC ministry teams assist Orthodox communities throughout Albania and around the world.

Fr. Anastas and Presbytera Georgia shared their mission work and the history of Orthodoxy in Albania during their visit. Fr. Anastas is a translator for

His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of Albania and serves at the Cathedral of the Resurrection in Tirana and Presbytera Georgia has been a Missionary with OCMC and is the director of an English language school supported by the orthodox church (Protagonists Albanian American school).

St. Mary’s Missions and Outreach Committee sponsored a luncheon on Sunday, July 7, for the Bendos as they raised awareness and funds to support their work in Albania.

How can we support missionaries in Albania...
and other Orthodox communities?

— Through your prayers and contributions.

Please remember the Bendo family in your prayers as they help rebuild the Orthodox Church in Albania.

You can mail contributions for the Bendos and other missionaries to the Orthodox Christian Missionary Center.

Mailing address:
OCMC
220 Mason Manatee Way
St. Augustine, FL 32086

Or make a donation on-line by going to:
www.ocmc.org/donate/

Click on “Support a Missionary,” then look for Georgia Gilman-Bendo (or another missionary you’d like to support).

Thank You to St. Mary’s 79 Volunteers!

Sunday, June 23, saw 79 folks join together in the Terrace Room to pack over 15,000 meals for local food shelves!

We packed 15,760 meals for local food shelves with Harvest Pack.

There is no feeling like working together for the good of others.

Which food shelves will share the meal packs?
FOCUS, Community Emergency Service (CES), and Joyce Food Shelf

A few comments about the day:
“Everyone was having a wonderful time and many of them said they felt good doing this.” —Cheryl Dragotis

“Thanks for organizing the Harvest Pack Event today, it was great fun! We are so glad to have opportunities like this where we can get to know each other better!” —John and Terri Leckas
FOCUS MINNESOTA ANNUAL FUNDRAISER!

Celebrate a very special year with us!

Learn about FOCUS House, our new center

Find out how you can be a part of our ongoing work to support those in need in the Twin Cities

FOOD, DRINKS, AND DANCING
Free and Open to the Public!

RSVP to: focustwincities@gmail.com
or Vera Proctor, 651.324.2705

Thursday, August 15, 2019
St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church
3450 Irving Ave. South
Minneapolis 55408
6:30-9:00 p.m.

Philoptochos News, continued

and Donna Psios for coordinating the entire Families Moving Forward program.

• To Elena Gabor, for chairing the baklava baking for the Festival. In her words, “Who would have thought the year we’re making a record number of pans of baklava that we’d finish over a day ahead of schedule? This is all due to a HUGE turnout of volunteers to help in all aspects of the baklava process: assembly, cutting, cloving, syruping, and freezing. Thank you one and all for making this year’s baklava project the best ever. It was a blessing to have such great groups of helpers who made this so successful and fun. Many hands DID lighten the load. Thank you ALL so very much.”

• To the Baklava Team: Bob Baffa, Nick J. Boosalis, Maria Estep, Kathy Finsand, Marina Gabor, Sean Gabor, Zoe Gabor, Jim Geogleris, Christine Gresser, Nancy Hartwig, Linda Hodge, Jayne Klatt, Sofia Johnson, Annette Legeros, Krysta Legeros, Sue Legeros, Naira Istephanous, Diane Jackson, Kristina Matsch, Kathy Moffat, Sasha Nicolle, Stephanie & Alexandra Panos, Mary Risacher, Alexis Rouches, Suzanne Schilling, Ann Theodotou, Mary Kay Twito, Dana Zoupas.

• To Sofia Johnson for organizing the 12-hour Days for Girls Day of Service. Fifty-three reusable menstruation kits were assembled, with many being hand delivered to girls and women in El Salvador.
FOCUS Program and Opportunities

Clothes Closet
Open twice a week for customers
• Open Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. and Thursdays, 4:00-7:00 p.m.
• Volunteers are needed each week to prepare (Mondays, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.) and assist customers (Thursdays, 3:30-7:30 p.m.)
• Bring new or clean, gently used clothing and shoes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Food Distribution
Twice a month on Fridays from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Volunteers are needed from 4:00-7:00 p.m. Call FOCUS for dates.

NEW: Resume and Cover Letter Assistance
• Geared toward young people, those making life changes, and the previously unemployed. Offered one evening per week.
• Volunteers with related skills are needed. Call FOCUS for dates and to volunteer.

NEW: Reception Desk Staffing
• In addition to welcoming clients and friends, duties include client intake, answering telephone inquiries, and assisting with projects as needed.
• Staffing can be shared by multiple people.

NEW: Preschool Storytime with Parent Education
• Weekly program for families with young children.
• Volunteers are needed to read to preschoolers while parents attend educational classes.

FOCUS Wish List
Contact FOCUS if you're able to fulfill a need:
• Gutters: purchased and installed
• Microsoft Office 365 software package
• 12-cup coffee maker
• 8 kick-down door stops
• 3 battery operated wall clocks
• 2 movable stanchions
• 1 backdoor doorbell

To volunteer or for more information, contact FOCUS at FocusTwinCities@gmail.com or 651-324-2705.

Families Moving Forward
With generosity and joy, we have welcomed four families into the church for two weeks providing a home for them. Thank you to the many volunteers who provide leadership, cooked, played, and stayed overnight. Thanks to those involved with set-up and laundry services. Our church staff is remarkable getting our communication out and preparing rooms for the guests. Your cash donations are also greatly appreciated! Thank God for this opportunity to show love and hospitality to these families in need. Please continue to keep all in prayer.

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

Thank You VCS Staff and Helpers!
On behalf of Fr. Jason, Dena Tortorelis and Krissa Rovolis (Directors of VCS), we would like to thank the volunteers below for their time and commitment to helping make Vacation Church School a success this year:

Adult Helpers
Diane Achterling, Georgia Andron, Kris Boosalis, Patty Christopulos, Vicki Chronakos, Vicky DiGiovanni, Christina Doukas, Nancy Gallos, Natalie Hideg, Fifi Kafkas, John Kafkas, Mary Kafkas, Hope Kennedy, Jon Klein, Demetra Kordopitoulas, Angela Koumoutzis, Aggie Koutroupas, Angie Maragos, Marissa Mortari, Roxanne Muchulas, Tia Muchulas, Bea Murdakes, Cristina Nicklow, Nancy Peters, Veula Possis, Maria Prassas, Chrissie Rakes, Elizabeth Saaathoff, David Shipp, Rafif Simon, Sia Tortorelis, Fr. Mircea Vasiu

Crew Helpers-Grades 7-12
Sophia Angelos, Eva Barnes, Kirubel Birhane, Danielle Brown, Edward Buss, Marina DiGiovanni, Makayla Merdan, Callie O’Donnell, Billy Paraschou, Isabell Tiggas, Perry Tortorelis

Office Support
David Mertesdorf, Julie Moricz, Bob Yang

Also, a SPECIAL thank you to Terri Leckas from Queen of Cakes for donating over 100 cookies to VCS!
In the Bookstore

by Rebecca Myerly

The month of August brings us to the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, and with it the celebration of the feast day of our church. It is thus appropriate to feature a book focusing on the Virgin Mary. *Mother of the Light* is a beautiful book for anyone seeking to grow in appreciation and gratitude for the Mother of God and her role in our salvation. Recently published by Newrome Press, this book includes thirteen prayers to the Most Holy Theotokos and three canons to the All-Holy Theotokos, all beautifully translated by the Very Reverend Archimandrite Maximos Contras—who many will remember from the informative and enlightening Lenten retreat he led here at St. Mary’s last year. Father Maximos wrote a superb introduction to this book, in which he explains the role of the Theotokos. His introduction opens with the following:

To understand the Theotokos is to understand the mystery of the Church. Those, on the other hand, who misunderstand the Theotokos, and who distort her role and significance, fundamentally misunderstand and distort the Christian faith as a whole. Without continuous reference to the Theotokos in the history of salvation and in the life of the Church, there can be no genuine devotion or theology.

Father Maximos then explains what we know about the Theotokos from Scripture and from “the official dogmatic statements of the Church."

This mysterious, hidden presence of the Mother of God in Scripture and theology points to a still deeper foundation. Devotion to the Theotokos has always been an essential part of the Church’s inner life, the heart and soul of its spiritual and mystical tradition.... (T)he Theotokos (is the) model of the spiritual life. She is the type and paradigm of perfection for every Christian, the archetype of the identity of their life in Christ.

The prayers and canons included in this book are all based on this awareness, written with great humility and gratitude by patristic and Byzantine writers. Although the prayers are difficult to date, at least some of them are thought to be “at least as old as, and in some cases likely older than, the ninth century.” More is known about the Saints who wrote the three canons included in this book: Saint Theodore the Studite (759-826), Saint Methodios I of Constantinople (who was patriarch from 843-847), and Saint John of Euchaita (ca. 1000-ca. 1080). By reading Father Maximos’s introduction and the “Notes on the Translation” included at the end of the book, readers will augment their appreciation for—and understanding of—the prayers and canons. In addition to the text, three exquisite icons of the Theotokos with Christ are included. Beautifully bound in a size suitable for carrying in a pocket or purse, *Mother of the Light* is meant to be a lasting companion for the reader seeking the divine companionship and intercession of the Theotokos.

August 30-September 1, 2019

Join other Orthodox families at the St. Iakovos Retreat Center in Kansasville, Wisconsin over Labor Day weekend for a fun-filled time reconnecting with your family and with God. Retreat leader Fr. Josiah Trenham is a priest, father of 10, podcaster, and speaker, will be this year’s retreat leader. His theme is: “Spiritual Athleticism in Family Life.” There will be interactive sessions for children ages three and older and teens, fun outdoor activities and time for worship and fellowship. Find out more, and also to register, at: www.GOCFamilySynaxis.org. Registration is now open. Register by August 14 to receive the best rate.
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.

**Dormition Retreat**

► **Wednesday, August 14, 4:00-6:00 p.m.**

We will be decorating the **Kouvouklion** for the Theotokos, having a lesson, and other fun events leading up to Vespers. Following the retreat, Great Vespers will be held at 6:00 p.m. 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.

**IOCC Houston**

Please keep the IOCC Homebuild team (Sheff, Athena, Jon, Marina, Joseph, Elias, Vasili, Audrey, and Sophia) in your prayers as we go to Houston and rebuild a home for the flood victims from August 5-10.

**June Recap**

In June, the Junior GOYAns went to the Roller Garden for their end of year party and got our groove on! The Senior GOYAns group had an end-of-year pool party at the Nicklow’s home where we wished our graduating seniors the best of luck on their future endeavors.

**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.

**Coffee Shop One-on- Ones**

This summer, we are trying to do something new here at St. Mary’s to get to know your children better. Towards the middle to the end of the summer, Jon will be going to different coffee shops around the Twin Cities Metro, and be there in case your child would like to meet up and talk for 10-15 minutes. These “one-on-one” meetings is an informal way for Jon to get to know your kids and for the kids to get to know him as well. They can chat about anything - how their summer is going, activities they are involved in, sports, music, Church, and anything else they would like to talk about. Knowing that a lot of our parishioners commute 20-30 minutes to our parish, we thought this would be a good idea to get closer to your neighborhoods. This program will be for the rising 3-12 graders. We have started with 6 locations. Depending on how this goes, we may add more days/times. If no one signs up, Jon will not be at the location. He will email you a day before the meet time to let you know that the meeting will be canceled. The time slots will be 15 minutes long, but you can sign up for more than one slot if you’d like. If you have questions, email jon@stmarysgoc.org. To sign up, visit this link: https://tinyurl.com/StMarysOneOnOnes

Some locations that I have chosen are:

1. Caribou in Roseville, 2714 Lincoln Drive
   July 29, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

2. Starbucks in Burnsville, 1310 County Rd. 42 W.
   July 30, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

3. Caribou Coffee in Minnetonka
   6001 Shady Oak Road
   August 1, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

4. Starbucks in Maple Grove
   7979 Wedgewood Lane North
   August 20, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

5. Starbucks in St. Paul, 1470 South Robert Street
   August 21, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

6. Caribou in Minneapolis (by St. Mary’s)
   3044 Excelsior Boulevard
   August 22, 3:00-5:00 p.m.
The Dormition of the Theotokos
August 15

August 14
Eve of the Dormition
4:00-6:00 p.m. - Youth Retreat
6:00 p.m. - Great Vespers
Reception follows

August 15
The Dormition of the Theotokos
8:30 a.m. - Orthros
9:30 a.m. - Divine Liturgy
Reception follows

In giving birth, you preserved your virginity, O Theotokos; in falling asleep you did not forsake the world. You passed over into life, O Mother of Life; and by your prayers you deliver our souls from death!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<th>Friday</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Dormition Fast Begins</td>
<td>2 7:00am-Men's Fellowship</td>
<td>3 9:00am-Bible Study</td>
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<td>6:00pm-Paraklesis</td>
<td>6:00pm-Paraklesis</td>
<td>5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
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<td>4 Seventh Sunday of Matthew</td>
<td>5 Eve of Transfiguration</td>
<td>6 Holy Transfiguration</td>
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<tr>
<td>“The Messenger” Deadline</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>6:00pm-Paraklesis</td>
<td>3:00pm-Baklava Sundaes Prep.</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>7:00pm-Greek Dance Practice</td>
<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>7:00pm-Open Gym</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>6:00pm-Paraklesis</td>
<td>Potluck Lunch follows Liturgy</td>
<td>7:00pm-Paraklesis</td>
<td>Reception follows Liturgy</td>
<td>6:30pm-FOCUS Fundraiser</td>
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<td>11 Eighth Sunday of Matthew</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13 Eve of Dormition</td>
<td>14 Eve of Holy Dormition</td>
<td>15 Dormition of the Theotokos</td>
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<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>6:00pm-Paraklesis</td>
<td>12:00noon-Senior Citizens</td>
<td>1:00pm-Adult Senior Bible Study</td>
<td>Church Office Closed</td>
<td>9:00am-Bible Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>7:00pm-Greek Dance Practice</td>
<td>6:00pm-Paraklesis</td>
<td>4:00pm-Youth Retreat</td>
<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>10:00am-Baklava Sundaes Prep.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:45am-Mission/Outreach</td>
<td>7:00pm-Parish Council</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
<td>6:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>11:00am-Altar Server Retreat</td>
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<td>18 Ninth Sunday of Matthew</td>
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<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>6:00pm-Greek Dance Practice</td>
<td>9:30am-Koulouria Baking</td>
<td>9:00am-“The Messenger” Mailing</td>
<td>6:30pm-Stewardship Com.</td>
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<td>9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>6:00pm-Greek Festival Mtg.</td>
<td>6:00pm-Open Gym</td>
<td>6:30pm-Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>7:00pm-Edina Koinonia</td>
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<td>11:45am-Mission/Outreach</td>
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<td>25 Tenth Sunday of Matthew</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29 Beheading of John the Baptist</td>
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<td>8:30am-Orthros</td>
<td>9:00am-Diples Frying</td>
<td>6:00pm-Open Gym</td>
<td>9:00am-Diples Honeying</td>
<td>9:00am-Altar Server Retreat</td>
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<td>1:00pm-Adult Senior Bible Study</td>
<td>9:30am-Diples Honeying</td>
<td>10:00am-Baklava Sundaes Prep.</td>
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<td>1:10pm-Twins Game Outing</td>
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<td>3:00pm-Baklava Sundaes Prep.</td>
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<td>5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
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