November 2019

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A Message from Father George

Father George Dokos, Proistamenos

“The Lord looked favorably upon Abel and his gifts, but for Cain and his sacrifices He had no regard.”

—Genesis 4:4-5

Beloved in Christ, when God created Adam and Eve, He set them over His “very good” creation to be caretakers and stewards of it, meaning, they were to tend to everything God had made and offer back to Him sacrifices of thanksgiving. This means that the human vocation is priestly in nature – we are all called by God to instinctively turn to Him in worship with gifts and offerings. It is no wonder, then, that the first two sons of Adam and Eve – Cain and Abel – naturally offered sacrifices to God of the good things He had blessed them with. Why then did God accept Abel's offerings, but not Cain's? Did God prefer lamb to fruits and vegetables? The answer is to be found in Genesis 4:3-4 where we read: “In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions.” The understanding of this passage arises from a comparison between the two offerings as to their inner quality, reflective of the inner state of heart of those who made the offerings. Cain's failure is precisely a failure to offer to God the 'first' and the 'best.' St. John Chrysostom illumines this scripture for us:

“Abel brought an offering of the firstborn of his flock, and in fact the fattest and best of them. Notice how the text hints to us of the piety of this man's attitude, and the fact that he did not casually offer just any one of his sheep, but one of the firstborn, that is, from the valuable and special ones. In Cain’s case, on the contrary, nothing of the kind is suggested; rather, he brought an offering of the fruits of the earth, as if to say, whatever came to hand, without any display of zeal or precise care.”

Brothers and sisters, what is your offering to God? What is the state of your inner heart when you give back to God a portion of what He has blessed you with? We must all ask ourselves when considering our offering to Christ's Church whether we want to be Cain or Abel. Are our gifts the best they can be? Do we offer them with love and care? Are they from the first things we receive, or are they leftovers?

Reflecting on these things, dear friends, let us then offer our very best in imitation of Righteous Abel so that the Lord might look down favorably upon us and our offerings.

With love in Christ,
+Fr. George

Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, November 3, 2:00 a.m.
Set your clocks back one hour before retiring Saturday night!
Our Life Together

Baptism

Alexander Kingston
Parents: Daniel & Katerena Krmpotich
October 5, 2019

Marriage

Jacob Garner to Christiana Chresand
September 21, 2019

Share YourShelf

November’s recipient of Share YourShelf contributions is FOCUS Minnesota.

Sunday, November 3
Oatmeal or Cream of Wheat®
Sunday, November 10
Baby formula
Sunday, November 17
Hygiene items
(toothpaste, soap, shampoo, etc.)
Sunday, November 24
Canned meat
(e.g. tuna, chicken)

Please consider making a monetary donation. Through a partnership with the Food Group, the food shelves we support are able purchase staple food items at a marked reduction in price. This means that your donated dollars go farther — almost doubling the money you give to purchase much needed food items.

“It is not enough to be compassionate; you must act.”
— the Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, 1992

Memorial Prayers

Sunday, November 17
Christina (Apostolou) Zoitos (7 years)

Thank You

I am grateful for the cards, phone calls and most especially for the prayers as I recover from surgery. —Linda Hodge

Thank you for your prayers, volunteer hours, donations, and sponsorships for the Clergy-Laity Conference last month. It is much appreciated!
—Co-Chair Georgia Andron

A Huge Thank You from MCP

The board and all volunteers at the Medical Crisis Program thank you all for your continued support towards MCP’s mission. The Annual Gala which took place September 15 was the most successful gala event yet! Due to your support MCP will be able to award a number of grants totaling $15,000 or more for 2020!

Save the date for next year’s Annual GALA which will take place Sunday, September 20!

Joan Spell has moved and asked us to share with her St. Mary’s family her new address. It is:
Brookdale
3330 Edinborough Way, #514
Edina, MN 55435
952.831.0893

Thanksgiving Eve Pan-Orthodox Vesperal Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, November 27
6:00 p.m.
Saint George Greek Orthodox Church
1111 Lexington Avenue, St. Paul
by Richard Barrett

Three years ago in the fall, shortly after I started chanting at my current parish, my priest came to me and said, “I want to do a Sarantaleitourgo for the Nativity Fast.”

“A what, now?” I understood that somehow we were talking about the number forty and liturgy, but I had never heard the term before.

“I want to serve a daily Divine Liturgy throughout the fast,” he said. “It’s a great honor and blessing to be able to do this in Greece, and I believe our community needs it.”

There is a tradition of a forty day period of daily Divine Liturgies in multiple contexts in the Orthodox world: it is customary for newly-ordained priests to celebrate daily for the first forty days after their ordination, it can be offered for the living and the departed, and it can be an observance of the Nativity Fast. The Nativity Fast observance appears to be a Greek practice primarily, although Slavs will offer forty Divine Liturgies (Sorokoust, a title that borrows the Greek word for forty) for the living and the dead.

To offer forty Divine Liturgies before Christmas is a marked difference in character between the Nativity Fast and Great Lent. During the Triodion period, the Church’s normative liturgical practice is to allow Divine Liturgy only on Saturday and Sunday, save for the feast of the Annunciation and the Wednesday and Friday of the week after Meatfare; this is why we have Liturgies of the Presanctified Gifts during Lent. Forty Divine Liturgies are impossible during this fast.

For the forty days before Christmas, however, there is no barrier to serving a daily Divine Liturgy. Thus, for the last four winter fasts, my priest has ensured that we have done exactly that.

Daily services are an immeasurable blessing for me... The opportunity to begin my day with Divine Liturgy draws me like a moth to a flame.

It is a commonplace to distinguish between two different senses of time embedded into our liturgical language. There is chronos, the time measured by our clocks, the world’s time; there is also kairos, or the timelessness we ought to experience in church – Καιρός τοῦ ποιῆσαι τῷ Κυρίῳ (“It is time for the Lord to act,” as the deacon says at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy). For me, the forty Divine Liturgies of the Nativity Fast are an opportunity to experience more fully as kairos a period that has come to be largely defined by chronos. On the 21st of November, the Entrance of the Virgin, the Christmas Katavasies are sung, and “Christ is born! Glorify him!” is proclaimed for the first time of the season. Shortly thereafter, the Kontakion for the Forefeast of Christmas is sung for the first time. The daily experience begins to feel somewhat like a dream by the middle of December, and by the time the Royal Hours of Christmas roll around, I can hardly believe that the season is nearly over.

If I am honest about it, my mornings during the Nativity Fast are really little more than a temporary shelter, a brief respite rather than a turning of the tide. Even so, the routine of that brief respite on a daily basis makes the daily Divine Liturgies a treasure that I look forward to now, and make me grateful for the daily services that are offered outside of this season.

Even if you do not attend a parish that observes Sarantaleitourgo during the Fast, I encourage you to take advantage of whatever additional services may be offered. I believe you will find that they add tremendous clarity to the journey and meaning of the season.

Richard Barrett is protopsaltis of Holy Dormition Greek Orthodox Church in Somerville, MA. He has a B.Mus. in Vocal Performance from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, and is a PhD candidate in Byzantine and medieval history at Indiana University, with additional work in ethnomusicology and Modern Greek Studies. Previous to joining the AGES staff, he was Director of Development for Suzuki School of Newton. In 2010 he founded the Saint John of Damascus Society, which supports public outreach and educational activities related to Orthodox liturgical music.

Richard is also the co-host of one of Ancient Faith Radio’s newest podcasts, A Sacrifice of Praise.

Original article found at: https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/timeeternal/40-days-of-divine-liturgy/
Education • Fellowship • Worship

Fellowship and Study Groups

**Adult Senior Bible Study**
On Winter break

**Intercessory Prayer**
Wednesdays, November 6 and 20
10:30 a.m., Nave Chapel

**Men's Fellowship**
Friday, November 1
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, November 12
12:00 noon, Terrace Room

**Women's Bible Study**
Wednesdays, November 6 and 20
11:00 a.m., Fireside Room

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**Koinonia**

**Edina Koinonia**
No November gathering

**Lake Calhoun Koinonia**
Sunday, November 24, 5:00 p.m.
Fr. George & Presbytera Christa's home
612.825.1067

**Northeast Metro Koinonia**
**Date and time to be announced**
Paul & Jenny Hibberd's home
763.723.5681

**South of the River Koinonia**
**Date and time to be announced**
Mark & Elizabeth Skoog's home
612.743.2789

**Western Koinonia**
Sunday, November 17, 7:00 p.m.
Gus & Cristina Nicklow's home
952.476.7624

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

**Weekday Schedule**

**Friday, November 1**
**Saints Cosmas and Damianos**
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

**Friday, November 8**
**Synaxis of the Archangels**
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

**Saturday, November 9**
**Saint Nektarios**
Orthros – 9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 10:00 a.m.

**Wednesday, November 13**
**Saint John Chrysostom**
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

**Thursday, November 14**
**Saint Philip**
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.

chedule continues below.

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The Sarantaleitourgo

*(40 Divine Liturgies) for the Nativity Fast*

**November**

15………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
16………………………10:00-11:00 a.m.
   **Saint Matthew**
17………………………………Sunday 9:30 a.m.
18………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
19………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
20………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
21………………………………9:30-10:30 a.m.
   **Entrance of the Theotokos**
22………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
23………………………………8:00-9:00 a.m.
24………………………………Sunday 9:30 a.m.
25………………………………9:30-10:30 a.m.
   **Saint Katherine**
26………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
27………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
28………………………………… No Liturgy
29………………………………… No Liturgy
30………………………………10:00-11:00 a.m.
   **Saint Andrew**

**December**

1………………………………Sunday 9:30 a.m.
2………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
3………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
4………………………………9:30-10:30 a.m.
   **Saint Barbara**
5………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
6………………………………9:30-10:30 a.m.
   **Saint Nicholas**
7………………………………8:00-9:00 a.m.
8………………………………Sunday 9:30 a.m.
9………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
10……………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
11……………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
12………………………………9:30-10:30 a.m.
   **Saint Spyridon**
13………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
14………………………………8:00-9:00 a.m.
15………………………………Sunday 9:30 a.m.
16………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
17………………………………9:30-10:30 a.m.
   **Daniel and the Three Holy Youths**
18………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
19………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
20………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
21………………………………8:00-9:00 a.m.
22………………………………Sunday 9:30 a.m.
23………………………………7:00-8:00 a.m.
24………………………………4:00 p.m.
   **Eve of Nativity**
25………………………………10:00 a.m.
   **Holy Nativity**
Pan Orthodox Tea

**Saturday, November 9**

The eleventh Twin Cities Pan-Orthodox Tea is hosted by St. Mary’s Orthodox Cathedral. Details are in the Philoptochos column on page 6. For further information, contact Karen Schwebach, schh99@msn.com

Summer Camp Staff Applications

**Due November 30**

Have you thought about applying as a staff member for Summer Camp, July 4-10, 2020? We WELCOME applications from our Pan-Orthodox Community!

Please prayerfully consider this amazing ministry!

Applications are due November 30, 2019.

Questions? Please contact Doria at 612.825.9595, or doria@stmarysgoc.org.

To apply, please go to http://youth.stmarysgoc.org/

There are 3 steps:

1. If new to this site, please create a NEW account using a NEW password. If returning, please sign in with your username and password. Please remember that the “forgot your password” link will send your password to the same email that you initially used. The retrieved password frequently ends up in spam or junk mail. If you still don’t receive your password within 15 minutes Jon Klein or Doria Saros can reset it for you.

2. Create/Update a Profile.

3. Register for Summer Camp 2020

American Legion Hellenic Post 129

**100 Celebration Year!**

**Saturday, November 9, 2019**

~ St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church Great Hall ~

Our Post and Auxiliary look forward to this very special occasion and have worked to make this a memorable evening of interesting speakers, delicious food, and entertainment. A personal memorabilia display has also been added to this fabulous program, serving as both valuable war/service family history and a way of honoring our veterans and their families for their sacrifice. The $20 tickets have been underwritten by Post 129 to allow tickets to be affordable to all of our guests. Please join us! Purchase your tickets after Liturgy on Sundays until November 3.

The 100th anniversary gala celebration is open to non-military and the general public.

Travel Opportunities

**Intensive Study of Icons in St. Petersburg**

Due to the success of the Russia 2019 trip, plans are underway to visit St. Petersburg from April 21-29, 2020.

The trip will include an intensive study of the icon collection at the State Russian Museum led by an expert at the museum, who will also deliver lectures during our stay. Additional optional tours at an extra charge and arranged by Deb’s connections will be available. A possible day excursion to Novgorod will be advised and scheduled for the group which would also include a very detailed tour of the icons at its icon museum.

This pilgrimage event is intended to offer the traveler greater freedom without commitments to a traditional daily tour itinerary. Individuals will have the opportunity to choose the places and amount of time spent at those choices. A group meeting will take place in December to gather together tentative plans.

There is room for a group of 10 reservations. Deb will facilitate the visa application process. Visa, travel insurance, meals outside of breakfast, and optional tours are not included.

Please call Deb at 612.889.5868 or email, akorluka@aol.com. The package price will include air, hotel (breakfast included), airport transfer, and lectures at the State Russian Museum.

**Holy Land Pilgrimage**

Join Tom and Mary Rudquist (St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church members) on their 2020 pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The dates are set for September 19-28. The pilgrimage is limited to 25. If interested or have questions, please contact Tom via e-mail: abousean@yahoo.com, or telephone: 651.890.6817

**Holiday Bake and Craft Sale**

The annual Daughters of Penelope Holiday Bake and Craft Sale takes place after Liturgy on Sunday, November 24. Come and stock up on a variety of gourmet treats and craft items for the upcoming holidays. Thank you in advance for your support.

**Lakewood Cemetery Plots Wanted**

A St. Mary’s parishioner would like to purchase two cemetery plots in the St. Mary’s section of Lakewood Cemetery. If anyone knows of availability, please contact Mike DeMoss at lawreview@mac.com or 952.913.7048.
LAST CHANCE to Support the Children's Medical Fund!

- 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.
- Buy a Raffle Ticket ($10 each or 3 for $25) at the Philoptochos table on Sunday for the chance to win a luxurious prize AND fund research to help sick children.

Twin Cities Pan-Orthodox Tea
Saturday, November 9, 2:00-4:30 p.m.

The 11th bi-annual gathering for Orthodox Christian Women of Minnesota is on Saturday, November 9, 2:00-4:30 p.m., at St. Mary’s Orthodox Cathedral Parish Center, 1701 5th Street NE, Minneapolis. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share, and plan to attend Vespers at 5:00 p.m. No RSVP needed.

Days for Girls Service Project Returns!
Tuesday, November 26

Come to the Terrace Room any time between 3:00-9:00 p.m. help make parts and assemble Days for Girls kits. These kits have all that’s needed for a girl or woman to manage her period...plus it’s washable and can be used for about three years! A brief Philoptochos meeting will take place at 7:00 p.m.

Coming in December
- Decorate for Christmas!
- Pan-Orthodox Women’s Retreat at St. Mary’s GOC on December 7.
- Vasilopita Sales to support St. Basil Academy.
- No Board or General Meetings.

FOCUS House Update
by Cheryl Dragotis, Philoptochos FOCUS House Representative

FOCUS House Cleaning
FOCUS is in need of people to clean FOCUS House weekly. Cleaning includes vacuuming, cleaning the bathrooms, refilling paper towel and toilet paper dispensers, and emptying trash. Estimated time is 3-4 hours. A stipend is available.

Sandwich Program for School Kids
FOCUS House provides 200 lunches for the children at the St. Paul City School. For some children, this is the only food they have between school and the breakfast provided by the school the following morning. The cost for preparing each bagged lunch is $2. FOCUS is in need of donations to help fund this ministry.

Sunday Dinners
Sunday dinners at FOCUS will begin again on Sunday, October 27. More information on hospitality groups will follow.
One of the greatest perennial challenges to one’s spiritual journey is the quest for time to spend in meaningful prayer and lectio divina, or holy reading. While the holiday season is an easy time to feel overwhelmed, I often struggle to quiet the little voice in the back of my head that tells me to wait for the perfect time to pray, only to find myself having rushed through the acrobatics of a busy day (and at the end of my evening) feeling like I have no energy left with which to give proper glory to God.

But here’s the thing—the Scriptures should feel like the close friend you can’t imagine a day without, not the distant relative that you only see at family weddings or graduation parties. Many areas of the Bible are meant for everyday reading, and the Psalms are perhaps the most relatable book for everyday life. King David cries out, complains, rejoices, reflects, atones, pleads, and converses with the Lord throughout the Psalms, and Sylvia Leontaritis’ Song of Praise: A Psalter Devotional for Orthodox Women (Ancient Faith Publishing, 2018) allows readers to approach the Psalms as a companion throughout the twenty-day cycle of prayer created by the kathismata.

Designed to be read during the forty-day fasts of Advent and Lent, Songs of Praise embraces and celebrates the prayerfulness of women by unifying them in the daily reading of Psalms. In addition to being an accomplished author, Leontaritis is a wife and mother of three boys with an active blog, Adventures of an Orthodox Mom, which provides a valuable online community of wholesome and spiritually nourishing conversations for women at all stages of their lives. Each kathisma in Songs of Praise is designed to be read in twenty minutes or less, beginning with a prayer, followed by the psalms for the day, a meditation from Leontaritis, and ending with a small prayer. Every meditation accompanying the Psalms is written to promote further thought and resonate with current areas of discussion in our changing world. Topics include “Sisterhood in Christ,” “Beauty in the Broken,” “The Orthodox Home,” “Seek Him in the Wilderness,” “The So-Called Perfect Life,” “The Pharisee in Me,” “Unsocial Media,” “Raising Arrows,” and one of my favorites, “Do Good Better.” In many ways, Leontaritis channels the struggles and enthusiasm of King David into a twenty-first century text aimed at the concerns that Orthodox women now find themselves lifting up to God. She is not afraid to scratch away the mask of perfection that so many of us may feel compelled to wear, and the humility that comes from pondering her words has been a welcome influence on my spiritual journey this year.

While I began reading Songs of Praise at the start of 2019, I found it kindled a light that led to a regular practice of reading the Psalms throughout the year. Songs of Praise is a doorway to making Scripture accessible, particularly to women. Given the blessed encouragement of His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael’s recent words to the girls and women of St. Mary’s to study the Scriptures, I recommend this book as a gift to all the women in your life. There’s an online community that joins in prayer groups during Lent and Advent to pray each kathisma together, and regular reading provides a daily practice of savoring the Psalms that can train the mind to extend to regular reading of the whole Bible. With time, the spiritual armor of the sacred Word will help quiet the voices that say we must only offer perfection to God or otherwise remain silent before Him. In gratitude for the grace of God in this text, let us turn our minds to the words of Abba Macarius*:

There is no need to make long discourses; it is enough to stretch out one’s hands and say, ‘Lord as you will and as you know, have mercy.’ And if the conflict grows fiercer say, ‘Lord, help!’ God knows very well what we need and He will show us mercy.

St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church
Application for Nomination to the Parish Council

Qualifications for all Council Candidates:

#1 Must be spiritually, canonically, and financially in good standing:
   A. Spiritually: Attend Divine Services regularly; active participant in the sacraments; uphold the teachings and traditions of the Church.
   B. Canonically: If married, married in the Orthodox Church; if divorced, must have an ecclesiastical divorce. Must live his/her life and activities in accordance with the faith and canons of the Church.
   C. Financially: Must be a member in good standing of the parish for at least one full year immediately preceding the date of elections.

#2 Must be willing to take the following oath of office:

   I do solemnly swear that I will uphold the dogma, teachings, traditions, holy canons, worship, and moral principles of the Greek Orthodox Church, as well as the constitutional charter, discipline, and regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, and that I will fulfill, faithfully and sincerely, the duties and obligations required of a member of the Parish Council, so help me God.

Responsibilities of all Council Members:

#1 To be an active participant in the sacramental life of the Church, thereby setting an example for the parish.
#2 To oversee the financial aspects of the Church, assist with its’ overall administration in a fiduciary manner, and aid the Priest in in the fulfillment of the Church’s aim and purpose.
#3 To devote the necessary time and give of your talents and expertise to administer the programs, policies, activities and affairs of the parish, according to the Uniform Parish Regulations and the parish Bylaws.
#4 To support, participate in, and fully advance all majority decisions of the Parish Council.

Current Parish Strategic Objectives:

#1 Provide a welcoming, loving, spiritually rich environment for members and guests.
#2 Increase the engagement of our youth and young adults, providing meaningful opportunities for them to grow in faith.
#3 Clarify, enhance, and advance the roles and expectations of our various ministries including the Foundation, Stewardship, Missions and Outreach, Ushers, Real Estate, and Long-Range Planning, utilizing our shared gifts as individuals and a parish community to further our mission.
#4 Enrich communication, engagement, and participation in all initiatives and activities of St. Mary’s.
Reaching Out
Are you a Go-To Person?

Why is reaching out so important? What a difference it can make when you say “Hi” and especially if you invite that person to sit with you as you celebrate the Liturgy! Put yourself in the shoes of a visitor and you are soon convinced – it makes all the difference! Recently, an Orthodox visitor talked with us. He had questions and accepted our offer to call us and noted our phone number. That is an important way that you can offer your acceptance and encouragement. (“Call us, if you have a question.”) You can also call them if you are going to attend an event and invite them to attend.

Naturally, most people need to call the Church Office and that is the first place to contact. But for many others it is good to have a go-to person. Be a go-to person. You can describe your own involvement in church ministries or offer an introduction to a member who has hands-on experience with a ministry.

St. Mary’s is very blessed with helping hands including go-to persons willing to encourage others. “Give me a call.” We are all glad to help like we or members of our family have been helped.

Harvest Pack
Sunday, November 3

Please check your calendar for November 3, for 30,000 meals to help families especially during the upcoming cold weather to have food until their next pay check.

Go to St. Mary’s website for Harvest Pack, SignUp Genius link, (or open your phone camera, when the camera sees the QR Code, look for SignUp Genius at top of your screen, tap on that and it will take you to SignUp Genius).

Thirty-Eight boxes of oatmeal packs are with FOCUS House, CES, and Joyce. The managers at each food shelf were very, very grateful to you for this food for their clients. Thank You!

Healing House Dinner
2-3 hours time commitment
Next dinner: Saturday, November 16.
Contact Sandra Anderson: asformess69@gmail.com

FOCUS House

Volunteers are needed to assist with distribution for the food shelf on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Volunteers are also needed to assist with clothing on Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. and Thursdays 4:00-7:00 p.m.

Take Heart

Take Heart is a mission to help persecuted Christian families in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. “With Jesus as our example, we steward your financial gifts through supporting income-generating projects. Take Heart partners with leaders in a community to assess needs.” Take Heart is about helping families with income-generating projects to be fully independent, providing jobs for their community.

Another Take Heart project is this photo of young adults attending “Ignite Academy” to become equipped to be trainers and leaders for future generations. Take Heart is currently set up in Syria and Iraq with 48 young adults, nine church leaders, and six church communities. What a blessing to help overcome weaknesses and threats that they have experienced in their lives.
St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (Sermon 172)

It is inevitable that we should be sad when those we love depart from us by dying. Although we know they are not leaving us for ever – that they have only gone a little ahead of us, that we who remain will follow them – nevertheless our nature shrinks from death, and when it takes a loved one we are filled with sorrow simply because of our love for that person. That is why the Apostle Paul did not tell us that we should not be saddened, but that we should not be saddened in the same way as those who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13). In the death of those who are close to us we experience both sadness at the necessity of losing them, and hope of getting them back. By the former we are distressed, by the latter consoled; in the one our weakness touches us, in the other faith restores us. In our loss the human condition mourns, but through hope the divine promise heals.

Accordingly, the solemn pomp of the burial rites, the thronging funeral procession, the costly and careful interment, the raising of a rich monument at the grave—all these things are some kind of solace for the living but no help to the dead. However, there is no doubt that the dead are helped by the prayers of holy Church, by the saving Eucharistic Sacrifice, and by alms dispensed for their souls; these things are done that they may be more mercifully dealt with by the Lord than their sins deserve. The whole Church observes the custom handed down by our Fathers: that those who have died within the fellowship of Christ’s body and blood should be prayed for when they are commemorated at the Holy Eucharistic Sacrifice, and that we should be reminded that this Sacrifice is offered for them as well. When these acts of mercy are solemnly performed for their sake, who can doubt that we are truly giving them our support? The prayers we offer to God for them are not futile. We must not waver in our belief that they are profitable to the dead, to those of the dead at least who have lived in such a way before death that these things can be useful to them afterward.

On How to Mourn and Pray for Our Departed Loved Ones

[St. Augustine (354-430) was born at Thagaste in Africa and received a Christian education, although he was not baptized until 387. In 391 he was ordained priest and in 395 he became assistant bishop to Valerius of Hippo, whom he succeeded in 396. Augustine's theology was formulated in the course of his struggle with three heresies: Manichaeism, Donatism, and Pelagianism. His writings are voluminous and his influence on subsequent theology immense. He molded the thought of the Middle Ages down to the thirteenth century. Yet he was above all a pastor and a great spiritual writer.]
Children & Youth

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)
- Koinonia (Fellowship)

leading our youth to develop, by their own free will, a personal relationship with God and to pursue union with Him.

HOPE and JOY; Junior and Senior GOYA

- Wednesday, November 20, 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  Parish Night at Church
  We start with prayer in the nave from 6:15-6:30, eat dinner from 6:30-7:00, lesson from 7:00-7:45 (break out into different groups: HOPE/JOY, Junior GOYA, Senior GOYA, and adults), and wrap up from 7:45-8:00. All are welcome to attend!

Faith Group
0-5 Year Olds and Parents
- Wednesday, November 13, 9:30-11:00 a.m.
  Great Hall and Terrace Room

HOPE and JOY
Kindergarten-Grade 2 and Grades 3-5
- Saturday, November 17, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
  Elf The Musical, Jr., at Stages Theatre in Hopkins.
  Please RSVP to Georgia Andron: greekborba@hotmail.com, if you plan to attend this event by Sunday, November 3. Families are welcome to attend, so it is a first come, first serve on tickets.
- Wednesday, November 20, 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  Parish Night at Church
  See above for details.

Junior GOYA
Grades 6-8
- Sunday, November 3, 11:30 a.m.-2:00ish
  Harvest Pack at St. Mary’s
  Earlier in the year, St. Mary’s teamed up with Harvest Pack and packaged thousands of meals for people in need. We are doing this again this Fall and would like to have our Junior GOYAn group work together to prepare and package 30,000 meals in 2-2½ hours! To sign up, please click this link: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/l0c0d4ca4ac2da5fa7-meall
- Wednesday, November 20, 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  Parish Night at Church
  See above for details.

Senior GOYA
Grades 9-12
- Wednesday, November 13, 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  St. Mary’s
  Senior GOYA is helping IOCC setup for their annual fundraiser. Please RSVP by November 12 by clicking on this doodle: https://doodle.com/poll/tr2ka2ytx9th3ct9
- Wednesday, November 20, 6:15-8:00 p.m.
  Parish Night at Church
  See above for details.

One-on-Ones (grades 3-12)
  One on ones are back! Sign your 3rd-12th grade child up for a one-on-one with Jon Klein by going to this link: https://tinyurl.com/Fall2019One-on-Ones. These “one-on-one” meetings are an informal way for me to get to know your kids and for the kids to get to know me as well. We can chat about anything - how the school year is going, activities they are involved in, sports, music, Church, and anything else they would like to talk about.

Church School News
  There will be class every Sunday in November. Of special note, on November 10 we’ll have combined group lessons on Stewardship and December 1, Thanksgiving weekend, we will have class. Please bring your children every Sunday as we are practicing for the Christmas program on December 15.

September Recap
  September was the youth program kickoff month! The HOPE/JOY group started off the year right by going around the Church on a scavenger hunt to collect items for their prayer box. Once they were done with it, they decorated it and took it home to put by their icon corner. The Junior GOYAn and Senior GOYAn kickoff was at the parish home and we had a bonfire where we roasted vegan hotdogs and discussed our New Year’s resolutions. Looking forward to a great year!

Follow the GOYAns on Instagram: St_Marys_GOYA
Traveling
by Maren Elizabeth Johnson

Have you ever read a book that makes you feel like you’re actually traveling in a distant land with brave and bold characters? That’s how I feel during the Twelve Gospel Readings service on Holy Thursday. This service tells the story of Christ’s journey from the Last Supper to his crucifixion.

The Twelve Gospel Readings service takes place on Thursday evening. Before each reading a member of our parish knocks on a large wood block—-one knock for the first reading, two knocks for the second, on and on up to twelve knocks. In front of the iconostasis are twelve candles that represent the twelve readings we’re about to hear, and they are snuffed out—-one at a time—after each reading.

The first reading is always the longest of all. Earlier that day, during Divine Liturgy, we read about Christ breaking bread and drinking wine with His disciples, and then Judas betraying Him. When we hear the story of the Last Supper again in the evening during the Twelve Gospels service, it is written by a different Evangelist and it is interesting to hear it told in a new way.

In the middle of the service, one of the readers in our parish sings a dramatic song while they bring out the cross and the figure of Christ. The priests process to the front of the church and put Jesus up on the cross while we are all kneeling down, prostrating in the dark. When the service ends, we all leave silently.

All of these dramatic things that happen during the service relate to the drama in the readings we hear. My favorite part of Holy Week is the Twelve Gospel Readings service because during the gospel readings I feel like I am going on Christ’s journey with him.

by Sophia Roegner

“This is the most blessed sabbath on which Christ has fallen asleep to rise on the third day,” cry the myrrhbearing women in one of the troparia of Holy Saturday Matins. We experience their same wonder in this beautiful service, which is one of my favorite parts of Holy Week. The service is filled with lamentation of the Lord’s death, but the sorrow is permeated with hope, awe, and joy as the great mystery of Christ’s salvation for mankind begins to be revealed. And the myrrhbearers, through their examples remembered in this Matins, show us how to take up this great pearl of Christianity and plant it in our lives as we strive to journey towards the salvation that has now been revealed to us.

Every part of Holy Week is beautiful and moving, but Holy Saturday Matins is especially so. As we look on the embroidered shroud surrounded by flowers in the center of the Church, we also listen to some of the sweetest music of the week and its moving hymnology. We truly experience the exclamation and ponder the question which the service’s Praises proclaim: “Thou, O Lord, ... hast filled all creation with your beauty, How canst Thou lie before us dead this day?”

The answer to this question of the ages is unveiled in one of my favorite hymns from the service: “The angel came to the myrrhbearing women at the tomb and said: myrrh is fitting for the dead, but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption.” I can just hear the angel barely daring to whisper to the myrrh-bearing women this mystery of mysteries! The mystery that not even the angels knew is now being revealed to mankind, and they look on with us in awe.

However, to be partakers of the new beauty in this mystery, we must first take up our cross and follow Christ—just as the myrrhbearing women, in order to hear the joyous message of the Resurrection, first braved a multitude of dangers by going to anoint Christ in the tomb. The Matins of Holy Saturday remind us not to take for granted the great sufferings Christ bore for our sakes, however familiar we are with them. The noble Joseph tenderly begged Pilot, “Give me this Stranger, Who has no place to lay His head: Give me this Stranger Whom an evil disciple..."
betrayed to death.” And we, too, remembering how He suffered for us, must prepare our souls as living temples for Him to lay His head in, not acting like He and His sufferings are Strangers to us. Joseph of Arimathea’s words rouse our souls so that we may rise up spiritually with Christ on Pascha and remain in this ascension for the rest of our lives.

Holy Saturday Matins is so beautiful and moving because through the example of the myrrhbearers, it embodies the point both of our journey through Holy Week and of our entire lives as Christians: to join in Christ’s Pascha by also sharing in His sufferings. If we follow the courageous example of the myrrhbearers with this service’s attitude of watchful and somber joy, we too will have Christ’s beautiful Resurrection revealed to us - in the fullest manner possible.

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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.

His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago was present at the Liturgy on Sunday, September 29, as a part of the Metropolis of Chicago’s Clergy-Laity/Philoptochos Assembly held in the Twin Cities. During the Liturgy, His Eminence tonsured a number of our young people. Pictured above are those who were tonsured and their parents. Axios!
For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

—Psalm 100:4

Happy Thanksgiving!
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<th>Sunday</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Saints Cosmas &amp; Damianos 7:00am-Men’s Fellowship 6:00pm-Evening Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>2 9:00am-Bible Study 5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
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<td>3 Fifth Sunday of Luke “The Messenger” Deadline Daylight Saving Time Ends 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 11:30am-Harvest Pack 12:30pm-Basketball Practice</td>
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<td>5 Parish Council Applications are due today.</td>
<td>6 10:30am-Intercessory Prayer 11:00am-Women’s Bible Study 6:00pm-Small Blessing of Water 6:30pm-Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm-Parish Council Candidate Meeting</td>
<td>7 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>8 Synaxis of the Archangels 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 9:00am-Bible Study 2:00pm-Women’s Tea 5:00pm-Great Vespers 6:00pm-Hellenic Post Centennial Celebration</td>
<td>9 Saint Nektarios 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 9:00am-Bible Study 5:00pm-Great Vespers 6:00pm-Hellenic Post Centennial Celebration</td>
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<td>10 Eighth Sunday of Luke Stewardship Sunday 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy After Liturgy-Ministry Fair 12:30pm-Basketball Practice 12:30pm-Basketball Parents’ Meeting</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12 12:00noon-Senior Citizens 6:00pm-Open Gym 6:15pm-Parish Council</td>
<td>13 Saint John Chrysostom 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 9:30am-FAITH Playgroup 6:15pm-Senior GOYA 6:30pm-Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>14 Saint Philip 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-IOCC Fundraiser</td>
<td>15 Nativity Fast Begins 7:00am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>16 Saint Matthew 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 9:00am-Bible Study 5:00pm-Great Vespers Healing House Dinner</td>
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<td>17 Ninth Sunday of Luke 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy after Liturgy-Parish Council Elections 11:45am-Mission/Outreach 12:30pm-Basketball Practice 5:00pm-Western Koinonia</td>
<td>18 7:00am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>19 7:00am-Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-Open Gym 6:30pm-Philoptochos Board</td>
<td>20 7:00am-Divine Liturgy 9:00am-“The Messenger” Mailing 10:30am-Intercessory Prayer 11:00am-Women’s Bible Study 6:15pm-Parish Night 6:30pm-Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>21 Entry of the Theotokos 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 6:30pm-Stewardship Committee</td>
<td>22 7:00am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>23 8:00am-Divine Liturgy 9:00am-Bible Study 1:00pm-HOPE/JOY Theater Outing 5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
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<td>24 Thirteenth Sunday of Luke 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy 11:45am-Church School Teachers’ Meeting 12:30pm-Basketball Practice 5:00pm-Lake Calhoun Koinonia</td>
<td>25 Saint Katherine 8:30am-Orthros 9:30am-Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>26 7:00am-Divine Liturgy 6:30pm-Philoptochos Meeting</td>
<td>27 Thanksgiving Eve 7:00am-Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-Vesperal Divine Liturgy, St. George GOC</td>
<td>28 Thanksgiving Day Church and Office Closed</td>
<td>29 Church and Office Closed</td>
<td>30 Saint Andrew 9:00am-Orthros 10:00am-Divine Liturgy 9:00am-Bible Study 5:00pm-Great Vespers</td>
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