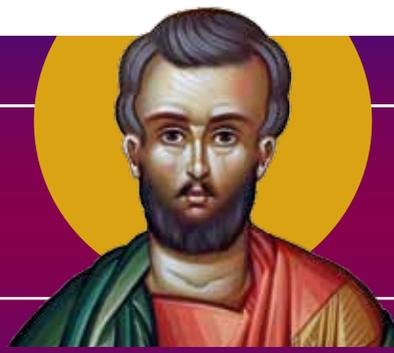




THE Message



SAINT MARK

SAINT MARK GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH · WWW.SAINTMARKBOCA.NET · 561.994.4822

FEB. – MARCH 2019



**2018 Christmas Gala:
Honoring our Presidents**
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at Saint Mark**
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Family Promise

Family Promise Hosting
February 17-24

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SAINT MARK OUTSHINES THE RAIN

“**R**ain or Shine!” That was the unconquerable mentality of the Saint Mark Family during the 2019 Saint Mark Greek Festival. We express our deep gratitude to Joe Pores for chairing this year’s Festival and to Dawn Riger for all of her efforts. We also thank the many volunteers who braved the stormy weather to ensure another successful weekend. While the Festival is our biggest fundraiser at Saint Mark, we know that the greatest blessing of the Festival is the bringing together of our faithful in the common goals of service, outreach and prayer. May God bless our Saint Mark family and allow us to continue witnessing the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Photo Highlights from the 2019 Greek Festival on the Back Page...

SAINT MARK: METROPOLIS CHAMPIONS!

Coming off of a championship run in boys basketball at the 2017 Metropolis Winter Youth Rally, this year it was our girls volleyball team’s turn to take home the top prize! Our group of three dozen goyans and advisors were on



hand to cheer our senior girls to the 2018 title in Atlanta! This year marked our greatest involvement in this event with two basketball teams, two volleyball teams, and SIX Bible Bowl teams participating over the weekend! We could not be more proud of how our teams and chaperones represented our Saint Mark Family. In every event our focus was always to demonstrate Christian faith and love while competing with heart and integrity. Congratulations to all involved!

Coverage from Both Metropolis Events on Pages 4 & 5...

The Message is an in-print outreach to the Orthodox Christian community of Boca Raton and the greater South Florida region. This publication aims to inform, edify, and serve as a witness to its readers of the Truth of Jesus Christ as confirmed in the Holy Gospel.

The Message is a ministry of:



Clergy:

Rev. Fr. Mark Leondis, Pastor
 Rev. Fr. Steven Klund, Associate
 Rev. Fr. Alexander Leondis, Protopresbyter
 Rev. Dn. John Christakis, MD
 Rev. Dn. Bryan Giusti

Office Staff:

Dawn Riger, Parish Administrator
 Ana Voicu & McKenzie Marsch

Church Maintenance:

Giovanni Lagomarsino & Carlos ?????

Office Volunteers:

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 Buettner, Pres. Mary Leondis,
 Debbie Fread, Kay Poly,
 Kalle Andromidas

Parish Council: Girard Mitchell

Philoptochos: Niki Core

Choir: Virginia Barnes

Chanters: Art Poly, Ramona
 Bean, George Demopoulos

Ushers: Tim Sharp

Acolytes:

Tom Bean, Sean Gibson
 & Constantine Mukasa

Church School:

Helen Lang & Julie Vagelos

JOY: Despina Hantzardis, Vivian
 Lazaridis, Erin & Rick Kontos

GOYA: Dominique Cultrera, Elaine
 Cotronakis, Lynn & Costa Athan, An-
 gela & Girard Mitchell, Jim & Claudia
 Dovas, Nicole Pelekanos

Seniors: Diane Paterakis

Syrtaki:

Jenny Saiger & Tasia Christakis

Greek School: Anna Kaisar

Bookstore: Yvette Koutsoupis,
 Barbara Tasiounes, Stella Pores

Welcome: Elaine Zographus

Readers: Ted Vagelos

The Message: Fr. Steven Klund

Live Streaming:

Ted Vagelos, Patrik Desai
 & Nick Csakany

Audio: Tom Spiliopoulos



For a little over a month now, Saint Mark has been using the official English translation of the Divine Liturgy as produced by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Below is a brief background of the service book, as well as a first-hand reflection from Choir Director Virginia Barnes.

The National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians have completed its development of music for the standard Greek and English texts for the Divine Liturgy. The result, is a beautiful standardized hymnal to be used throughout the English-speaking world. It is the hope that this new hymnal will eventually be used by all American parishes, and replace the “green book” produced by Ernie Villas years ago and that is still used in many churches to this day.

Here at Saint Mark we just received our shipment of pew copies of the service book, and installed them in our Sanctuary at the beginning of the new year. We noticed that the one thing that the hymnal version of the book was lacking was the pre-communion prayer that we offer as an assembly during every Divine Liturgy. Thanks to a handful of dedicated volunteers we were able to place the prayer in a sticker on the back cover of each book. Now we are able to fully utilize these hymnals in our weekly services without any reservations or omissions. While transitions are always a little uncomfortable at first, we know that this new official translation will quickly become as natural

and familiar to us as the previous version. In the long run, it is a small price to pay for a globally unified text!

This past fall, Fr. Mark showed me a copy of the new Divine Liturgy book, and asked me if the choir could learn the music. I ordered a copy of Kevin Lawrence’s setting of the music, which includes soprano, alto, tenor, and bass parts. No sooner did we start rehearsing, then Debbie Abdo D’Ambrosio appeared! I asked her to play the keyboard while we learned our parts. This really sped up the process-The Lord provides! Thanks to our iPads and TV screen on which I projected the music we were working on to maximize rehearsal time, Debbie on keyboard, and fantastic attendance by our choir members, we were ready by January 13th to sing the new music during Divine Liturgy! The improvements made last year; switching to ipads instead of books, the TV screen for rehearsals, the construction of higher risers in the choir loft, were the prerequisites for this challenge. In addition, the extra rehearsing for the new music has really strengthened the choir as a group, and we have improved and gained confidence through the process. The Saint Mark Choir is so grateful for the support from our clergy, the parish council, and church members. Knowing that things we need will be cheerfully supplied, and hearing compliments on our singing gives us the wings to fly!

PARISH COUNCIL - JIM DOVAS

On January 13, 2019 Father Mark administered the Oath of Office for the 2019-2020 Parish Council. The Affirmation of Office was conducted in the Sanctuary within the Divine Liturgy, as we all gathered as one body in Christ.

The twelve Council members met the Clergy on the solea where they placed their hand on the Gospel and affirmed their willingness to follow the teaching and traditions of the Orthodox Christian Faith and the regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Following the affirmation, the new Parish Council approached the Chalice as one body, and received the Holy Eucharist as a symbol of their unity in Christ. Following the Divine Liturgy and Epiphany Luncheon the Parish Council met in the Library to select their 2019 Officers (*listed to the right*).

Together with the other members of the

Council (Ramona Bean, Riad Boulos, Dominique Cultrera, George Douglas, Helen Lang, Bill Skoundridakis, and John Voytilla) they will serve and represent the faithful of our Saint Mark family. We ask you to keep the Clergy and Parish Council in prayer!



- **Jim Dovas**President
- **John Koutsoupis** ..1st Vice President
- **Joe Pores** 2nd Vice President
- **Girard Mitchell** Treasurer
- **Ted Vagelos** Secretary

PASTORAL MESSAGE
Rev. Fr. Mark Leondis



My dear Faithful,

I was asked to write a letter to all Orthodox Priests in America regarding the work of IOCC — to all Jurisdictions. I wanted to share this with you all.

A blessed Lenten Season,

Fr. Mark

My dear brother,

Ever since my daughter was a child, she heard stories of family members and others on mission and service projects. In 2017, my then 16 year-old daughter informed me that she would be attending an “IOCC Homebuild” in Nassau over the summer. She continued that because she was not 18, a parent would need to accompany her on this short term service project. Needless to say, the day we concluded summer camp, we were on a flight to Nassau to meet our team.

It was indeed a special week of service, outreach and giving of ourselves to others. We completely replaced a roof of a family which was destroyed by a Hurricane a year earlier; we spent time preparing meals to feed over 1,000 people in need; we were given an awesome opportunity to give of ourselves.

Serving the Lord is perhaps the greatest joy we can experience on this earth. Giving of ourselves to others is not only heart-warming, but our call. But sometimes, we forget the unseen blessings of service to others.

As priests, we have so many different responsibilities and they differ from day to day, hour to hour. We spend countless hours in personal prayer, counseling, consoling, celebrating sacraments, comforting the family of the deceased, preparing eulogies, visiting the sick and elderly, preaching, counseling married couples to name a few. Then there are the administrative tasks of correspondence, raising funds, overseeing stewardship, building, newsletters and attending innumerable meetings.

Of course we also must make difficult and unfavorable decisions, hear complaints, confessions, praying for those who dislike us, bear the burdens and often the hurts of the flock and trying to keep the Body of Christ united in love and leading them to the Kingdom.

We have always spoken about service and outreach in the home. But this IOCC experience gave my daughter and me a unique perspective on how our Church can be a healing presence in a hurting world.

IOCC has impacted my family’s life in a special way, and I thank our Lord for their loving presence. Their programs, outreach opportunities and mission are exactly what our Church and this world needs.

Brothers...IOCC is the real thing! As priests, we have the most awesome responsibility of serving before the altar of our Lord...truly a blessing. IOCC allows us to serve outside the four walls of our Church.

With brotherly love in the New Year,

+ Fr. Mark Leondis

Father Mark

Blessed Lent!

The season of Great Lent is the time of preparation for the coming Resurrection of Christ. It is a chance for all believers to renew their devotion and commitment through increased prayer, fasting, and almsgiving (acts of mercy). Great Lent is a penitential time, but not a morbid one. We should joyfully rededicate our lives according to Christ and His teachings, and most of all, re-apply ourselves to the Great Commandment of loving God and our neighbors.

Saint Mark offers an array of opportunities to help us grow closer to God during this season. We encourage frequent participation in our services, as well as the Sacrament of Confession. If you are interested in participating in this blessed sacrament, call Dawn Riger at the Church Office (561 994 4822) in order to schedule an appointment with Fr. Mark.

March 11 - Clean Monday

It all begins on Clean Monday, March 11, 2019. We will once again be offering the Sacrament of Holy Unction at 5:30 pm. Before the service begins, Confession will be made available beginning at 3:30 pm. Call the office to schedule an appointment.

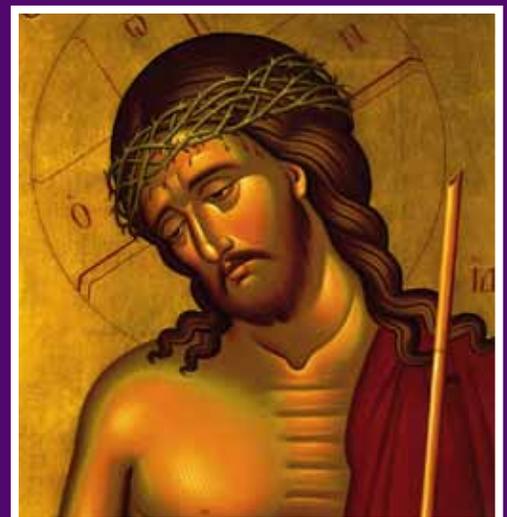
The other lenten ministries that we are offering are:

Wednesdays

- 5:30 pm - Synaxis: “Tools for Theosis” - Anthony M. Coniaris
- 6:30 pm - Pre-Sanctified Liturgy

Fridays

- 7:00 pm - Salutations to the Theotokos
Lenten Lesson to Follow
- 8:00 pm - Lenten Dinner



The 2018 Annual Christmas Gala

Greeting Fellow Parishioners!

The 2018 Saint Mark Christmas Gala was held at the Quail Ridge Country Club in Boynton Beach on December 15. A sold-out crowd of parishioners enjoyed Cocktails on the patio and an elegant dinner with choice of Lobster, Fish, or Vegan Entrees in the ballroom. This Black-Tie optional event paid tribute to the current and past presidents of the Parish Council of Saint Mark.

Throughout the years of our beloved Church, we have had many faithful men and women come forward to serve on the Parish Council and assist the Clergy in administering the affairs of the Church. It is indeed a great sacrifice of time, talent and treasure, and we thank God for each of them.

Parish Council members are committed Orthodox Christians who seek to serve our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. They lead by example and voluntarily offer assistance to the Clergy in shepherding the faithful through Parish worship and ministries. A Parish Council member is committed to acting in a Christ-centered manner in accordance with the Traditions of our Orthodox Faith.

The Church is the Body of Christ on earth, which needs dedicated people who, together with the Priests, share in the work of spreading the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We at Saint Mark offer our heartfelt gratitude for the Presidents and the Parish Councils who helped make Saint Mark the Christ-centered parish it is today. We are also extremely thankful for our 2018 Gala Chair Athena Economou and her team for their incredible work in organizing this elegant and memorable evening. We could think of no better way to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and no better people to celebrate it with!

In Christ,



Fr. Mark Leondis





..... WINTER YOUTH RALLY 2018 RECAP BY: DR. TOM COPULOS

After a runner-up finish in 2016, the Saint Mark Lady Lions Black team led by returning players Sophia Athan, Efthymia Copulos, Christina Simitses, and Katerina Spiliopoulos, came to the 2018 Winter Youth Rally determined to “finish the job” this time around. With the addition of three new players, Ioanna Copulos, Daniella Oatmeyer and Emily Stringer, the Lady Lions would prove to do just that!

The brackets were set with Saint Mark slated to open fittingly competition against Winston-Salem (the same team that beat Saint Mark in the 2016 finals). The match got off to a rough start for Saint Mark, as Winston Salem took the first set, powered by large and raucous crowd cheering them on. However the Lady Lions were able to rally, winning the next two sets and thereby securing their position in the Winners bracket.

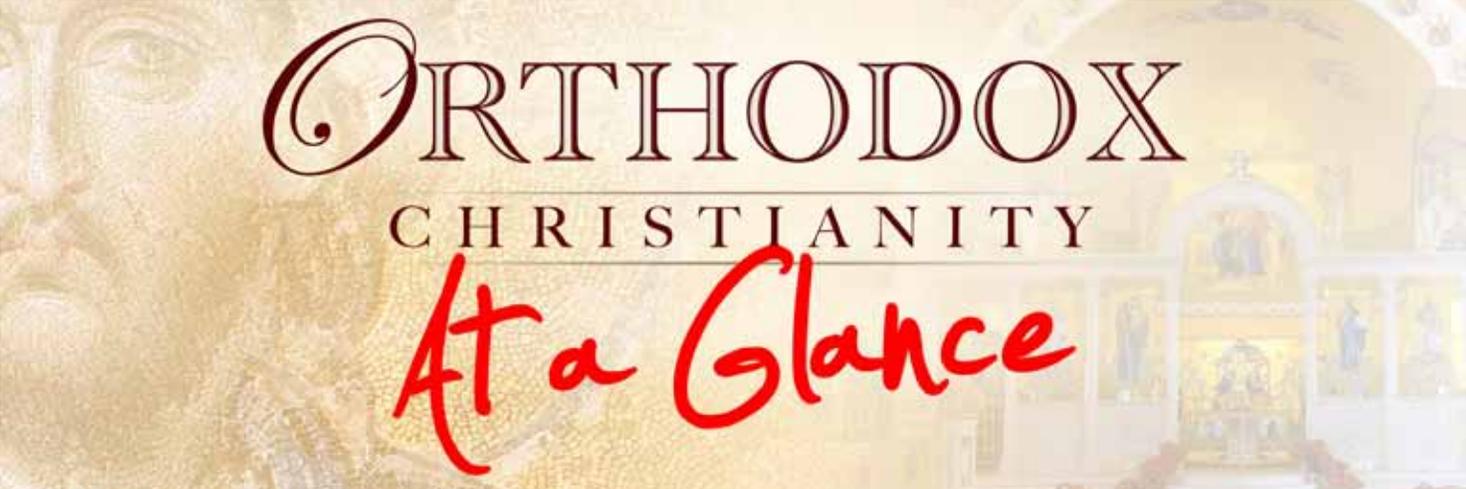
On the second and final day of the tournament, we were faced with Winston-Salem’s second team. After another slow start, Ioanna Copulos and Daniella Oatmeyer took charge with a combination of 10 assists and kills to pull us ahead in the first game of the match. In the second game Sophia Athan and Emily Stringer, each had service

S A I N T M A R K
CHAMPIONS
 20 18

runs of five points to win out the match and send the Lady Lions to the finals.

The Championship game featured a rematch against the senior Winston Salem team from the opening round. However, this time around there would be no slow start as the Lions set the tone early with their aggressive play. Truly a team effort, each player on this team saved

their best performance for the final match. Their play on the court was coupled with the added support of the full complement of Boca Raton GOYANs and chaperones cheering them on. By this point in the weekend our three other teams from Saint Mark (both boys basketball teams, and our junior girls volleyball team) had finished their schedule of games and were able for the first time to come and watch our girls play. Now with the crowd working in *our* advantage for the first time, we were able to cruise to our first evey championship in straight sets (25-17, 25-15)! To make the win even sweeter, it marked the unseating a legitamate dynasty, as Winston-Salem’s senior team has won this tournament 27 times in the past 30 years. Congratulations to St. Mark Lady Lions Black, winners of the 2018 Winter Youth Rally Volleyball Championship!



ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY *At a Glance*

.....
FR. PETER A. CHAMBERAS
.....

The Orthodox Church is the original form of Christianity and pre-dates both Protestantism and Catholicism. It is the historic Church established by Christ and His Apostles in the first century of the Christian era. When the Apostles went out of Jerusalem and Palestine and began to preach Christ and to establish communities of Christian Faith in the pagan world of Hellenism throughout the Mediterranean Sea, the first Greek speaking Christian churches came into existence. This initial encounter of early Christianity with Hellenism brought about the conversion of Hellenism. The powerful cultural elements of Hellenism were gradually Christianized, and what came into existence was precisely the Orthodox Church. After the initial centuries of persecution, the Church co-existed with a Christian Empire and was the inspiration which spread the Gospel to other people and regions of the world, and which created the Christian civilization and culture.

For more than one thousand years the Christian Church enjoyed a fundamental unity of faith and life in both East and West, in spite of a considerable amount of cultural diversity that existed in these two far reaching areas. Gradually however the diversity became divergence, and divergence became separation from the unity of a common faith and life. The breakdown of Church unity between East and West came about gradually. It was not really finalized until 1204 AD, when the Fourth Crusade sacked and devastated Constantinople, while the Orthodox Christians of this Queen City of the Christian world stood in disbelief that such horror could be brought upon them by fellow Christians. Constantinople, the center of the Orthodox Christian world, never fully recovered politically from this blow, and ulti-

mately fell to the onslaught of Islam and the Turks almost two and a half centuries later on May 29, 1453 – the darkest day in all of the four thousand years of Greek history. While the Empire was lost, the Orthodox Christian Faith survived, and today the Orthodox Church enjoys a continuous history of two thousand years. At the same time, the Orthodox Church also bears the awesome responsibility of being a witness to the original and unchanged Christian Faith proclaimed by Christ and preached by the Apostles.

Through the Creed, the Symbol of our Christian Faith, we profess to believe: in one God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible; in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, who was Incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man for our salvation, which He accomplished through His Crucifixion and Resurrection; in the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and who, together with the Father and the Son, is worshiped and glorified. In addition to the Triune God, that is, the Holy Trinity, Orthodox Christians also believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. This is indeed an article of Faith, but it is also an historical reality which exists today, and is in fact identified with the Orthodox Church.

The Orthodox Church, though by no means perfect in its historical life, is essentially identical with the Church of all ages, and indeed with the early Apostolic Church. In other words, it is not a church, but the Church. There is here more than an unbroken historic continuity; there is also, above all, an ultimate spiritual and real identity with the original Church established by Christ. This means that the Orthodox Church of today has the same faith, the same spirit, the same ethos as it did in the beginning, and this essential sameness and identity constitutes the distinctive mark of Orthodox Christianity, which

can trace its existence back to the Church established by Christ to continue His work of salvation on earth throughout the ages.

In the midst of a fallen and suffering human history, Christ established His one Church to be the abode of His divine presence in the world. The expectations of salvation promised by God to the people of the Old Testament are now being fulfilled in Christ and in His Church. The Church is understood as the new Israel, the new Chosen People of God, called by God both from the old Israel and from all the nations of the earth, who would believe, love and follow Christ as Lord and Savior and Head of His Church. The mystery of the Incarnation of Christ is also the mystery of the Church. In Christ our human nature was assumed, renewed and saved. In the Church mankind is united to Christ to become “a chosen generation, a holy nation” (1Peter 2,9), and set apart from the fallen world. Those who choose freely to be united with Christ share in His victory and become one Body with Him, who is their Head. As the Body of Christ, the Church is essentially transfigured and regenerated mankind, which abides in an organic unity of love, faith and truth.

From the very beginning Christianity existed as a corporate reality, as a community of faithful believers. To be a Christian means to belong to a community of faith. Nobody can be a Christian by himself or herself, as an isolated individual, but only in fellowship with all the other brothers and sisters in Christ, who share the same faith and life in the Church. It is a distortion of our individualistic modern society to think that we can do “our own thing” in the Church. An isolated individual, not partaking in the common life of the Church is simply not an authentic Christian!

Christians can share a common life in the Church with others primarily because they are first of all one in Christ. The cen-

ter of unity is the Lord, and the Spirit is the power who effect this unity of all the faithful. Christians are constituted into the unity of the Church by divine design, by the will and power of God. The Church of God has been established and constituted by God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. The Church is not a human society, but a divine society; the Church is not a secular community of this world, but a sacred community in the world but not of this world. Christ Himself belongs to this community, not only as its Lord and God, but also as its real Head. Christ is not above or outside the Church; the Church as the Body belongs to Christ and truly exists in Him.

On the historical road of the Church's life on earth no final goal, no ultimate perfection has yet been attained. But the ultimate reality has been revealed and is truly available and a possibility for all to know and to experience personally, in spite of the historical imperfections and provisional status of empirical Church life. The divine presence in the Church, made possible through the sacramental life of the Church, gives new meaning, new value to the world and to our human condition by filling it with the light and the life of God.

The primary task of the Church is to manifest and proclaim the life in Christ. The Church is to reveal and bear witness to the new reality now

available in the Church. This is done both in word and deed. The best and truest proclamation of the Gospel of Christ is precisely the very practice of this new life: to show our faith by our deeds, to live our faith and not simply to talk about it. The Church therefore has not only to invite people to enter the Church, but must also introduce them into the new life in Christ to which it bears witness. The Church must receive each person and actually convert him or her, that is, it must bring people, through faith and repentance, to Christ Himself, to be born anew in Him. This conversion or new spiritual birth is only a start, which must be followed by a life-long process of spiritual growth and maturation. The people of God in the Church are of all ages and at different levels of spiritual growth and maturity, as they move ever forward and upward toward God. Consequently, there will be a degree of tension in the life of the Church, fluctuating, as it does, between the divine and the human, between the abysses of human failure and the renewal and sanctification of human nature and personality. The image of the Church as the Body of Christ must be a constant reminder that all the individual members of the Church, like those of any body, are important, significant and essential. They must all be nourished and cared for so as to be healthy and able to carry out their own individual functions within the Body of the Church as whole.

The real nature and purpose of the Church is to reveal the presence of Christ in the world, and, in turn, to bring the people of this world to Christ. It is precisely in this restored union of God and man that the entire universe transfigured. Nothing is more urgent today than to rediscover this true meaning and purpose of the Church, and to embrace the Church by entering fully into its life and mission to the world.

2019 LENTEN LESSONS



SYNAXIS

Wednesdays in Lent before
Pre-Sanctified Liturgy (5:30 PM)

Focusing on:

"TOOLS FOR THEOSIS:
BECOMING GOD-LIKE IN CHRIST"

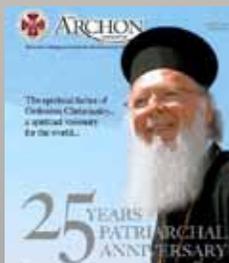
By Anthony M. Coniaris

SUPPLICATIONS

Fridays in Lent - 7 pm

(Lenten Suppers to follow)

The Saint Mark Cultural Committee Presents . . . **The Plight of the Ecumenical Patriarchate** March 16, 2019



Join us as we learn to understand the history, spiritual development and modern day issues facing our Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople and the role Archons play. Presentations will be made by Father Alexander Leonidis who studied with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew at Halki Theological Seminary and Dr. Stamatis Kartalopoulos, an Archon who has traveled and lectured extensively representing His All Holiness at Religious Freedom Conferences. All are welcome to attend this complimentary event.

SAINT MARK PARISH PILGRIMAGE to OCMC/Saint Photios Shrine March 2-3, 2019



MARCH 2, 2019

08:00 AM Depart Saint Mark
12:00 PM Arrive at OCMC
Lunch, Talk & Tour
02:00 PM Depart for Marriott
Rest and Relax/Beach
05:00 PM Historic St. Augustine
Dinner (on own)

MARCH 3, 2019

08:30 AM Depart for St. Photios Shrine
09:00 AM Divine Liturgy (Chapel)
10:15 AM Light Breakfast, Talk & Tour
(Shrine & Bookstore)
11:30 AM Lunch (on own) & Shop
02:00 PM Depart St. Augustine
06:00 PM Arrival at Saint Mark

Join us for an amazing educational 2-day Parish Pilgrimage to OCMC/St. Photios Shrine. We will have plenty of time for sightseeing in the historic St. Augustine and fellowship with one another.

HOTEL

Marriott Courtyard @ St. Augustine Beach
\$179 per night Single/Double Occupancy
Call Hotel directly at 888.869.7185 to reserve your room

TRANSPORTATION

\$80 per person for a luxury Motor Coach
(includes lunch on Sat and Breakfast on Sunday)

REGISTRATION

The Philotochos and Daughters of Penelope will be registering in the Fellowship Hall or you may call the Church Office

JOY - ERIN KONTOS

During the Fall JOY Retreat on Oct. 6 we made crafts and played games while recalling things we are thankful for. Then in December we had our annual Saint Mark JOY Christmas Caroling. It has become our favorite JOY Outing. Visiting dear friends in our church community and sharing in Christmas carols was an experience enjoyed by all. Afterward, the Zaparegos home was filled with fun and fellowship, as we were treated to a festive spread including desserts and a hot chocolate station for the kids.



The following month, we had a special movie night outside at Saint Mark. We projected "Ferdinand" on the outside wall of the Church while enjoying a campfire with s'mores on a chilly night.

Next up for JOY is an event on Saturday, February 9. The details to be announced soon. Email ErinKontos@hotmail.com for more information.



 Instagram FOR EVERYTHING SAINT MARK   

FOLLOW @SAINTMARKBOCA ON
FOR ALL NEWS ON GOYA, JOY AND MORE

CHRIST IS IN OUR
MIDST
HE IS & ALWAYS SHALL BE

AN ORTHODOX WEEKEND WITH
THE RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP ANTHONY
Auxiliary Bishop to the Metropolitan, Diocese of Toledo
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese



FRIDAY, MARCH 15
Saint George Cathedral - Coral Gables
Akathist Service - 7pm
Bishop Anthony's
Presentation following

SATURDAY, MARCH 16
Saint Mark - Boca Raton
Youth Retreat - 10am - 3pm
Vespers - 3pm

SUNDAY, MARCH 17
Saint Mary - West Palm Beach
Hierarchical Divine Liturgy - 10am
Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers - 5pm
Homily by Bishop Anthony



ORATORICAL FESTIVAL - JOANNE LINDHOLM



Participating in the Saint Mark Oratorical festival is an excellent opportunity to develop and perfect your self-expression of our faith and your public speaking talent! The Saint Mark Oratorical Festival is March 3, 2019 immediately following the Divine Liturgy. The top two finishers in both the senior and the junior division will advance to the District level to compete on April 6, 2019, and from their any finalists would advance to the Metropolis event on May 10-12 in New Orleans. You can find this year's topics included below. Please see Mrs. Helen Lang, Mrs. Julie Vagelos or your Church school teacher for more information!

2019 Junior Division Topics (Grades 7-9)

1. Martyrs of the Church and some of the early monastics are both described as "athletes." What does it mean to be an athlete for Christ?
2. Consider the Three Hierarchs: St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St. John Chrysostom. Select one of these Church Fathers and discuss his contribution to the Church.
3. Discuss the significance of water in the Church and what it suggests about our responsibility for the earth.
4. Discuss the new commandment of John 13:34: "Love one another, even as I have loved you..." What does it mean to love one another as Christ loved us?
5. How should Orthodox Christians relate to money and wealth?

2019 Senior Division Topics (Grades 10-12)

1. Many of the Church's services employ objects from the natural world (such as wheat, wine, oil, or water) in order to confer a blessing upon the faithful. Why does the Church do this, and what does this suggest about our responsibility for the natural world?
2. How is an Orthodox Christian to discern whether today's politicians publically demonstrate their faith out of genuine piety or in order to manipulate the electorate?
3. Pick one hymn from the Lenten or Holy Week period and describe how it speaks to you personally.
4. Describe how science and technology should always be at the service of humanity and, ultimately, of God, in harmony with His purposes.
5. In view of St. Paul's exhortation in Colossians 3:16, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom," discuss the importance of being biblically literate today.

PHILOPTOCHOS - NIKI CORE

The Ladies Philoptochos started 2019 with a flurry of activity, beginning with our annual Epiphany Luncheon on January 6 with 300 in attendance. Guests enjoyed a wonderful luncheon prepared and underwritten by the Orfanos family and Taverna Trela; we thank them for their overwhelming generosity. Special recogni-

tion goes to the following members of the community: our Greek School students who sang the Kalanda; our GOYA youth, AHEPA and Parish Council members who helped serve the food and wine; and all the Philoptochos volunteers who worked tirelessly during set-up and clean-up. We also thank Louis and Helen Nicozisis for providing the wine at each table, Richard and Athena Economou for the mimosas, and Tom and Georgia Copulos for the deserts at each table. In addition, we extend our gratitude to Presbyteria Bia Moulketis who won the 50/50 raffle and gifted her winnings back to Philoptochos. These generous donations allow us to donate the proceeds of this event to other charities. Co-Chairs Suzette Johnson and Pam Parent, Raffle Chair Chris Baldino, along with their dedicated volunteers, made this the most successful Epiphany Luncheon ever for our Chapter.

January continued to be a very busy month as we prepared for the Festival. Our ladies baked over 7000 cookies and then worked throughout the weekend selling pastries and coffee to our many happy customers. If you are new to Saint Mark, we hope you will consider joining the baking volunteers next year.

This year is an election year for Philoptochos. If you are interested in offering your time and talents to our wonderful organization, you



must be a current steward of Saint Mark, a member of Philoptochos and must have attended at least four meetings in the past year. Please contact Election Committee Members Sandra Gibson at 561.859.5895 or Thelma Constantinou at 561.495.2645 if you wish to run for the Board. Elections will be held in May.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Membership Event and Cocktail Party - Monday, February 11, at 7:00 pm in the Church Hall You are invited to join us for cocktails and appetizers as we enjoy a special presentation by Maria Spiliopoulos and Harry Mirabile on Estate Planning and Wills. (Please fill out your Philoptochos membership form and bring it to the event or mail it by April 15, 2019.)
- St. Photios Trip to St. Augustine - March 2-3
- March General Meeting - Monday, March 18, at 7:00 pm
- Lenten Dinner Sponsored by Philoptochos - Friday, March 22 (after Salutations)

Each year we give an accounting of how the money you so generously donate to Philoptochos is spent. Below is a partial list of the organizations and charities supported by Philoptochos of Saint Mark in 2018:

LOCAL COMMITMENTS:

Caring Kitchen
Family Promise

Children's Place at Home Safe
Orthodox Christian Network

METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA COMMITMENTS:

Panagia Chapel
Fam. Camp for Special Needs Children

Clergy Education
Saint Stephen's Camp

SAINT MARK COMMITMENTS:

Mission Trips to Mexico and Kenya
Saint Mark College Scholarships
Saint Mark Greek School Scholarships

Saint Mark Greek Festival
Benevolent Fund

NATIONAL COMMITMENTS:

Cancer Fund
Ecumenical Patriarchate
OCMC
IOCC
General Medical Fund
Orthodox Christian Fellowship

SPECIAL APPEALS:

APC Archdiocese Presbyters Council
Albanian Women's Health Initiative
Feeding Children Everywhere
Fires in Greece and California
Florence Fuller Gift Cards in Backpacks
Victims of Recent Hurricanes
IOCC Middle East Christian Relief
OCM

EPIPHANY CELEBRATION 2019

2019 brought with it plenty of reasons to celebrate. Our annual Epiphany Luncheon took place on January 6, where we honored our ministry leaders and volunteers in front of 300 seated guests. The next week, on January 12, we took part in the District Epiphany Celebration with His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta. We had four divers representing us from Saint Mark, and our very own Vasili Kaplanidis (*pictured right*) was blessed to be able to retrieve the Cross from the harbor! We are so proud of Vasili and offer heartfelt congratulations to the Kaplanidis family. May the rest of the year be as fruitful for our Saint Mark Family!



2018 GREEK FESTIVAL SPONSORS - THANK YOU ALL!

We would like to offer our most heartfelt appreciation to all of our benefactors and sponsors who supported the 2018 Saint Mark Greek Festival. The annual festival is quite an ambitious event, and it would not be possible without the assistance from our faithful parishioners. Thank you!

Festival Sponsors

Yianni Agelopoulos It's All Greek
 Yianni Agelopoulos & Paul Tzikas.. Rafina
 Mark Christakis Mark Christakis Realty
 Maria Karaloukas Jimmy the Greek
 Lambros & Sandra Kokkinelis Gyroville
 Paul Manolakos Marathon Groceries
 Peter & Helen Politis..... Mr. Green's Produce
 Joseph & Stella Pores..... Call 4 Health
 David & Maria Tadros Tadros Litigators
 Sophia & John Theodore Taverna Kyma

Festival Offerings

Rick & Erin Kontos \$300
 George Melides \$250
 Harry & Constantina Mirable..... \$150
 Alexa Nanos \$125
 Art & Kay Poly \$475
 Chris Rodis \$1,000 In Honor of the
 Clergy & their Families
 Jerry & Joanne Scheller \$1,200
 Tim & Kathy Sharp..... Golf Cart Rentals
 David & Maria Tadros \$650

SAINT MARK Mommy + Me TUESDAYS @ 10AM (BI-WEEKLY)

Our 2019 Mommy+Me classes are now underway! Every other Tuesday at 10 am at Saint Mark, our parents and their children gather in the Church to light candles before heading next door to our "early education classroom." There we have a short prayer service in front of a child-sized iconostasis. The class continues with story-time, music, crafts and



free-play time. During the play time, the parents are led by Fr. Steven in a spiritual discussion about parenting with Orthodox values in a modern world. Registration is only \$25 for the spring semester, and the first class is free! If you are interested in joining "Mommy + Me" please email us at of-

fice@saintmarkboca.net or call us at 561-994-4822 for more details.

FAMILY PROMISE HOSTING IN FEBRUARY



As part of Saint Mark's continued outreach efforts into the community, we are once again

hosting homeless families through Family Promise the week of **February 17th – 24th**. Family Promise's mission is to help homeless and low-income families achieve sustainable independence. As part of this community-based response, Saint Mark joins 17 other congregations to provide food and shelter for these local families.

Hosting will occur at the 260 House, located at 260 NE 2nd Street, Boca Raton, next to Saint Gregory Episcopal church just southeast of Mizner Park. You will need to sign up on line at following link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090e45a9a72ca4ff2-family>

A training session will be held right after church on February 10th. Training is limited to 20 people, so let Tim Sharp know ASAP at 561-213-1016 or timsharp1958@gmail.com if you are interested.

AHEPA / DOP - TIM SHARP

Join us at our annual Valentines Dinner Dance at the beautiful Benvenuto Restaurant in Boynton Beach. Proceeds from the event will benefit the educational, Hellenic and philanthropic efforts of the AHEPA Chapter including scholarships for local high school and college students, support to our Saint Mark ministries, other local Boca Raton charities, as well as providing meals for needy families and children in our area.

Call Tim Sharp (561.213.1016) or James Constantine (954.304.3200) for tickets and more details.



AHEPA Boca Raton Chapter 487 Annual Valentines Dinner Dance

Friday, February 15, 2019 at 7:00 PM



**1730 N. Federal Highway
Boynton Beach, FL 33435**

\$105 includes Valet Parking, 1 Hour Premium Open Bar, Passed Hors' d'oeuvres, Sweetheart Photo, Greek Salad, Choice of Prime Rib, Salmon, Pork Chop, Chicken or Vegan, Premium Wine with Dinner, Coffee with Dessert & Entertainment

**Tim Sharp (561) 213-1016
James Constantine (954) 304-3200**

2019 HOLY WEEK SERVICES

4/21/18	PALM SUNDAY	BRIDEGROOM SERVICE	6:30 PM
4/22/18	HOLY MONDAY	BRIDEGROOM SERVICE	6:30 PM
4/23/18	HOLY TUESDAY	BRIDEGROOM SERVICE	6:30 PM
4/24/18	HOLY WEDNESDAY	HOLY UNCTION	5:30 PM
4/25/18	HOLY THURSDAY	LITURGY OF LAST SUPPER 12 GOSPELS	9:00 AM 6:30 PM
4/26/18	HOLY FRIDAY	ROYAL HOURS APOKATHELOSIS LAMENTATIONS	9:00 AM 3:00 PM 7:00 PM
4/27/18	HOLY SATURDAY	DIVINE LITURGY RESURRECTION VIGIL PASCHA DIVINE LITURGY A LIGHT MEAL TO FOLLOW IN THE HALL	9:00 AM 11:00 PM 12:00 AM
4/28/18	PASCHA/EASTER	AGAPE VESPERS	12:00 PM



PASCHA (EASTER) CARD, EASTER LILIES AND HOLY WEEK ITEMS

If you would like to sign up for the Pascha card, donate an Easter lily in memory or honor of a loved one, or make a donation toward an item for Holy Week, please complete the following form, remove and return it in to the office (or by email: office@saintmarkboca.net).

Easter Lilies - \$25

In Memory of: _____ In Honor of: _____

Saint Mark Easter Card - \$25

Names as you would like them to appear: _____

HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA DONATIONS

Many parishioners ask to donate for Holy Week/Pascha items.

If you are so inclined, please fill out the form below and stop by the table in the hall.

Unction Supplies (oil, cotton balls, bags) - \$30

Floral Wreath (Thursday evening) - \$275

Holy Friday (Sheet for Christ's body) - \$40

Flowers for the Iconostasis - \$125

Charcoal - \$50

Palms for Palm Sunday - \$180

Rose Water/Rose Petals - \$75

Case of Communion Wine (Commandaria) - \$140

Box of Charcoal - \$25

Box of Incense - \$30

Paschal Candle (Priest) - \$100

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____ Total: _____



SAINT MARK
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
2100 NW 51ST STREET
BOCA RATON, FL 33431

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