

THE Message



THE
RESURRECTION
OF CHRIST

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MAY-JUNE 2016



Capital Improvements
Underway! PAGE 3



Sign Up for Saint Mark
Greek Week '16! PAGE 10



Volunteers Needed!
May 29-June 5

PAGE 11



CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN!

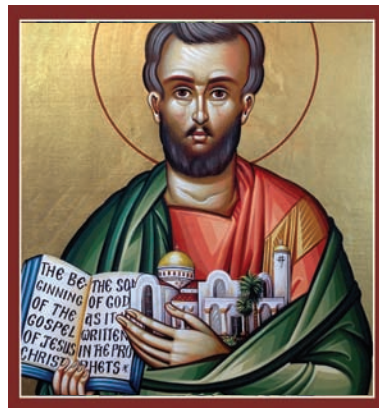
SAINT MARK CELEBRATES THE FEAST OF FEASTS

Though You went down into the tomb...You rose as the victor, O Christ our God; and You called out "Rejoice" to the Myrrh-bearing women, and gave peace to Your Apostles, O Lord who to the fallen grant resurrection. - Kontakion of Pascha

The season of Great Lent has finally come to a close. Over the course of Holy Week, thousands of faithful came to glorify our Lord's Passion, Crucifixion, and Resurrection at Saint Mark. We pray that the risen Lord may continually shine His Light on our Saint Mark family and the Orthodox faithful everywhere!

Holy Week Coverage Continued on Page 4

THE FEASTDAY CELEBRATION OF SAINT MARK



On Holy Monday, April 25, at 9:00 am, we held a special Presanctified Liturgy for our annual Feast-day of the Apostle and Evangelist Mark, the patron saint of our Church. This special occasion was an extra blessing this Holy Week, providing us a spiritual boost for the beginning of our journey to our Lord's Resurrection. We pray that the Lord will continue to grant our Saint Mark family many more years of Christian ministry and witness here in Boca Raton and the greater South Florida community.

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:



Saint Mark *Greek Orthodox Church*

2100 NW 51st Street
Boca Raton, FL 33431

Clergy:

Rev. Fr. Mark Leondis, Pastor
Rev. Fr. Steven Klund, Assistant
Rev. Fr. Alexander Leondis,
Protopresbyter
Rev. Dn. John Christakis, MD

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Debbie Fread, Kay Poly,
Kalle Andromidas

Parish Council: Girard Mitchell

Philoptochos: Pam Parent

Choir: Virginia Barnes

Chanters: Ramona Bean,
George Demopoulos, Art Poly
Emmanuel Manos

Ushers: Tim Sharp

Acolytes: Brian Giusti & Tom Bean

Church School: Helen Lang

JOY: Angela & Girard Mitchell,
and Erin & Rick Kontos

Seniors: Diane Paterakis

Syrtaki:

Tasia Christakis & Jenny Saiger

Greek School: Anna Kaiser

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Readers: Ted Vagelos

Photography: Constantine Mukasa
& Irina Giakouminakis

The Message: Fr. Steven Klund

Live Streaming:

Ted Vagelos & Nick Csakany

PASTORAL MESSAGE *Rev. Fr. Mark Leondis*

My dear faithful,

Christ is Risen! One of my greatest joys in life is watching a young person, fully transformed by the Faith, become “on fire” for our Lord. It is truly an amazing event when a young person decides for themselves that indeed, this is their Faith. Too often our young people and ourselves, own the faith of our parents or grandparents. Owning one faith is imperative in the spiritual development of our young.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, “Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.” Children, like adults, are given equal opportunity to live in the Kingdom.

When someone is baptized, they immediately have joined and become full members of the Body of Christ, regardless of their age or maturity. And members of the Church are given the opportunity to fully participate in the life of the Church. Children, like adults, should fully participate in the Sacramental life of the Church. To deprive them of this is sinful!

Many times in our parishes, we view our children as “half Christians.” We don’t take them seriously! We don’t give them a voice. Each member of the Church has a role. Saint Paul reminds us of this in his first Epistle to the Corinthians (I Corinthians 12) that all members of the Church are called to service.

It is true, we don’t always accept our youth as full members of the Church. We look at them and ask ourselves, “What can they do for the Church?” We forget to ask them, “How they can use their God given talents and gifts for the Glory of God?” For gifts and talents to be developed, they must be used.

We offer our programs for our young people as a “means to an end.” Too often we look at GOYA, Dance, and others as the “end product.” If these ministries and activities are not drawing our young people closer to our Lord and His Church, than we should think twice about their effectiveness and usefulness. If these programs are utilized as a “means to an end,” and allow our young people to better experience their Faith, than let them be blessed. It’s all about Salvation!

Oftentimes, parents will come to me when their child is in their teenage years and ask for help (sometimes too late). Of course, Saint Mark is here to assist in any way to help young people embrace the Faith. But I strongly remind you . . . the number one remedy for having a child embrace their Faith, is to be present at Church. Now-a-days, our youth have so many activities, sporting events and school that pull them away from Church. I urge our parents not to fall into this temptation. If you want your child to grow and be a strong member of the Faith . . . they must be present for the Divine Services. Choosing studying or sporting events over the Divine Liturgy is not a healthy decision . . . and will ultimately lead toward detrimental views of the Church.

Don’t be afraid to let your children take a more active role in the life of the Church – serving the Lord is quite contagious. If you are having a difficult time plugging them in, come see one of our Clergy. Allow us to help you! Let them truly experience our Orthodox Faith, as full members. Bring them to Church.

At Saint Mark, we have a plethora of ministries to allow our youth the opportunity to grow in their Faith toward salvation. Take advantage of them! In August, we will be registering our young people for the ministries of our Church – sign up . . . register . . . help give them the opportunity to own their own Faith and walk toward Salvation!

I think you’ll be surprised on what our young people can offer the Church and what they can offer our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let us all rejoice in the Risen Lord and be transformed by His love.

Christos Anesti . . . Alithos Anesti!

+ Fr. Mark Leondis
Fr. Mark Leondis

A MESSAGE FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

GIRARD MITCHELL – PRESIDENT



You will notice some improvements around the church campus. The gold domes are being refurbished, damaged stucco is being fixed, roof and wall leaks are being rooted out and fixed, the entire church campus is being power washed and painted, new speakers for the pews have arrived and will be installed shortly, the wireless microphones for the clergy have been refurbished and the parking lot will be resealed over the summer. We want to maintain our beautiful campus; your stewardship is vital and necessary for the operation, the ministries and the maintenance of Saint Mark church.

The Parish Council has unanimously approved the Security Committee's recommendation to hire a uniformed Boca Raton police officer for Sundays. The purpose and need of this is in many areas. It is to prevent someone from coming into church and causing problems, to help with traffic flow in our drop-off circle and to assist if a parishioner needs medical assistance & expedite an ambulance response. All of these improvements and "upgrades" will help us keep Saint Mark thriving.

On behalf of the entire Parish Council - Christ is Risen!

PARISH COUNCIL TEAM CHARTER

Last month the newly elected Parish Council members gathered with Fr. Mark, Fr. Steven and with Parish Council Consultant and Facilitator Tim Sharp to focus themselves in a common vision for a new year of ministry. This involved creating, revising, and approving a long overdue mission statement included below:

"The Parish Council are elected representatives who serve the stewards of Saint Mark to provide stability and promote the growth of the parish. We lead by example and voluntarily offer our assistance to the clergy in shepherding the faithful through the worship and ministries of the church. In all things the Parish Council is committed to acting in a Christ-centered manner in accordance with the Traditions of the Orthodox Faith."

We the undersigned agree to endorse and follow through with our responsibilities and commitments as parish council members of Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church, support the above Mission Statement and follow through with the Ministry/Committee goals we established and agreed upon for ourselves.

Witnessed this 29th day of April 2016 by:

[Signature] *[Signature]* *[Signature]*
 Father Mark Leondis, Senior Pastor Father Steven Klund, Assistant Pastor Timothy Sharp, PC Consultant & Facilitator

2016 GOYA OLYMPICS

We will be hosting the 2016 District GOYA Olympics! During the weekend of May 13-14 we will be welcoming dozens of GOYANs from all over Florida, and we need adult volunteers to help! Listed below are areas that we could use volunteers.

Friday Night - Opening Ceremony

- Break Down & Set Up
- Kitchen Staff for Dinner

Saturday Games

- Location Transportation & Set Up
- Referees for Games
- Medical Staff
- Food Beverage Tent Staff
- Clean Up Crew

Saturday Night

- Break Down & Set Up
- Kitchen Staff for Dinner

If you're interested in helping out, or if you would like to sign your GOYA child(ren) up to participate in the event please email:

DominiqueCultreraGOYA@gmail.com

BYZANTINE EASTER & OUR EASTER

..... FR. ALEXANDER LEONDIS

I would like to take you back to the celebration of Easter during the Byzantine Empire. All worship services in the Orthodox Church are rooted in the history, evolution, genius, theology and spirituality of the Byzantine Church. Our connection to glorious Byzantium today is our Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Easter is the Christianized version of the Passover and thus is called Pascha. Our personal passage from worldly life to spiritual life is our personal Baptism, our initiation into membership of the Kingdom of God. The Sacrament of Baptism in the early Church was administered only on the feasts of Easter and Epiphany, preceded by after forty days of instruction in the Faith.

During Holy Week and Easter we follow the footsteps of our Lord from his Passion to his glorious Resurrection. During Lent and especially during Holy Week we repent for our sins, we fast and attend special Church services. We renounce the ways of the sinful world and focus more intently on our relationship with Christ.

The catechumens in the early Church prepared themselves by instruction in the Faith during Lent in preparation for their Baptism on Pascha. Prior to the Paschal Liturgy in Constantinople masses of catechumens, preparing to become Christians, gathered for the Easter Vigil to be received into the Church, to be born anew through Baptism.

From the fourth century many accepted Christianity and sought to be received into the Church. Great Lent became the period of catechetical instruction and Easter became the day of mass baptism. The Easter Liturgy in Constantinople is described in detail in the "Typikon" (order of services) of the Great Church of Constantinople.

The Easter service began on Holy Saturday evening at the Saint Sophia Church with a vigil. Since many catechumens were being received into the Faith. After the first Gospel lesson was read by the Ecumenical Patriarch, the catechumens gathered at the Great Baptistry. The Patriarch blessed the waters for Baptism and the anointing with oil for the catechumens. The Patriarch would then cense around the large baptismal area three times. The catechumens were then anointed with the oil and then baptized in the blessed water, thus becoming illumined, "photismenoi" for they received the light of Christ.

After the conferral of baptism, the Patriarch vested in white vestments and led the newly baptized into the Church of St. Peter, just east of Saint Sophia. There the clergy administered the Sacrament of Chrismation to each of the newly baptized Christians.

After all were blessed with Holy Chrismation oil, the Patriarch accompanied by twelve bishops, led the neophytes in solemn procession to the magnificent Saint Sophia Church. As they processed into the Church, the Patriarch and Bishops chanted Psalm 32, which we still chant today at every Baptism: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sins are covered."

The Patriarch accompanied by the twelve bishops, led the newly-baptized into the great Church of Saint Sophia to join the waiting congregation for the Paschal Divine Liturgy. At this point in the worship service the usual Trisagion Hymn was replaced by the baptismal hymn from Galatians 3:26 which we sing at the Easter Liturgy. "Those who have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia." At the Easter Liturgy, the neophyte Christians completed their initiation into the Church by receiving Holy Communion for the first time and thus were with joined with Christ and the body of faithful.

The ritual described above is administered in like manner in our Church even today. If you have attended an Orthodox baptismal service, you have witnessed firsthand the same actions that were performed in Byzantium. The only difference being that we no longer perform mass baptisms, but basically follow the same ritual.

By bearing lighted candles every Easter we emulate the early practice of the Church by rededicating ourselves to our Baptismal vows. We re-enact the ritual of the Byzantine Church and receive the resurrected Christ as the Light of our life and the Light of the World.

Each Easter we are spiritually re-baptized in Christ; we die to sin and resurrect to new life in the Lord. We recommit ourselves to Christ and our Orthodox Faith.

Every Pascha we are joined with Christ and with one another as we behold the triumphant and empty tomb of our Lord. We are united in our Orthodox Faith, to Byzantium and to one another through our fellowship of love at our St. Mark Church.

Christ is Risen! Truly he is Risen!





AN INTERVIEW WITH OUR STEWARDS

KATHI SHARP INTERVIEWING MARLENE BUETTNER



This week Stewardship Committee member Kathi Sharp had the chance to sit down with Marlene Buettner in the fourth installment of our series of interviews spotlighting some of our Saint Mark stewards. This will be an ongoing forum in which we will be able to learn from our brothers and sisters what being an Orthodox steward means to them.

KATHI SHARP (KS): Marlene, you have been volunteering at Saint Mark for many years, but for those who may not know you, tell us about you and your family.

MARLENE BUETTNER (MB): There are many chapters to the book of my life, which has been Grace-filled in so many ways. I had a wonderfully varied career in the field of education. I have lived in Florida for over 45 years, have been married, and raised my only son in Boca Raton. I live now with my sister Sylvia, brother Robert, and niece Tara. My focus in my retirement years has been to travel to the lands of Orthodox Christianity's early beginnings and to visit the lands of my Serbian ancestors. I feel like I have come full circle in my life and that God has brought me to this place.

[KS]: How long have you been a member of the Orthodox Church?

(MB): Although I was born into Orthodox Christianity I left it in my early twenties where I was searching for answers to my questions. Unfortunately I became an active participant of the World and did not understand the Word. Having an inquisitive and searching mind, I studied many religions and movements and although like others, claimed to be Orthodox, I was not a practicing Christian. About fifteen years ago I had some life changing experiences and even an epiphany. I embraced Jesus Christ! Through the Holy Spirit I was helped to understand what I couldn't in my youth. I returned to my Orthodox Christianity and attempt to live my faith to its fullest.

[KS]: What does Saint Mark and the Orthodox Church mean to you and your family?

(MB): My Orthodox faith has given me a firm foundation of Truths. I used to think in opaque shades but now am able to discern more clearly. Saint Mark has an as-

tounding community of believers and people committed to helping others. My fellow stewards are compassionate and loving people and have been good examples for me. We are a friendly and welcoming church. My family cannot usually attend church because my brother and my niece have severe disabilities. St. Mark has embraced my family through our children's JOY group who has come to our home to sing Christmas carols, and Fr. Mark and Fr. Steven come frequently to serve in-home Communion, pray over my loved ones, and bless our home and my son Sean's grave.

[KS]: God has endowed us with personal talents and gifts. What is your greatest talent and how will you use it for the glory of God at our Saint Mark Parish?

(MB): I think that my greatest gift from God is my smile because it makes others smile, draws people near, and maybe gives someone who is feeling lonely or having a "down" day to feel better. That is what love is, and we are commanded to practice it. It is very important to become involved in ministry as it is dual purposed. It helps others and fulfills some of our own personal needs. Through my volunteer registrar duties in the front office has come an unexpected personal ministry. I am able to meet and assist many who are planning marriages, baptisms and Chrismation. I share our beautiful faith with those who are new to it or often, have fallen away from it. I listen to and assist those who need information and advice. I believe that the Lord is using my talents in this ministry.

[KS]: Can you suggest a ministry that you would like added at Saint Mark for your growth in Christ?

(MB): I have grown in Christ because of our many offerings and would encourage others to attend the wonderful Bible studies and Synaxis classes, lectures, and special events that are provided. Growth in Christ starts with coming to church on time to experience the Liturgy in its entirety, and participating in the Holy Sacraments. Taking advantage of our full offerings of Feast-day and Lenten services has given me an exceptional education and understanding of our beautiful faith and has deepened my love for our Lord Jesus Christ, the Theotokos and all the Saints. It has been an education by participation!

As for additional ministries that I would like to see added for my growth in Christ I might suggest a "prayer" ministry or a small group ministry where people gather in a more intimate setting like homes, and focus on our prayer life, and our Christian struggles. We are a big church and need to find ways of opening ourselves to those who are new, or alone, or seeking comfort and/or enlarging their prayer life and life in Christ with other Orthodox Christians. Our priests alone cannot do this; we all need to be encouragers of each other.

BE SURE TO PLEDGE FOR 2016

75% of the Saint Mark budget comes from Stewardship. Without you filling out your stewardship pledge envelope each and every year, we cannot exist. Everything we possess are gifts from God and they ultimately belong to Him. They are given to us — by Him. If you haven't filled out your 2016 stewardship pledge envelope — please, do so today (they are located in the pews). "God loves a cheerful giver." - (2 Cor. 9:7)

GOYA NEWS - LYNN ATHAN

On April 2, a group of 35 GOYANs attended the District GOYA Lenten Retreat hosted at Saint Catherine in West Palm Beach. One of the highlights of the day was the opening icebreaker in which the teams had to compete in a relay race while carrying a "cross" over their shoulders. This proved to be much harder than it looked! Overall it was a fun and spiritually fulfilling day for all who participated.

A couple of weeks later on April 15, our GOYA hosted a Lenten supper following the Salutations Service. Enormous thanks go out to our GOYAN families for their generous donations towards the meal. We also offer our appreciation to the GOYANs themselves who stayed after to wash and clean up the kitchen. Despite the terrible weather outside, it was a beautiful service and a wonderful fellowship opportunity for all the faithful who attended.

Finally, just last week our GOYA held its annual Holy Friday Retreat at Saint Mark following the Royal Hours Service. The kids helped to prepare the Church for the Lamentations and Resurrectional services, before heading into the library for a Bible study and Byzantine chant introduction. Fr. Steven helped explain Psalm 22 ("O God, My God why have You forsaken Me?..."), and why Christ recited it on the Cross, while our Holy Week chanter Chris Atheneos chanted a traditional monastic musical rendition of the psalm for the GOYANs.

Please email DominiqueCultreraGOYA@gmail.com for more about GOYA, and to sign up for any of the upcoming events below.



WHAT'S COMING UP FOR GOYA...

MAY 7 - CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR @ CINEMARK (EARLY AFTERNOON, TBA)

MAY 13 & 14 - 2016 DISTRICT GOYA OLYMPICS (SAINT MARK & FAU)

MAY 29 - SAINT MARK END OF YEAR PICNIC (OUTSIDE, AFTER LITURGY)

JUNE 16 - DELRAY CARING KITCHEN (MEET AT SAINT MARK AT 8:30AM)



JOY - ANGELA MITCHELL

The JOY (Junior Orthodox Youth) ministry of Saint Mark had a beautiful Holy Week this year. Beginning on the Saturday of Lazarus the kids took a break from folding palm crosses to learn about the Sacrament of Confession, and then were able to offer their own confessions that afternoon. Less than a week later our JOY ministry had its annual Holy Friday retreat which focused on "preparing the tomb of Christ," where we made beautiful artwork on the basketball court using sidewalk chalk. Later that evening, many of our JOY children served in the Altar and as Myrrh-bearers for the Lamentations service. As the year is almost over, now we turn our attention to GW16 Summer Camp. Contact the office for more information.



Instagram

FOR EVERYTHING SAINT MARK



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FOR ALL NEWS ON GOYA, JOY AND MORE



ORATORICAL FESTIVAL FINALISTS



Once again, Saint Mark had a great representation in the annual Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival. This year, out of our 14 parish participants, our top 4 finalists advanced to the district festival at Saint Catherine in West Palm Beach. We are proud to announce that three of those four finalists, Stamatina Copulos (*center*), Sophia Athan (*far right*), and Francois Khoury (*2nd from left*), qualified to advance to the Metropolis level held this month in Daytona Beach. There they will compete with other speakers from the Metropolis of Atlanta for a spot in the final national competition held in Charlotte, North Carolina. We are so proud of all of our speakers, and wish them well in Daytona!

SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL - HELEN LANG

As our Church School Ministry calendar has one class session after Pascha, on May 8th, and we celebrate the completion of the Church School Ministry year on May 15th, this is a great opportunity to thank all of our students, families, teachers and volunteers, for a wonderful year of church school!

With record attendance this year, we have reached an enrollment of over 200 students in the Church School Ministry.

Listen to the children, singing 'Christ is Risen,' as our K-5th graders receive hymn instruction throughout the year, as Virigina Barnes, our Choir Director visits the classrooms. Did you discuss the Sunday Gospel on your Sunday ride home with your child? Our teachers provide a lesson on Sunday that reinforces the Gospel reading. Perhaps you have church school inspired crafts, and hand painted crosses, adorning your home, that your child completed in Church School this year, thanks to Mrs. Irina Giakouminakis.

Our middle and high school students can discuss the examples of their faith in practice, as they have engaged in classroom discussions which provide the students with a deeper understanding of their faith, and overcoming the challenges they may be presented with in living their faith.



Mrs. Bothers, Mrs. Skoundridakis, Ms. Stabile, Dr. Copulos, Mr. Douglas, Dn. Stephanie, and Dr. Cucuras, and frequently called upon substitutes, Mrs. Desai, Pres. Anastasia, Mrs. Pelletier, Mr. Jamie Bennett, Mrs. Farsedakis, and Mr. Koutsopis and guest lecturers, Fr. Mark and Fr. Steven, for their commitment and participation in the Church School Ministry.

We thank you for your support, and for bringing your children to church and church school, each Sunday!

We will see you at the end of the year ministry picnic, May 29th.

We wish to thank our teachers, Mrs. Kontos, Mrs. Mitchell, Mrs. Tratoros, Mrs. Chapman, Ms. Valladares, Mrs. Mukasa, Mrs. Matthews,

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



With only one class left before Summer, we are finishing up our 2nd year of Mommy + Me this month. We have been meeting every other Tuesday at 10 at Saint Mark.



We had a very special event two weeks ago as we took part in a "pre-Holy Week" easter egg hunt! We followed up that class with our most recent gathering just a few days ago,

when we shared the Light of our Risen Lord chanting "Come Receive the Light" and "Christ is Risen" from the midnight Resurrectional service of Holy Saturday night.

"Mommy + Me" is for all children 4 years old and younger. If you are interested in joining "Mommy + Me" next year please contact us by email at office@saintmarkboca.net or by phone at 561-994-4822 for more details.



AHEPA - TIM SHARP



His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios has proclaimed May 15th as "AHEPA Sunday" in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. This proclamation has become an annual tradition from the Archdiocese in recognition of the AHEPA Family's long history of service to the community.

AHEPA is the largest Greek American association in the world with chapters in the United States, Canada, Greece, Cyprus, England, Bulgaria, Australia, New Zealand and Puerto Rico. The mission of AHEPA is to promote Hellenism, education, philanthropy, civic responsibility, and family and individual service.

The Boca Raton AHEPA Chapter 487, which includes the Daughters of Penelope (DOP), will be hosting a free breakfast in the church hall following the Divine Liturgy service. You will have an opportunity to learn more about the AHEPA family, recent new members and what we do for our local community. We will also be distributing scholarships to local high school students entering college.

For more information about the AHEPA Family, or how to apply for membership, please contact AHEPAN president Tim Sharp at 561-213-1016 or DOP president Marina Nicolaides at 561-827-9761.

PHILOPTOCHOS - PAM PARENT

The Ladies Philoptochos Society was established in 1932 by Archbishop Athenagoras to be the philanthropic branch of the Greek Orthodox Church. Our chapter here at Saint Mark has served the community since its inception. Over the years we have given of our time, talent and treasure to our church and our community. Now, nearly 180 members strong, and with the generous support of the community of Saint Mark we have been able to disseminate this year over \$40,000.00 to our church, community, nationally and internationally.

At the local level, we gave \$2000.00 in scholarships to worthy high school graduates, and a full year's tuition for a student to attend Greek School. We also supported the students attending Saint Stephen's Camp. We provide groceries for the needy, have paid utility bills and bought Christmas presents for those who are struggling with illness or job loss. Our women baked and sold thousands of pastries for the Greek Festival, and all proceeds went to the church. Holy Week saw our women dyeing and wrapping the eggs in preparation for Anastasi, and decorating the kouvouklion. All proceeds of the sale of the eggs were donated back to the church.



We donated \$7,500 to Saint Nicholas Shrine in New York. This money was raised through specific donations by Philoptochos members, and not a dime was taken out of our treasury for this contribution.

This year we also held a very successful fashion show, chaired by Athena Economou. All the proceeds were given back to the community, starting with our own Saint Mark. We gave Saint Mark, the Caring Kitchen, and Family Promise \$4,300.00 each. The Caring Kitchen in Delray Beach, is our Chapter challenge and we will be presenting our project at National this July. With the support of GOYA and REAL, we painted the building inside and out. We also purchased new shelving for them, and prepared and served meals on the third Thursday of each month. We are so appreciative of Fran Papamichael for chairing this important outreach committee.

Philoptochos hosted two very popular events this year, the Men's Cu-



linary Delights and the Epiphany Luncheon. The Epiphany Luncheon was underwritten and prepared by the Orfanos family and we appreciate so much their overwhelming generosity. Because of their support, we were able to use almost all the proceeds for our many charities. Both these events were fundraisers for us, but more importantly, they serve as community builders for Saint Mark. We can't wait to see who wins the Golden Koutala award next November!

Our Coffee Hour collection supports such worthy causes as the Cancer Fund, Autism Speaks, Children's Medical Fund, Hellenic College and Holy Cross, IOCC, OCMC and more. Those dollar bills (and the occasional five or ten), assist us in meeting these important obligations. Koliva and Coffee Hour sponsorships provide comfort to bereaved families. Thank you to Thelma Sorrentino, who prepares the koliva weekly, prayerfully and reverently. Did you know that you can sponsor Coffee Hour for joyous events as well - birthdays, graduations, anniversaries, etc. Thank you so much to Suzette Johnson who chairs this committee so efficiently.

We are a team at Saint Mark, and Philoptochos could not do our good works without the support of the entire Saint Mark parish. We thank God for our loving and giving women of Philoptochos, and for the generosity of our wonderful parishioners of Saint Mark.



OCF COLLEGE MINISTRY - ANNA SAIGER

The Spring semester is coming to a close, and with it another year of our Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) campus ministry at FAU. However our OCF chapter isn't slowing down, just because final exams are coming up. Last week many of our students took breaks from studying for their finals in order to volunteer at our "Pascha Table" on the "Free Speech Lawn" at FAU.

It was part of the "Greek Easter Celebration" that was presented by the Department of Multicultural Programming. Fr. Steven along with a number of our members were on hand to answer questions from hundreds of students who stopped by our table to experience a piece of Orthodoxy.

The event was a great opportunity to share our Traditions during the most celebrated season in our faith. We look forward to finishing the year with a game night at Fr. Steven and Presbyteria Nicole's house on Thursday May 19, and then with elections of our officers for the 2016-2017 year at the Saint Mark "End of Year Picnic" on May 29. If you want to learn more about our OCF campus ministry, please call the Saint Mark office at (561) 994-4822.



CHOIR FEDERATION CONFERENCE - VIRGINIA BARNES

Imagine being surrounded by a choir of 200 singers; from on high, an angelic youth choir singing in the choir loft all together with an organ accompaniment.

That is what you will experience this summer in the Divine Liturgy at Saint Mark on Sunday, July 31! The Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians along with Saint Mark Greek Orthodox church will be hosting choirs from all over the Atlanta Metropolis and beyond. The choir will be celebrating "The Liturgy of Peace" conducted by the composer himself, Christopher Kypros.

After witnessing the stunning music at last year's conference in Saint Petersburg, Bishop Dimitrios proclaimed, "Now I know what heaven is like, because we have just experienced it right here!"

Our Saint Mark choir is already working very diligently on preparations to host this big event and want to put our "best foot forward" for our guests. That being said, there are many expenses. Please consider placing an ad in the choir conference commemorative album. It can be a business, personal or memorial ad. Please make checks out to 2016 SFGOCM Choir Conference attached to the form below and send it to the church office marked "Attention Choir Conference" or send it to Kathy Chapekis, our commemorative album coordinator at 17689 Pine Needle Terrace, Boca Raton, FL 33487. All donations are greatly appreciated. Think of it as supporting the arts at Saint Mark!

40th. Anniversary Choir Conference
of the
SOUTHEASTERN FEDERATION OF GREEK ORTHODOX CHOIRS & MUSICIANS
hosted by
Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church
Boca Raton, Florida | July 28-31, 2016
www.SaintMarkBoca.net
Guest Conductor - Christopher Kypros
"The Liturgy of Peace" | www.kyprosliturgies.com
For more information contact:
Virginia@BarnesViolins.net - or - Kathy.Chapekis@gmail.com

GREEK LANGUAGE SCHOOL - ANNA KAISAR



Back in March our Saint Mark Greek Language School took its annual trip to Tarpon Springs in celebration of Greek Independence Day.

Under sunny blue skies that hinted an air of spring, hundreds lined both sides of Dodecanese street in Tarpon Springs waving blue and white flags to remember the day Greece won its independence from Turkey in 1821. Floats passed by ringing in cultural pride for our Greek forefathers and mothers before an array of parish and school groups, including our own Saint Mark Greek School program. A group of sixty parents and children of our parish participated in this event. It was truly a great experience for all who attended.



When we returned to Boca Raton that week, we held our own Independence Day celebration at Saint Mark on Friday March 25. Following the conclusion of the Salutations Service to the Most Holy Theotokos, our Greek School students recited readings and poems in honor of Greece's liberation. Following the presentation, the Greek Language School sponsored the family Lenten Supper for the faithful who attended the evening's service.

DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE - MARINA NICOLAIDES

It was great that at the last meeting of DOP we decided to prepare Easter Baskets for the children of Saint Mark, with all of the proceeds benefiting the Church. In addition to the baskets, we gathered hundreds of plastic eggs filled with candy for the Mommy + Me Easter egg hunt two weeks ago.



In other news, we have begun preparations for the celebration in honor of Connie Pilallis and the completion of her amazing year as National Grand President. Soon after, the District and the Supreme conventions are to be held in Tampa and Las Vegas respectively. All those interested in attending, should begin making their arrangements now.

Finally, we would like to congratulate Penny Coyle who will be taking over as the new DOP president, with Alexa Nanos as the vice president.

Thank you all for a wonderful year!



SAINT MARK GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SAINT MARK GREEK WEEK SUMMER CAMP



JUNE 6-10 • 9:00 AM-2:00 PM (*childcare from 8-9 am and until 5 PM*)

1. Name _____ Grade attending in Fall 2016 _____
Circle T-Shirt Size: YOUTH: Small, Med, Large; ADULT: Small, Med, Large, X-Large
Phone Number: _____ Emergency Contact: (Name/Cell) _____
Please list any allergies or medical concerns/conditions: _____

2. Name _____ Grade attending in Fall 2016 _____
Circle T-Shirt Size: YOUTH: Small, Med, Large; ADULT: Small, Med, Large, X-Large
Phone Number: _____ Emergency Contact: (Name/Cell) _____
Please list any allergies or medical concerns/conditions: _____

3. Name _____ Grade attending in Fall 2016 _____
Circle T-Shirt Size: YOUTH: Small, Med, Large; ADULT: Small, Med, Large, X-Large
Phone Number: _____ Emergency Contact: (Name/Cell) _____
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4. Name _____ Grade attending in Fall 2016 _____
Circle T-Shirt Size: YOUTH: Small, Med, Large; ADULT: Small, Med, Large, X-Large
Phone Number: _____ Emergency Contact: (Name/Cell) _____
Please list any allergies or medical concerns/conditions: _____

REGISTRATION FEES

Ages 4 through Grade 8 - \$145; Counselors 9th Grade and older - \$75

Non-Saint Mark Stewards - \$225; Childcare - \$10 per day additional

Lunch and snacks provided daily

Make checks payable to Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church

Payment is non-refundable

Please note that in providing a program that contains recreational/sporting activities, Saint Mark does not hold itself responsible in any way for any injury that may arise from participation in such activities. Participation is strictly voluntary and carries with it the understanding that some degree of risk is associated with the activity. Participants are notified that if they are injured as a result of the activity their assumption of the risk will relieve Saint Mark of any legal duty toward him or her. In signing this release form, I hereby give the summer camp Director full authority, as temporary guardian, to act on my behalf regarding my child. I understand that in case of an emergency, the Director and/or designated staff will try to contact me, but until such time, they will make all necessary decisions to ensure the safety and well-being of my child. I also give permission for my child to participate in all program activities, both on/off the Church site, including the field trip, unless I specify otherwise.

Signature of Parent (Legal Guardian): _____ Date: _____



Family Promise



Volunteers Needed!

May 29 - June 4

Family Promise is an interfaith organization of 19 local congregations who work together to transition families experiencing homelessness to sustainable independence and financial stability. This is accomplished by providing temporary shelter, food, financial management training, family counseling, access to transportation, educational scholarship funding and a formal long-term mentoring program to ensure successful life transitions for its clients.

Saint Mark and AHEPA Chapter 487, will be hosting these homeless families **May 29-June 4**. We are calling upon all of our faithful to get involved in helping our efforts. To volunteer or learn more about this opportunity, please contact:

Tim Sharp

(561) 213-1016

timsharp1958@gmail.com





SAINT MARK
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
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