



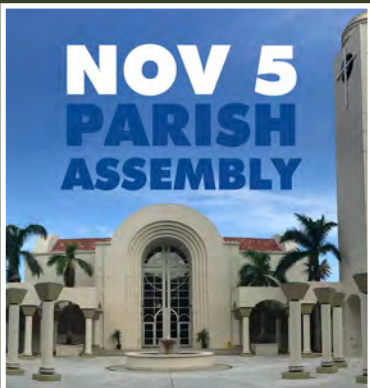
# THE Message



SAINT MARK

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

OCT-NOV 2017



Save the Date! Nov. 5  
Parish Assembly PAGE 3

*"As the Father has sent Me,  
So I Send You." - John 20:21*



## STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY – NOV. 19

*"God loves a cheerful giver." - (2 Cor. 9:7)*

70% of the Saint Mark budget comes from Stewardship. Without your pledge every year, we cannot exist. On Sunday, November 19 we will officially begin our stewardship campaign for 2018. On that day, we invite all of our faithful families to come and fill out their stewardship pledge for the upcoming year. We will then collect all of the envelopes during the Divine Liturgy and offer a special prayer service for them as the first offerings made to our Lord for the new year. Afterwards we will have a complimentary breakfast in the Fellowship Hall for all our stewards. May we always be mindful of the Lord's presence in our lives, and constantly offer ourselves back to Him in thanksgiving!

Read more about Saint Mark stewardship on Page 5



## 2017 STORM SEASON AT SAINT MARK



The 2017 storm season has had an unprecedented start. Just one week after Hurricane Harvey devastated the Gulf Coast, our South Florida community was struck by Hurricane Irma. Fortunately we avoided significant damage at Saint Mark, and we were able to respond quickly to the needs of our faithful thanks to the selfless efforts of our clergy, office staff, parish council members, and dedicated volunteers.



(Pictured left, Fr. Mark & Dawn, with members of our Parish Council who prepped the Church before the storm)



Sign Up for the Men's  
Culinary Event! PAGE 6

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,  
Protosphyter  
Rev. Dn. John Christakis, MD  
Rev. Dn. Bryan Giusti

**Office Staff:**

Dawn Riger, Parish Administrator  
Ana Voicu & McKenzie Marsch

**Church Maintenance:**

Yosban Pazbalino

**Office Volunteers:**

Lynn Athan, Sophia Hamrick,  
Marlene 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 Hantzaris, Vivian  
Lazaridis, and Erin & Rick Kontos

**GOYA:** Dominique Cultrera, Elaine  
Cotronakis, Lynn & Costa Athan,  
Angela & Girard Mitchell, Jim & Claudia  
Dovas, Nicole Pelekanos

**Seniors:** Diane Paterakis

**Syrtaki:**

Jenny Saiger & Tasia Christakis

**Greek School:** Anna Kaiser

**Bookstore:** Yvette Koutsoupis,  
Barbara Tasiounes, Stella Pores

**Welcome:** Elaine Zographus

**Readers:** Ted Vagelos

**The Message:** Fr. Steven Klund

**Live Streaming:**

Ted Vagelos & Nick Csakany

**Audio:** Tom Spiliopoulos



**R**ecently Stamati Kartalopoulos (pictured on the left, in the photo on right), a parishioner of Saint Mark who is best known for assisting at the Chant Stand, represented the Order of St. Andrew in Warsaw, Poland on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Stamati and his wife Anita were also in our parish news after winning the car raffle at the 2017 Festival, and donated back 15% of their winnings to Saint Mark.

WARSAW, Poland. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) convenes its Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) in Warsaw, Poland annually. HDIM is Europe's largest annual human rights and democracy conference and is a platform for the 57 OSCE participating nation states, international organizations and other relevant actors to take stock of the implementation of the OSCE human dimension commitments.

Since 2005, the Order has sent a delegation to the OSCE meetings, to present to the international community the Turkish Republic's continuing violations of human rights and religious freedom asphyxiating the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Archons Constantine G. Caras, Esq. and Dr. Stamatios V. Kartalopoulos represented the Order at this year's 2017 OSCE Conference in Warsaw.

Archons Caras and Kartalopoulos each participated in the assembly on September 13-14, submitted written statements, and presented oral arguments on September 14th detailing the discrimination and impediments to religious freedom faced by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey today. Many of the 57 participating nation states send ambassadors to the OSCE. The Turkish ambassador to the OSCE, who always attends during presentations by the Order, is offered the opportunity to respond and does so.

Because of the stature that the conference enjoys, the US State Department sends a delegation to monitor the meetings as well. The Archons representing the Order conferred with the participating U. S. State Department representatives, and provided them with the most current information regarding the status of our Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey, the major issues of which we are all aware, the most recent developments and current documents of the Order.



Archons Caras and Kartalopoulos also conferred with the Ambassador of the Greek Republic to the OSCE, and others in attendance who are sympathetic to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

We are so proud of Stamati as this is now the third time that he has testified in Europe on behalf of the Patriarchate. May his faith be an inspiration to all!

## OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Just like how Stamati and Anita did with in donating a portion of their winnings from the 2017 car raffle, we all can find other opportunities to give back to God.

Please consider Saint Mark throughout the year in the following ways:

- Gift in Stock
- Gifting from an Estate
- Corporate Matching Programs
- Recurring gift payments via credit card or PayPal.

Call the Parish Office for details. We are currently in the process of setting up a Saint Mark Endowment — so that faithful can leave gifts to the Church. Thank you for your consideration!

PASTORAL MESSAGE  
*Rev. Fr. Mark Leondis*



My Dear Faithfull,

How much time do we commit to God each day? How much time do we commit to reading His Word, the Holy Bible? I recently came across this article:

*The Holy Bible VS our Cell Phone*

I wonder what would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our cell phones?

What if we never left our house without it in our purses or pockets?  
What if we flipped through it countless times a day?  
What if we spent an hour or more using it every day?  
What if we used it to receive messages from the text?  
What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?  
What if we gave it to kids as gifts?  
What if we used it in case of an emergency?

What if we realized that unlike our cell phones, one plan fits all:

- Unlimited usage
- No roaming charges
- No weak signals

- And we don't ever have to worry about our Bible being disconnected . . . Jesus already paid the bill!

This cute article really got me thinking. The Bible is the revelation of God . . . but something many of us rarely open. So make a resolution today . . . open your Bible; Study the Word of God; invite the Word of God in your daily routine.

Here are some helpful "tips" to move you in the right direction:

- Download the Goarch Daily Bible App;
- Join a Facebook community of daily Bible readers;
- Follow a daily Twitter Bible feed;
- Read the Bible during your lunch or coffee break;
- Come to Bible Study on Tuesday evenings;

No habit in your life will reward you more than a daily spiritual discipline (askesis). So give it a try! Don't leave home without it!

With love in Christ,

Father Mark



## SAINT MARK GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish Assembly meeting will take place in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, November 5, 2017, immediately following the Divine Liturgy. This Assembly is for you, our fellow parishioners, to learn and hear about the status of Saint Mark. We welcome and need you to attend.

- Fr. Mark Leondis and Girard Mitchell

### 2017 Fall Parish Assembly Agenda

1. Opening Prayer
2. Election of Chairman of Assembly
3. Approval of Parish Assembly Minutes
4. Pastor's Report
5. Parish Council President's Report
7. Selection of Audit Committee
8. Growth and Planning Update
9. Presentation of 2018 Financial Budget
10. Nominations for 2018-2019 Parish Council
11. Closing Prayer/Adjournment

## SAINT MARK PARISH ASSEMBLY ..... SUNDAY NOVEMBER 5, 2017 .....

*"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." - Matthew 18:20*

There is great power and Grace in the unity of faithful Christians. At Saint Mark we know this Grace well, and invite all our parishioners to our Parish Assembly to discuss where the Grace of the Holy Spirit may lead us in the years to come.

**YOUTH MINISTRIES - JOY & GOYA**

Our youth ministry kick off events were delayed slightly due to Hurricane Irma, but now things are back to normal and our calendar is off to a great start! Just two weeks ago, our GOYA families pitched in to help clean up the fallen landscaping debris from our campus (more on this project featured on the "Hurricane Season" recap on page 7). Then on Saturday September 30, we hosted our brothers and sisters from our neighboring Orthodox parishes for a "District GOYA Welcome Back Pool Party." Dozens of Orthodox teenagers gathered at the Boca Bath and Tennis Club to play basketball, volleyball, swim and enjoy a much needed break from the recent stress surrounding the storm. You can see photos below, and on our instagram page (@saintmarkboca).



Our JOY ministry was forced to postpone our annual bowling party until the winter, but we are greatly looking forward to the Mini Retreat at Saint Mark on October 7 as our first event of the year!

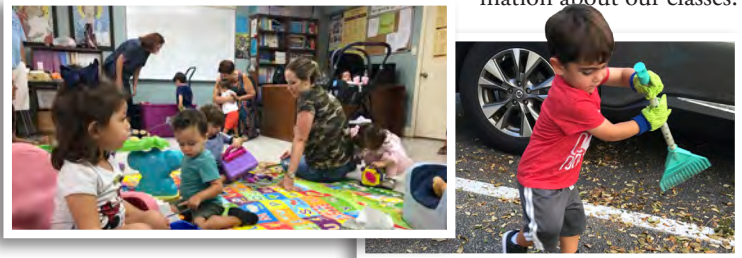
If your family is interested in any of our youth offerings please contact the Church office, or stop by our JOY (*elementary school children*) and GOYA (*middle and high school students*) tables during Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall during our four ministry registration Sundays from August 20-September 10. Everyone buckle up, it's going to be another amazing year! For more information please email the following:

**FOR JOY, EMAIL: ERINKONTOS@HOTMAIL.COM**  
**FOR GOYA, EMAIL: DOMINIQUECULTRERAGOYA@GMAIL.COM**

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

Last week we resumed our Mommy + Me ministry. It was such a joy having all of our children back again. We celebrated this year's new beginnings with games, yummy snacks, and a special family craft in which each child planted small seeds to take home and nurture. We look forward to even more chances to gather together, as many of our parents are thinking of ways we can increase our program to a weekly schedule! As always, make sure to stay tuned in to our Saint Mark communications (latest issues of "The Message" and our weekly email blast) for more details as they are announced.

"Mommy + Me" is for all children 4 years old and younger. If you are interested in joining "Mommy + Me," please contact us by email at [office@saintmarkboca.net](mailto:office@saintmarkboca.net) or by phone at 561-994-4822 for more information about our classes.



**SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL - HELEN LANG & JULIE VAGELOS**

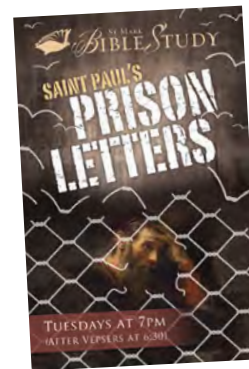
On Sunday September 24, we held our first Sunday Church School classes of the year! As always, our Saint Mark clergy began the year by visiting each class and blessing the students, teachers and rooms with holy water. We pray for an edifying year, and we ask God to inspire our students to deepen their knowledge of the Orthodox Christian Faith.

This year will again offer a full schedule of classes, crafts, and hymns, at no cost to our families! So parents, register your children today if you haven't already, and also consider joining us as a classroom volunteers!

**BIBLE STUDY - TUES @ 7PM & SYNAXIS - THURS @ 11AM**



This September Saint Mark will resume its Bible Study, and Orthodox Discussion group "Synaxis."



This Fall, we will be examining Saint Paul's "prison letters": Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon (*the four books he wrote while under house arrest in Rome*) in our Bible Study every Tuesday at 7 pm (*after vespers at 6:30 pm*). Also, every Thursday at 11 am (*after Paraklesis at 10 am*) we will be gathering for our Synaxis discussions. This year the group will be reading "Beginning to Pray" by Anthony Bloom. The book will be available in the Church Bookstore.



**2018 STEWARDSHIP - JOHN KOUTSOUPIS**

Stewardship is the backbone of our Saint Mark Church. Our Stewardship keeps our doors open, our campus clean, our lights on and gives us an administrative staff and so much more. Our stewardship does so much more . . . it allows us to spread the Gospel and our Faith with the world. We are a constantly growing, evolving parish, which can adapt to various circumstances because of you, our Stewards.

Saint Mark can plan ahead productively, can fix what is broken, can be flexible when there is need and can address so many issues all because each one of us commits to a yearly, monthly, daily amount to our parish.

A perfect example of this is during the weeks surrounding Hurricane Irma, Saint Mark was well prepared to assist the needs of our Church and faithful. Water bottles were delivered and accessible; bags of ice were prepped and ready for distribution; our data management system allowed us to reach out to our Seniors and those in need of assistance.

Sometimes we take our Church for granted – thinking others will take the lead. The task of every steward is to become fully engaged in the life of the Church, beginning with worship. If we commit our-



elves first to our Lord, He will take care of all our needs. If we are committed to Christ first, we will never take our Church for granted.

So I urge you all, KEEP IT GOING! Please, keep your Stewardship going and keep Saint Mark alive. If you have the means to give more, do so knowing that you are giving to your parish and ultimately help so many people in so many different ways.

As we have begun our Church year, please remember to fill out your pledge envelope and to remind others to do so also. Think about what you are going to give understanding its purpose and importance to the whole. We love our Saint Mark Church; We love our Saint Mark Clergy; we love our Saint Mark Parishioners. Let's keep Saint Mark going and keep Saint Mark strong with our stewardship flowing into 2018.

**AHEPA - TIM SHARP**

After a delay due to Hurricane Irma, AHEPA Boca Raton Chapter 487 held its first meeting of the new Ecclesiastical year last Thursday, September 21, enjoying a dinner from Zorba's Taverna and fellowship with the Daughters of Penelope. We welcomed our guest, Constantine Mukasa, and initiated a new brother, Mihai Voicu (*his initiation pictured to the right*), and look forward to him becoming an active member of our Chapter. During our first meeting, we approved a calendar of events for the 2018-2019 year.

We meet the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 PM in the Saint Mark Fellowship Hall with our next meeting scheduled for October 5. Please join us for a complimentary dinner and learn about this group of men promoting education, philanthropy, civic responsibility, fellowship and Hellenism in our Saint Mark Church and local community.

Should you have any questions please feel free to e-mail or call Tim Sharp at [timsharp1958@gmail.com](mailto:timsharp1958@gmail.com) or 561-213-1016.



**FAMILY PROMISE - TIM SHARP**

Family Promise's mission is to help homeless and low-income families achieve sustainable independence through a community based response. As part of this response, our Saint Mark Church joins 17 other South Palm Beach County congregations to provide food and shelter, so every family has the dignity of their own private living space on the road to independence.

After our second successful year being an active part of the Family Promise ministry, Saint Mark is pleased to announce our 2018 Hosting Dates: February 4 - 11, and August 5 - 12. (we may also consider a third date in the Fall.) Of course, there are always opportunities throughout the year for faithful to volunteer with other congregations when a need arises. We will continue to highlight those opportunities in the Email Blast when requested.

If you are interested in volunteering for this worthwhile ministry, please e-mail Tim Sharp at [timsharp1958@gmail.com](mailto:timsharp1958@gmail.com) or contact the Church Office.



PHILOPTOCHOS - NIKI CORE



Our Philoptochos Chapter stands as a beacon of outreach in our community as well as nationally. As an example of our mission to serve the needy, we have matched our Coffee Hour donations for the month of September and are sending a check for \$2,544.00 to IOCC, who will determine how best to use the funds for hurricane relief. We thank the community for their generous support, even when we endured the wrath of Hurricane Irma ourselves.

Our opening dinner meeting will be held at Jimmy the Greek Taverna on Monday, October 9. We encourage you to bring a guest who is not yet a member. Come and enjoy delicious food, fellowship with friends, and learn more about our plans for the season. Members also will have an opportunity to sign up to volunteer their many talents at our events during the year.

Make a Difference Day will be on Sunday, October 22. Philoptochos will join forces with our Church School students to prepare hy-

giene kits for those who are in need. Helen Lang and Julie Vagelos are leading this project.

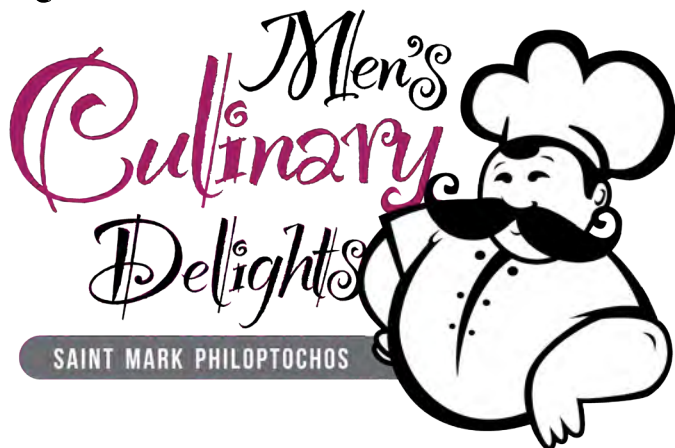
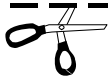
Philoptochos Sunday, October 29, is the day we pay tribute to our sisters who have fallen asleep in the Lord and honor our patron saints, Cosmas and Damianos. They were physician brothers in the 4th century and were known throughout the Empire as they assisted the poor and the afflicted without the desire for any compensation. Because of the similar Christian dedication to the poor and destitute, the Philoptochos Society chose to celebrate the founding of the organization (over 85 years ago) with the feast day of these saints on November 1. Philoptochos is the compound Greek word, "philos" and "ptochos" which means "friend of the poor." As a token of thanks to our

community for their continued support, the women of Philoptochos will host a complimentary light buffet luncheon after Divine Liturgy.

On Saturday, November 11 we will host the ever-popular Men's Culinary Delights. Come out and support your favorite chef while enjoying delicious treats! Proceeds from this event will go to support our many charities.

Don't miss our general meeting on Monday, November 13. Our guest speaker will be Juliana Leondis who travelled to the Bahamas last summer to help repair damage from last year's Hurricane Matthew. We are all very excited to hear about her experiences during a very challenging week.

We now have 181 Philoptochos members and hope that number will continue to grow in the coming year. Attend a meeting and make a difference!



CONTESTANT REGISTRATION

NOVEMBER 11, 2017

The "Men's Culinary Delights" cooking competition will take place in the Saint Mark Community Hall from 6-9 pm, November 11th. We ask that all contestants arrive before 5:30 pm to set up. Be prepared to present your dish and answer any questions about ingredients. Awards will be presented at 8:30 pm.

RETURN TO: 2100 NW 51ST STREET BOCA RATON, FL 33431 -OR- OFFICE@SAINTMARKBOCA.NET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  Sweet  Savory  Appetizer

Thank you for participating in Saint Mark's third annual culinary competition. Please fill out the information provided and attach your sweet or savory dish recipe. Thank you for your participation.

May the best dish win!

# HURRICANE SEASON AT SAINT MARK

## SAINT MARK HURRICANE RELIEF

By - Girard Mitchell

*“Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. The men were amazed, and said, “What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?” - Matt. 8:26-27*

We were very fortunate in Boca Raton that Hurricane Irma shifted away from us and we were spared from the strongest winds. It has been two weeks since the storm and many people are still dealing with cleanup and repairs. While the worst of the storm may have

missed us, our neighbors on the West coast and in the Caribbean weren't so fortunate, and now need our help. Father Mark has requested special donations from our Saint Mark family to aid those who have been affected from storms this hurricane season through IOCC, and we have seen such a great response.

I am so proud of our Philoptochos for answering that call with a matching donation from their coffee hour collections (they raised over \$2,500). Challenging times reveal the character of people and communities. Many of our parishioners reached out and helped others before and after the storm. Tom Bean and Bill Johnson work for FPL and have just started to slow down and take a day off from non-stop work. We are proud of their efforts.

I would like to highlight the help offered by Presbytera Anastasia Leondis, a licensed mental health counselor and trained in disaster response counseling. Presbytera Ana has volunteered with the Red Cross for numerous years and has traveled across the country offering professional counseling to victims of tornadoes, hurricanes or other traumatic events. She and Father Mark were scheduled go to Houston, Texas and assist in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey when Hurricane Irma hit Florida. For many long days Presbytera Ana volunteered at the Palm Beach County Red Cross shelters counseling those in need. This is one example of a Saint Mark parishioner and leader reaching out to another. I am proud to be a member of Saint Mark.



## HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

FOR MORE TIPS VISIT - [DISCOVER.PBCGOV.ORG/PUBLICSAFETY](http://DISCOVER.PBCGOV.ORG/PUBLICSAFETY)

Hurricane season every year poses a serious threat to our South Florida region. Please make sure that you and your family have taken the necessary precautions to ensure that you are prepared when the next storm arrives. Below are some helpful tips to get started:

- 1: **Make a Plan** - Visit [www.readypbc.org](http://www.readypbc.org) for help creating the right plan for your family
- 2: **Build a Kit** - There are helpful tips at the website listed above in building your storm kit.
- 3: **Know your Evacuation Zone** - Visit [pbcgov.com/knowurzone/](http://pbcgov.com/knowurzone/)
- 4: **Call Saint Mark** - Are you leaving? Staying? Let us know your plans, and how we can help you prepare!





**SAINT MARK**  
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THE 2017 ANNUAL SAINT MARK  
**CHRISTMAS  
GALA**

BOCA RATON MARRIOTT  
AT TOWN CENTER

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2  
COCKTAILS AT 6PM

FEATURING LIVE MUSIC BY  
DIMITRI AND THE ISLANDERS

COCKTAIL RECEPTION & DINNER