

THE Message



SAINT
MARK

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

MAY-JUNE 2016



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SAINT MARK GREEK WEEK & SAINT STEPHEN'S SUMMER CAMP SEASON 2016



Once again, during the first week of summer vacation the Saint Mark parish held its annual summer camp program. The 2016 session proved to be another huge

success! The Church grounds absolutely came alive, as the property was filled with joy and excitement, with water slides, sports, crafts, and a deepening of faith. The excitement did not end there because soon afterwards a bus of 50 GOYANs and staff headed to Saint Stephen's Camp at the Diakonia Retreat Center in South Carolina. There they spent an unforgettable week making new friends and reconnecting with God.

More Summer Camp Coverage on Page 8 and the Back Page

43RD BIENNIAL CLERGY-LAITY CONGRESS



During the first week of July the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America held its 43rd Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress in Nashville, TN. Along with Fr. Mark and Presbytera Anastasia, Emmanuel Cotro-nakis, Emmanuel Manos, and Girard Mitchell represented our Saint Mark family. Concurrently the National Philoptochos Conference was taking place there as well. Our chapter was represented by Athena Economou, Suzette Johnson, Fran Papamichael, and our Philoptochos President Pam Parent.

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:



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Rev. Fr. Alexander Leondis, Protopresbyter
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Philotochos: Pam Parent

Choir: Virginia Barnes

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

Ushers: Tim Sharp

Acolytes:

Tom Bean & Constantine Mukasa

Church School:

Helen Lang & Julie Vagelos

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

Seniors: Diane Paterakis

Syrtaki:

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Ted Vagelos & Nick Csakany

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Recently one of our very own from Saint Mark, Kristina Koutsoupis, took part in a summer mission trip to Alaska. For ten days Kristina spent her time and efforts in helping to lead an annual youth camp in Kwethluk as well as a young adult retreat in Napaskiak. She and a team of half-a-dozen others, helped teach the youth and young adults of the lower Kuskokwim Deanery the Christian approach to withstanding social temptations and a deeper understanding of Orthodoxy. Included below is a summary, in Kristina's own words about her experience in Alaska:

My experience in the villages of Alaska was so extraordinary and surreal that it is difficult to express in words. Taking part in this short-term mission trip through OCMC (the mission arm of the Assembly of Bishops – all Orthodox Churches in America), was truly a life-changing experience. Different team members from different Orthodox Churches came together to make up one team.

My initial feeling when I got asked to go on this mission trip to spread my faith was apprehension. I did not know what to expect, whom I was going to meet, where I was going to go, or what I was going to do. It was the most adventurous journey I have ever been on. Now, having completed my mission, and I cannot be happier it went the way it did. I already miss each and every child I met and my team with all my heart, and I hope that they all continue to be happy and safe.

By the end of the trip, I was covered in hugs and kisses by children who accepted

me into their families, culture, and homes. If I ever thought I was going to help them as much as I thought, I was wrong. They helped and taught me more than I ever thought possible. I learned so much about so many things (about life, God, family), and I cannot wait to go back and hear their laughs and see their smiles again.

I would like to express my love and thanks to Bishop David of Sitka and Alaska, our host Bishop (from the Orthodox Church in America), as well as all of the clergy from the Diocese. I truly appreciate all the prayers and support I received from my Saint Mark Family, especially Helen and Lou Nicozisis, who made this trip possible for me. Most importantly, I want to thank Father Mark for encouraging me to experience this phenomenal mission and who is giving all of us so many ways to better understand our faith.

I just got off Face Time (video chat) with Sophia and Cassian, two of the children that I spent 3 days with in Nepaskiak, AK. It has been a few weeks since I returned from Alaska, and I am still in contact with them. I hope to return on another mission trip soon. The bonds we formed were life-changing. Thank you OCMC.

We are so proud of Kristina, and we pray that her efforts will inspire the future generations of missionaries from Saint Mark!



PASTORAL MESSAGE

Rev. Fr. Mark Leondis



My dear faithful,

This past July, a few Saint Mark faithful traveled to Nashville to participate in the Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress and Philoptochos Conference of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. This is the highest legislative body in the Church, which all parishes throughout America are encouraged to participate. Throughout the week-long activities, we experienced our theme, "You are the voice of Christ in a Changing World," based on the directive of the Lord from the Gospel of John (Jn. 20:21).

This beautiful theme, chosen by our Archbishop, challenges each of us in our daily lives to not only talk about our Faith – but to live our Faith. One of my favorite sayings is a quote from Saint Francis of Assisi, which reads, "preach the gospel at all times and if necessary use words." We are called not just to talk about the voice of Christ – but rather, we are called to BE THE VOICE OF CHRIST. Throughout the week during the workshops, educational seminars, lectures and discussion groups, we the faithful were challenged to spread the message of Jesus Christ in the world we live in.

This is a very important theme because we see the sad reality of declining numbers and closing churches not only in our Archdiocese, but also

in all denominations. One of the fruits that came out of the Clergy-Laity Congress is the Fall Renewal Conference, "Bringing Orthodoxy to America," from October 3-5 in Portland, Oregon. This Conference is a three-day workshop that will feature parishes that are growing and renewing. While we are blessed at Saint Mark to be a thriving, Christ-centered parish, we must be a beacon of our Orthodox Faith to those in South Florida, and continually be outreaching and inviting others to our Faith. Let's continue to share our Faith and be the Voice of Christ in a Changing World

We thank our Saint Mark delegates: Presbytera Anastasia Leondis, Girard Mitchell, Emmanuel Cotronakis and Emmanuel Manos, along with our Philoptochos Delegates: Pam Parent, Fran Papamichael, Suzette Johnson and Athena Economou, for their participation in this year's Clergy-Laity Congress. We look forward to sharing with you the blessings of the Conference this Fall at our Parish Assembly.

Wishing you a blessed 15 days of August, I remain,

+ Fr. Mark Leondis

Fr. Mark Leondis

FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL
GIRARD MITCHELL – PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Saint Mark Stewards,

The Parish Council has been busy over the past year receiving quotes and overseeing improvements to our beautiful church campus. We have completed stucco repairs to the sanctuary, columns and bell tower, with various roof repairs being made. The sanctuary, hall and administration buildings were pressure cleaned and painted; a new gutter system was installed on both the first and second story of the sanctuary; the domes were refurbished with a beautiful gold system (the domes will receive scheduled service to retain luster for years to come). Two beautiful new candle stands (bangaria) were added this year in the Exo-narthex (we thank Father Alexander and Pat Sourlis). I would like to thank Fr. Mark, Jim Dovas, George Mellides and Dawn Riger for their hours of work that go beyond what many of you know.

It is the Parish Council's goal to self-fund capital repairs, and thus far, we are able to do so because of our excellent stewardship, faithful donations, strong leadership and careful budgeting.

We are now turning our attention to the kitchen (floors, cabinets, storage and walls), Sanctuary Windows (new rubber seals), the

COMPLETED CAPITAL PROJECTS

Project	Money Spent + (Source of Funds)
Gold Domes	\$125,000 (Donation)
Candle Stands	\$18,000 (Donation)
Stucco Repairs	\$30,000 (Capital Reserve Fund)
Painting	\$60,000 (Capital Reserve Fund)
Gutters	\$12,000 (Capital Reserve Fund)
Roof Repairs	\$20,000 (Capital Reserve Fund)

"Bringing Majesty and Tree of Life" recognition walls (corrected and refinished) and the resealing of the parking lot.

Our Saint Mark Family campus repairs are on going, and we thank you for your support. We have a beautiful campus and it is our goal to maintain it. The second tray passed each Sunday is earmarked for maintaining Saint Mark. On behalf of your Parish Council, I thank you all for your continued generosity and ongoing support. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Girard Mitchell, Parish Council President

THEOTOKOS AND OBEDIENCE

FR. ALEXANDER LEONDIS

On August 15th we will celebrate the Dormition, the falling asleep of the Theotokos, the Mother of God. Mary always stands at the very heart of the Church's life. She exemplifies the purest expression of human love in response to God.

In her love and obedience, in her faith and humility, she accepted to become what from eternity all creation was meant to be, the Temple of the Holy Spirit. She bore Christ, the Son of God in her womb and thus she replaces the old Temple of bricks and mortar for in Mary God makes his abode among men.

Unlike Eve, who rejected God's love in Eden, Mary accepted to become the Mother of God and fulfills the womanhood of creation. Restoration of God and the world is expressed in the Bible in terms of marital union and love.

Saint Paul writes in Second Corinthians 11:2: "I betrothed you to Christ to present you a pure bride to her one husband." The world, which finds its restoration and fulfillment in the Church, is the Bride of God. Eve's sin and rebellion against God's will distorted this fundamental relationship.

In Mary, the Woman, the Virgin, the Mother and in her affirmative response to Gabriel at the Annunciation, the Church finds its beginning, its existence and its life. The Theotokos' response manifests total obedience to God in love. This is the true response of creation to its Creator. Humanity is fully humanity when it responds in obedience to God, when it becomes a total self-giving to himself to the Lord. Mary stands before us as the example "par excellence" of

obedience and trust in God. Even in her death, she assures us of our resurrection in Christ. One of the hymn of the Dormition says:

"In giving birth, Theotokos, you have retained your virginity, and in falling asleep you have not forsaken the world. You who are the Mother of Life have passed over into life and by your intercessions you deliver our souls from death."

Saint Germanos, Patriarch of Constantinople in the seventh century, placed poetic words into the mouth of Christ telling his Mother of her impending Dormition or falling asleep:

"It is time to take you to be with me, my mother. Just as you filled the earth and its people with joy, so now you shall bring joy to the heavens, bring happiness to the mansions of my Father. Where I am there is light eternal, joy without compare, a place without equal, a city safe from corruption. And so where I am, you shall also be."

At the Theotokos' Dormition, we celebrate the victory of death for all humanity, for Mary the Mother of God, lived and died in God's will. In her we find the purest human example of victory over sin and death.

At the Dormition Vespers' Hymn, poetically speaks of this sacred feast:

"Come, you people, and let us sing the praises of the pure and most holy Virgin, from whom the Word of the Father ineffably became incarnate. Let us cry aloud and say: Blessed are you among women and blessed is your womb that held Christ. Having delivered your soul into his holy hands, do, most pure one, intercede to him for the salvation of our souls."



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FAST

Mary, the Mother of our Lord, is honored throughout the entire year, but with even a greater distinction during the month of August when we remember her "Dormition" (or "Falling Asleep") on August 15.

This Dormition feast is preceded by 14 days of prayer and fasting, during which we entreat the Ever-Virgin Mary to intercede to her Son, and our God, for guidance and help. The Church assists us in this effort by offering frequent "Paraklesis" services which more clearly bring to mind the dedication that the Virgin Mary had for God, and in turn inspires us to replicate this devotion ourselves. In short, these days provide us with the opportunity to renew our personal commitment to Jesus Christ by following the example of His mother.

DORMITION FAST SERVICES



MONDAY - AUG 1

- 6:30 pm - Paraklesis

WEDNESDAY - AUG 3

- 6:30 pm - Paraklesis

FRIDAY - AUG 5

- 6:30 pm - Vespers
(Transfiguration)

SATURDAY - AUG 6

- 9:00 am - Liturgy
(Transfiguration)

SUNDAY - AUG 7

- 8:45 am - Orthros
- 9:45 am - Liturgy

MONDAY - AUG 8

- 6:30 pm - Paraklesis

WEDNESDAY - AUG 10

- 6:30 pm - Paraklesis

FRIDAY - AUG 12

- 6:30 pm - Paraklesis

SUNDAY - AUG 14

- 8:45 am - Orthros
- 9:45 am - Liturgy
- 7:00 pm - Vespers
(Dormition, West Palm)

MONDAY - AUG 15

- 9:00 am - Orthros
- 10:00 am - Liturgy



This week Stewardship Committee member Kathi Sharp had the chance to sit down with Dean Bacalos in the fifth installation 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): Dean, you have been worshipping at Saint Mark for many years, but for those who may not know you, tell us about you and your family.

DEAN BACALOS (DB): My name is Dean Bacalos. I was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and attended Saint George Cathedral. I've lived in Boca Raton Florida for 36 years and my parents and I have been members of Saint Mark since the early 80's.

I've served in the past on the Parish Council, and have worked the festival along with many other fund raisers.

Professionally, I'm a claims adjustor for State Farm, and have been for almost 23 years.

(KS): How long have you been a member of the Orthodox Church?

(DB): As I stated, I was baptized into Orthodox Christianity as an infant at Saint George in Philadelphia, PA. We moved to Boca Raton and have attended St. Mark since the early 1980's. I've been a practicing Christian all my life.

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

(DB): Saint Mark has helped me, along with my parents in so many ways. I look forward to attending church to pray, and to give thanks for all of my families blessings, especially for the small things. I love to pray, and find myself praying many times a day. Each morning at work I make the sign of the cross on my paperwork to get the day started.

There are days and weeks when we deal with life's issues and problems, but when I attend church, my heart and mind find peace in so many ways. I find comfort when I see all the wonderful caring people every Sunday.

(KS): What is your greatest talent and how will you use it for the glory of God at our Saint Mark Parish?

(DB): My greatest talent is my work ethic, and it's something I have inherited from my parents. It is this work ethic, instilled by parents and strengthened by God's Grace, that has made me who I am today.

I work full time like everyone else, but make it a priority to attend church on a regular basis. Every Sunday I'm up at 5:45am to get to the gym, and then attend church. I don't want to make any excuse for a Sunday absence.

I volunteer at St. Mark, whether it be as an usher, or are festival, or in any other capacity. I've been a member of the Saint Mark Parish Council in the past, and worked together with an incredible group of people. They also taught me about hard work. They taught me if something needs to get done, just do it. We are here to serve. I will continue to use that work ethic in the years to come.

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

(DB): A co-worker of mine volunteers his time with foster kid programs. He's been doing this for many years. He lights up every time he talks about the kids. Many people in the world are not as fortunate as others. I'm so grateful for my parents. I can't begin to comprehend what some of these kids go through on a daily basis.

We have great people at Saint Mark, and I could see many of these people making a similar difference in the lives of such foster children.

REACHING THE DISTANTLY CONNECTED

Stewardship is a ministry defined by our ability to share. By now we all understand and agree that the life of the parish depends on us sharing our time, talents, and treasures. The same is true with the global Church and our neighbors outside the faith. His Grace Bishop Kallistos of Denver, of blessed memory, once said "People are looking for what we have, not our cultural heritage, but our faith!...The more we share, the stronger we will become. This is the will of God!" In order for a Church to thrive, it must become an outreach-oriented Church. This was the theme of this summer's National Clergy-Laity, and the national stewardship campaign theme for 2017. We are challenged to offer ourselves to our parish, and also to our surrounding community. This will demand that our stewardship be pushed to greater heights. That we are not only stewards of what is inside our walls, but also inside our hearts.

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 20, 2016

75% of the Saint Mark budget comes from Stewardship. Without your pledge every year, we cannot exist. 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)

PHILOPTOCHOS - PAM PARENT

Once again we are about to embark upon a new season of philanthropy at Saint Mark. We invite and encourage all women to join our thriving, dynamic chapter and to be a part of one of the fastest growing and most successful chapters in the Metropolis of Atlanta. Our chapter is 187 members strong and growing. The National Ladies Philoptochos Society is the largest Christian women's philanthropic organization in the United States.

While we are strong and growing, we still need the support of all the women of Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church. We have many programs and outreach efforts that require the work of our wonderful women in order to achieve our goals. Please join us as we serve the needs of our church, our community, our nation and our world.

This year we have fund raising activities and events for all the community of Saint Mark to enjoy. We will begin our season with our opening dinner meeting on Monday, October 10. This meeting will feature a presentation of our Chapter Challenge that Fran Papamichael (pictured above left with Suzette Johnson on



the right) proudly shared with others at the National Conference held in July in Nashville. It was received with hearty applause and accolades, as Fran told the audience of nearly 400 about our efforts to feed the hungry at the Caring Kitchen in Delray Beach for the past 20 years. We estimate that we have served and prepared over 60,000 meals in that time. We look forward to sharing this power point presentation at our first meeting of the new season. Watch for announcements as to time and place.

Our ever popular Men's Culinary Delights will take place on Saturday, November 12. Who will earn the honor of taking home the Golden Koutala this year? Gentlemen of Saint Mark, the challenge is on!

On November 20 Philoptochos will host Feeding Children Everywhere. We invite representatives from every ministry to join us as we prepare 25,000 meals of rice, beans and lentils for hungry children in Palm Beach County.



As January rolls around, we will once again host the Epiphany Luncheon and Vasilopita Cutting. On this day, we honor those who have served the community of Saint Mark in a special way. The funds of this day, and all our other fund raising efforts go to support the many charities of Philoptochos.

We will no sooner host our Epiphany Luncheon then we will begin to bake the koulourakia, kourambethia, and finikia that fly off the shelves at our Festival. We work hard but we enjoy fellowship and laughter at the same time. Join us as we prepare for the Saint Mark Festival. The proceeds from what we prepare and sell goes right back to our community.

We invite everyone to join the beautiful ministry of Saint Mark!

SAINT MARK CHOIR - VIRGINIA BARNES

We are in the finishing stages of preparing for the 2016 Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians. Of course, the end result of chanting "The Liturgy of Peace" composed and directed by Chris Kypros, will be the culmination of a great weekend of music and fellowship, but to me, what has been most impressive is how the Saint Mark Community has come together to make it all happen. The moment our choir requested volunteers to help with registration, providing baked goods for snacks, decorating the hall, taking tickets, serving meals, and clean up, all positions and needs were fulfilled effortlessly. The Saint Mark Choir is truly grateful! This outpouring of support even made an impact on the commemorative album which not only includes ads from businesses, but from "friends of the choir" as well. Knowing that the choir has loving and appreciative friends in the Saint Mark community gives us new strength to sing week after week.

Lastly, as the Saint Mark Choir Director, I would like to say that working on hosting the choir conference has really brought our choir together as a group. Everyone had their part to work on, and had to collaborate with each other when their tasks converged. This endeavor has brought out the best in our choir members, and has created a renewed commitment to the Saint Mark Choir. I thank every choir member for their tireless effort in bringing what I am sure will be a beautiful weekend to fruition!

SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL - HELEN LANG

The Church School Ministry teachers, substitutes, and volunteers, are enjoying a restful summer. As you see in the picture, the Church School Ministry invites all of the Saint Mark children, beginning with the age of four years old, through our graduating high school seniors, to a weekly lesson on the faith, traditions, and practices of our Orthodox faith. Under the direction of Father Mark and Father Steven, who frequent the classroom to guest lecture as their Sunday schedules permit, our volunteer teachers prepare weekly lessons to provide our children with the fundamental teachings of our faith.

With a full schedule of Church School Ministry classes, lessons, including activities, crafts, and hymns, register your children, in the Church School Ministry, at no charge, and join us as a classroom volunteer!

Please see the tentative Church School Ministry class schedule, below. We will see you at registration, beginning on August 14th, and please note, classes begin on Sunday, September, 11th. We look forward to seeing your children!

2016-2017 SCHOOL CALENDAR

September - 11, 18 25 March - 5, 12, 26

October - 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 April - 2, 23, 30

November - 6, 13, 20 May - 7, 15**

December - 4, 11, 18*

January - 8, 15, 22 * Christmas Pageant

February - 5, 12, 26 ** Sunday School Graduation

SENIORS OF SAINT MARK - DINNER OCTOBER 1

The Seniors of Saint Mark have used the summer, not as chance to relax, but to plan for a great year of events! The first event of the Fall will be an Italian dinner in the Fellowship Hall on October 1 at 5:00 pm. This will be a wonderful kick-off for another great year! Membership dues are only \$10 for the entire year! If you have any questions about membership please contact Olga Malides, for all other information please talk to the Seniors' Board President Diane Paterakis.

*Join the Seniors of Saint Mark
November 2-3, 2016*

TO

FORT MYERS

**Overnight Itinerary
Included For \$296 (\$336 Double)**

*Go to See "Evita" at the Broadway Palms
1 Night at the Holiday Inn Express Hotel
Dinner Aboard the Seminole Murder Mystery Train
Lunch and Sightseeing on the Franklin Lock Cruise*



**\$50 Deposit due by Sept. 19, 2016 to:
3000 S. Ocean Blvd. #806 Boca Raton, FL 33432**

**For More Information Call
Diane Paterakis - (561) 368 3728**

MINISTRIES REGISTRATION | AUG 14 - SEPT 4

The new ecclesiastical year is just around the corner, which means that soon all of our ministries will be in full force once again. We anticipate another loaded calendar with tons of exciting events. To prepare for it, we are holding registration for all of our ministries in the Fellowship Hall after Liturgy during the four Sundays leading up to our kick-off picnic on September 11. In the hall you will find tables set up with banners, information, and registration forms for the various ministries as well as a table where you will be able to renew your stewardship pledges for the upcoming year.

2016-2017 will be an incredible year filled with spiritual growth, service, fellowship and lots of fun. We invite you to join us, and experience all that the Saint Mark family has to offer!

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

ST MARK BIBLE STUDY This September Saint Mark will resume its Bible Study, and Orthodox Discussion group "Synaxis." This Fall, we will be taking a deeper look at the Book of Revelation in Bible Study every Tuesday at 7:00 pm (after vespers at 6:30 pm). Also, every Thursday at 11:00 am (after Paraklesis at 10:00 am) we will be gathering for our Synaxis discussions. This year the group will reading Volume 1 from the Spiritual Counsels of Saint Paisios of Athos, "With Pain and Love for the Contemporary Man." The book will be available in the Church Bookstore soon.



SAINT ANASTASIA PARAKLESIS SERVICES - THIS FALL

Starting on October 3 the Saint Mark family will be continuing our monthly paraklesis services to Saint Anastasia. She is the patron saint for those battling addictions and mental health disorders, and we will continue to turn to her to intercede to Christ our God on behalf of those afflicted. Services will be held on the first Monday of the month (with some exceptions) at 5:30 pm. If you have any loved ones you know (Orthodox or not) who would benefit from these prayers please email either Fr. Mark (frmarko@saintmarkboca.net) or Fr. Steven (frsteven@saintmarkboca.net) to add them to our monthly prayer list.

"REAL" YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY - ORTHODOXY ON TAP

Our "REAL" young adults and OCF students are fresh from summer vacation and ready to kick off another year of ministry at Saint Mark! As always we will be holding our monthly "Orthodoxy on Tap" events as well as movie nights, service projects, and other gatherings. If you are between the ages of 18-35 email frsteven@saintmarkboca.net to sign up!



SAINT MARK Mommy + Me EVERY OTHER TUESDAY @ 10 AM

Beginning Tuesday September 20 at 10 am, we will be resuming our Mommy + Me ministry. Now in our third year, we look forward to more worship, sing-a-longs, crafts, story-time, and games! If you have children 0-4 years old, and are interested in joining us please contact the Church office at (561)994-4822 or office@saintmarkboca.net



SAINT MARK "GREEK WEEK" SUMMER CAMP



GW16 - MARINA MILIOS

The 2016 summer break started off with a bang for our kids here at Saint Mark with our 16th annual Summer Camp! From June 6-10 the Church grounds were filled with the sights and sounds of children playing games, going down inflatable slides, doing crafts, and other activities.

Led by an amazing staff summer camp featured field trips to the beach and Coconut Cove Waterpark. Once again we partnered with "Kona Ice," a travelling flavored do-it-yourself snow cone truck, and the "Fantastic Fire Department" which gave the kids a chance to soak each other with fire hoses and go for rides on

a real-life fire truck! Even the "Reptile Guy" made a return appearance for the campers.

With these amazing activities in addition to the daily sports, indoor table tennis, pool, and air hockey, the kids were having the time of their lives. However camp was more than just fun and games. This year we focused our activities with the theme of a spiritual "Calling All Nations." Everyday we took a look at a different area in global Orthodoxy and learned about its culture, history, and patron saints. From Saint Innocent and the Aleutian Islands in Alaska, to the missionary efforts in Mexico and Guatemala, the kids were able to experience the treasures of our Orthodox faith through the lenses of other cultures.

Highlighting our global theme were the

exotic flavors we were served at lunch everyday thanks to Lynn Athan and her amazing kitchen staff. Lynn spent countless hours researching and preparing authentic dishes from the various regions we were studying at camp in addition to her fantastic menu.

We were also blessed to have Constantine and Mary Mukasa as this year's guest speakers. They were able to give the campers a first-hand account of how Orthodoxy is practiced in Uganda, and other countries.

We greatly appreciate all those who volunteered as staff members and counselors this summer. Without our staff and parents we have no camp program. Thank you all for taking an interest in the lives of our children and their spiritual journey. See you all at GW17!!!



INSTAGRAMS FROM OUR GW16 "TRIP TO ALL NATIONS"



How did Saint Innocent feel on his mission to Alaska? A lot like having ice cubes in your shirt!



The White and Yellow teams racing in a good old fashioned game of "Mexican Kickball"



How can we make "Taco Tuesday" an Olympic sport? Taco Jousting! #softshellsareSOMuchbetter!



Getting ready for a time-honored Japanese contest of Sumo Wrestling...in a bubble suit!

FAMILY PROMISE - 1ST HOSTING WEEK RECAP

During the first week of June, the Saint Mark family was blessed to take the next step in its mission to provide Christian love to the neighboring South Florida community. For the past three years, Saint Mark, through the efforts of the Ladies Philoptochos Society, has been a financial contributor to "Family Promise," a philanthropic organization that rehabilitates situationally homeless families. In June, however, Saint Mark became an official host site for these families!

During those seven days the classrooms in the Fellowship Hall became bedrooms, and the bridge club tables became dining room tables for two local families in need. Torrey and his 14 year old son Brandon, and Sebrina and her 5 year old son Javion called our parish "home" for the week, as dozens of Saint Mark stewards answered the call to help out.

Although the families were a bit unconventional with respect to their schedules, our volunteers were exceptionally flexible and accommodating for our two families. Many thanks are due to all of those who volunteered for this important outreach project. From food donations, to meal preparations, to overnight hosts, the Saint Mark faithful came out in full force to make a great first impression with Family Promise!

Finally, none of this would have been possible if it were not for the incredible and selfless leadership of Tim Sharp. He spent countless hours throughout the year working to bring Family Promise to Saint Mark. His efforts, the participation of the AHEPA, and our entire Saint Mark family have truly made a meaningful impact in the lives of these families (*as evident in the letter and photo we received last month, pictured below*).

This will be an ongoing ministry for Saint Mark, and all parishioners are encouraged to join in the efforts. The next host week has yet to be determined, but once it is the Church administration and Family Promise coordinators will be sure to notify the entire parish. Anyone who is interested in volunteering, be sure to talk to those who did participate and find out what a great and rewarding experience it was to host these families.



Dear, Family promise
 Brandon and myself want to say thank you very much for giving us a place to live when we HAD nowhere to turn too. when I first came into the program I was in a very low spot emotionally in my life, but Family promise was there for us big time
 All of the different churches we went to and people we met that give up their own personal time to help out families that are in need is a great thing thank so much for Everything.
 -Torrey

AHEPA / DOP - TIM SHARP



The AHEPA Boca Raton Chapter 487 and Daughters of Penelope (DOP) Cassandra Chapter wrapped up their year with the Citrus District 2 Conference from June 10th – 11th in Tampa. The AHEPA Citrus District represents the state of Florida and is composed of twenty four AHEPA and ten DOP chapters throughout the state and Puerto Rico.



Both AHEPA and DOP were well represented at the conference, and besides the daily business meetings, participated in a number of District-sponsored events. At the convention close out banquet, the AHEPA Boca Raton Chapter 487 was awarded "Chapter of the Year", which was accepted by President Tim Sharp on behalf of the chapter. In addition, DOP Connie Pilallis was honored and thanked for both her term as the DOP Grand President, but also her 25+ years of service to the DOP.



At the final chapter meeting of the AHEPA/DOP on June 17th, the new officers were initiated for the 2016-2017 year



OFFICE	AHEPA	DOP
President	Tim Sharp	Penny Coyle
V. President	Jerry Baldino	Alexa Nanos
Secretary	Harry Mirabile	Christine Baldino
Treasurer	Manny Manos	Pat Anthony

In addition, AHEPA president Tim Sharp made a presentation on the accomplishments of the chapter over the year that was presented at the District convention. Finally, DOP Grand President Connie Pilallis announced that President Tim Sharp was elected as the new AHEPA District 2 Warden and was presented with a pair of handcuffs symbolic of the Warden's duties.

AHEPA and the DOP will be meeting this summer to begin the planning and goal-setting process for the 2016-2017 year. If you are interested in joining this exciting group of men and women committed to providing service to both the Saint Mark and Boca Raton communities, please contact AHEPA president Tim Sharp at 561-213-1016 or timsharp1958@gmail.com or DOP President Penny Coyle at 954-304-4817 or pencoy50@gmail.com.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES

ELIZABETH BARTZOKIS



Elizabeth Bartzokis will be attending Duke University in NC in the fall 2016. She graduated from Saint Andrew's School as an AP Scholar with Distinction and was admitted to the Cum Laude Society. Elizabeth's passions are lacrosse and music. In lacrosse, she was chosen as an Academic All-American by the National U.S. Lacrosse

league and competed as a 6-year Varsity starter. In music, Elizabeth won national awards for jazz band and saxophone solos in NY and Chicago. Elizabeth loves her Greek heritage and is helping the needy in Greece suffering after the economic crisis by founding an organization called Hellenic Families In Need.

ROBERT DENNEY

Robert, the son of Tom & Marilyn Denney, graduated from the Ohio State University in May with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental & Natural Resources and is currently working in Tallahassee for the Florida Forest Service.



ALEX RIGER

Alex graduated from Olympic Heights High School. He will be attending Eastern University in Pennsylvania on an Academic and Basketball Scholarship. He will be pursuing a major in Criminology and fulfilling his dream of playing college basketball.



CAROLYN & STEPHANIE ZACHARIAS



Carolyn graduated from Clemson University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Management. She has moved to Arlington VA and will be working as an IT consultant.

Stephanie graduated from the University of Alabama with a Bachelor of Science in Education. She will be teaching August in Palm Beach County starting this August.



GOYA - MINISTRY REGISTRATION BEGINS AUG. 14

Orthodoxy
Sept 24 **GO** **@DistrictGOYA**

SAINT ANDREW GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
 7901 NORTH KENDALL DRIVE, MIAMI, FL 33156
 EMAIL DOMINIQUECULTRERAGOYA@GMAIL.COM TO REGISTER
 REGISTRATION CLOSES SEPT. 12

GOYA
 SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

Having spiritually recharged with amazing sessions of summer camp, our GOYANs are gearing up for what should be another phenomenal year of ministry! It all begins this August 14 with ministry registration after the Divine Liturgy in the Fellowship Hall. There we will have a table with pictures, information, and helpful GOYANs and advisors to assist you in signing up for the 2016-2017 year.

Then on Sunday, September 11, we will be kicking-off our GOYA calendar, along with all of the other Saint Mark ministries, at the annual beginning-of-the-year picnic outside by the playground after Church. Then on Friday evening, September 16, we will have our first gathering at 6:30 pm at Fr. Mark's house. This will serve as a welcoming to all of our new 6th grade GOYANs, and an opportunity to reconnect with one another after our summer break.

On Saturday September 24 we will be travelling down to Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox Church in Kendall, FL for our first District GOYA retreat of the year. This year's theme will borrow from the worldwide mobile app phenomenon "Pokemon Go." All of the day's activities will be using elements and gameplay mechanics from this app to help us rediscover some of the more *hidden* treasures of the faith. This "Orthodoxy Go" retreat will last from 9 am to 4 pm with breakfast and lunch provided. We will meet here at Saint Mark at 8 am and carpool down together, returning by 4:45 pm. If you are interested in registering any GOYANs to participant, or you yourself would like to volunteer as a chaperone/driver for the event please email dominiquetreragoya@gmail.com for more information. But act fast, as registration closes September 12.

THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS PRAYER LIST

Join us in honoring our beloved Panagia in this sacred time during the month of August. We ask you to please consider making a special offering in honor of her, our protectress and constant mediator to her Son and our God. With your donation you will have the opportunity to offer the names of any living family and friends in the form below. The names on this form will be read in every Paraklesis service during the 15 days, while names offered separately will be discarded after each service. May the Joy of Christ burn in you as brightly as it does in the Theotokos!



Names of the Living - (to be offered at all Paraklesis services during the first 15 days of August)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

In honor of our Mother the Theotokos and most Holy Virgin Mary,
 please accept my enclosed offering in the amount of \$ _____

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Please make checks payable to: Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church Memo Line: Dormition Donation
Mail or Hand Deliver To: Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church - 2100 NW 51st Street Boca Raton, FL 33431

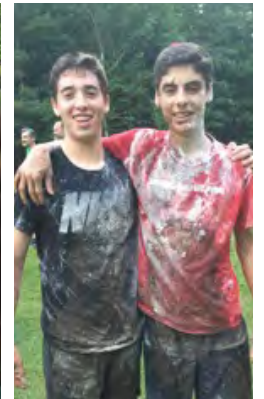


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BOCA RATON, FL 33431

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SAINT STEPHEN'S CAMP 2016 - SOPHIA ATHAN

For the third consecutive year, over 50 GOYA campers and advisors packed their bags and traveled up to the Diakonia Center in Salem, SC. The campers were welcomed with a brand new theme for the year – “Spread the Word.” Along with learning how to spread the word about God, the campers learned more about the life of Saint Stephen and how he was selfless, forgiving, and a beacon of light for the faithful around him.

Activities throughout the week included canoeing in the lake, blindfolded trust activities with friends, arts and crafts, and the ‘Ultimate Camp Warrior’ obstacle course – where campers raced through mud, flour, and water and tried to achieve the fastest times in their groups. Each night featured a special activity where the campers either competed with their cabins or in teams. There were “Junkyard Wars”

and Icebreaker activities along with new additions such as the Song Game, Lip Sync Battle, Mud Mania, and Bible Feud. Campers really brought their enthusiasm and competitive spirit. Overall, the activities for the camp were jam packed with excitement and energy that brought lots of laughs and lots of memories for all.

Camp was not only about fun and games. The most important goal for each camper was that they take time to connect on a deeper spiritual level with God. With Orthros in the morning, Alone Time with God, camp songs, and Vespers at night, campers learned how to spread the word about God through praise and worship. Orthodox Life was time spent each day discussing our faith - it was also where campers could get any spiritual questions they may have answered.

All the campers brought back the gift of strengthened friendships, a closer connection to God, and memories that will last a lifetime. Next June can't come soon enough!