



# THE Message



SAINT  
MARK

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

FEB 2016 & MAR 2016



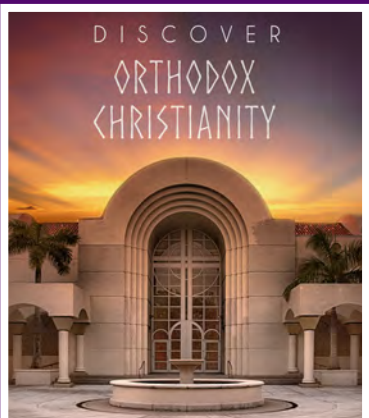
Epiphany Celebration  
West Palm Recap PAGE 4



Highlights from the  
2016 Greek  
Fest



PAGE 11



DISCOVER  
ORTHODOX  
CHRISTIANITY  
Intro to Orthodoxy  
Class NOW on Tuesdays



## SAINT MARK WELCOMES NEW PARISH COUNCIL FOR 2016

On January 24, 2016, Father Mark offered the “Affirmation of Office” for our 2016 Parish Council. Following Liturgy, the Council convened to elect Girard Mitchell as president, Jim Dovas as 1st Vice President, Steve Giakouminakis as 2nd Vice President, George Mellides as Treasurer, and Pat Anthony as Secretary for the 2016 calendar year. These council members (newcomers and veterans) will undoubtedly serve and govern the parish with reverence and love. We are blessed with many faithful members here at Saint Mark, and our parish council is an exceptional representation of our fervent and vibrant Church family.

## SAINT MARK SYRTAKI WINS BIG AT HDF

Our Syrtaki dancers competed in the annual Metropolis of Atlanta Hellenic Dance Festival in Orlando, January 15-17, 2016. Over 30 of our youth performed their choreographed routines for judges and spectators from all across the southeast. Our dancers had fantastic performances, as the junior team took home Silver Medals, and our Senior team took home the Platinum Award (highest score out all 11 teams)! We also congratulate Anastasia Theodore and Irina Giakouminakis, as both of our teams won the award for most outstanding costumes!



*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,  
Prototropesbyter  
Rev. Dn. John Christakis, MD

**Office Staff:**

Dawn Riger, Parish Administrator

**Church Maintenance:**

Yosban Pazbalino & Tim Caldwell

**Office Volunteers:**

Kalle Andromidas, Lynn Athan,  
Niki Core, Joann Haros, Marlene  
Buettner, Pres. Mary Leondis,  
Debbie Fread, Kay Poly

**Parish Council:** Girard Mitchell

**Philoptochos:** Pam Parent

**Choir:** Virginia Barnes

**Chanters:** Ramona Bean,  
George Demopoulos, Art Poly

**Ushers:** Tim Sharp

**Acolytes:** Brian Giusti & Tom Bean

**Church School:** Helen Lang

**Youth Ministry:**

Angela & Girard Mitchell, Erin &  
Rick Kontos, Costa & Lynn Athan,  
Dominique Cultrera, Claudia  
Dovas, Irina Giakouminakis, &  
Nicole Pelekanos

**Seniors:** Diane Paterakis

**Syrtaki:**

Mark Christakis & Jenny Saiger

**Greek School:** Anna Kaiser

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

**Welcome:** Elaine Zographus

**Candles:** Peter Zivanovich

**Readers:** Vivian Jenetopoulos

**Photography:** Ted Vagelos  
& Irina Giakouminakis

**The Message:** Fr. Steven Klund

*You are  
Invited!*

TO OUR LORD, GOD & SAVIOR'S

*Mystical Supper*

CELEBRATED IN THE DIVINE LITURGY OF SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

*Every Week on Sunday Morning*

SAINT MARK GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

2100 YAMATO ROAD BOCA RATON, FL 33431

*Appetizers*

ORTHROS 8:45 AM

*Main Course*

LITURGY 9:45 AM

This amazing celebration will be presided by Our Lord Jesus Christ invisibly together with the Father and the Spirit on behalf of the entire eucharistic assembly both in heaven and across the earth

YOUR PRESENCE AND PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED BY OUR HOST

FELLOWSHIP RECEPTION IMMEDIATELY TO FOLLOW

**ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL**

The Oratorical Festival is coming up fast! While the speeches aren't given until the spring, the best speeches are the ones that are started in the Fall. Get started today. This is an excellent opportunity to practice and perfect essential, public speaking skills.

**Saint Mark Oratorical Festival - March 13, 2016 after Liturgy**

**District Festival - April 2, 2016 at St. Catherine During District Lenten Retreat**

TALK TO YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER FOR MORE INFORMATION

# OUR COMMUNITY REGISTRY

MAY 2015 – JANUARY 2016

## BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

**May 3** – Milica Glamoclja:  
Child of Michael & Lisa Glamoclja  
Godparent: Alex Glamoclja

**May 17** – Albano Bala:  
Adult Baptism from Albania  
Godparent: Kristi Bala

**May 23** – Themis Linardakis:  
Child of Kostas Linardakis & Anna Kourakis  
Godparent: Kallie Vlamis

**May 30** – Devyn Joorbachi:  
Child of Sina & Bessie Joorbachi  
Godparents: Alexandra Vosotas

**May 31** – Luke Timothy Klund:  
Child of: Fr. Steven & Pres. Nicole Klund  
Godparents: Fr. Theodore & Pres. Stacey Ehmer

**July 11** – Kaden Firehock:  
Child of Kurtis & Candice Firehock  
Godparent: Brian Wirth

**August 2** – Greysen De Leeum:  
Child of Christopher & Katherina De Leeum  
Godparent: Stephanie Papanikolopoulos

**September 12** – Dimitri Cosimos:  
Child of Dimitri & Yessyke Cosimos  
Godparent: Joanna Cosimos

**September 20** – Photini Athena Bean:  
Child of Thomas & Ramona Bean  
Godparents: Constantine & Mary Mukasa

**September 20** – Eric Dicianu:  
Child of Dragos Dicianu & Corina Ceaus  
Godparent: Laura Oradam

**November 22** – Evan Demetroules:  
Child of George & Kimberly Demetroules  
Godparent: Valasia Gandolfo

**December 27** – Niki Kokkinelis:  
Child of Lambros & Sandra Kokkinelis  
Godparent: Alexa Georgakopoulos

**January 2** – John Maximos Christakis:  
Child of George & Christy Christakis  
Godparent: Jeremy Christakis

## CHRISMATED INTO CHRIST

**May 2** – Aylin Gezgin  
Sponsor: Pres. Mary Leondis

**August 20** – Michael Gabriel Malak  
Sponsor: Emmanuel Christakis

**August 22** – Jacquelyn Eckstein  
Sponsor: George Fountoulakis

**November 22** – Edward Gagliardi  
Sponsor: Tom Bartzokis

## MARRIAGES

**May 30** – Alexandros & Jessica Pappas  
Koumbaro: Dimitrios Sismaniz

**June 20** – George & Roselee Stefanopoulos  
Koumbaro: Constantine Pappas

**July 11** – Brian & Nicole Wirth  
Koumbaro: Josh Ely

**July 25** – Charles Smith & Anastasia Theodore  
Koumbaro: Anastasia Theodore

**August 22** – George & Jacquelyn Fountoulakis  
Koumbaro: Georgia Fountoulakis

**Sept 5** – Joseph & Kristine Khouzami  
Koumbaro: George Khouzami

**Sept 12** – Ioannis & Dawn Angelopoulos  
Koumbaro: Peter Symoyannis

**Sept 19** – Winslow Remley & Nicole Angelo  
Koumbaro: Nicholas Angelo

**Oct 17** – Michael Connell & Tami Dimitrakis  
Koumbaro: Alexandra Seciaridis

**Oct 31** – Thomas & Christine Doudoumis  
Koumbaro: Alexandra Seciaridis

**Nov 22** – George & Kimberly Demetroules  
Koumbaro: Valasia Gandolfo

**Dec 5** – Myron & Nicole Mortakis  
Koumbaro: Despoina Psoma

**Jan 23** – Jose & Soula Cruz  
Koumbaro: Mary

## FALLEN ASLEEP IN THE LORD: MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

**Jan 11** – Connie Janis

**Jan 12** – Mary Morafates

**Jan 15** – Alex McGraw

**Jan 22** – Helen Harris

**Jan 25** – Judy Solomon

## Blessed Lent!

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

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

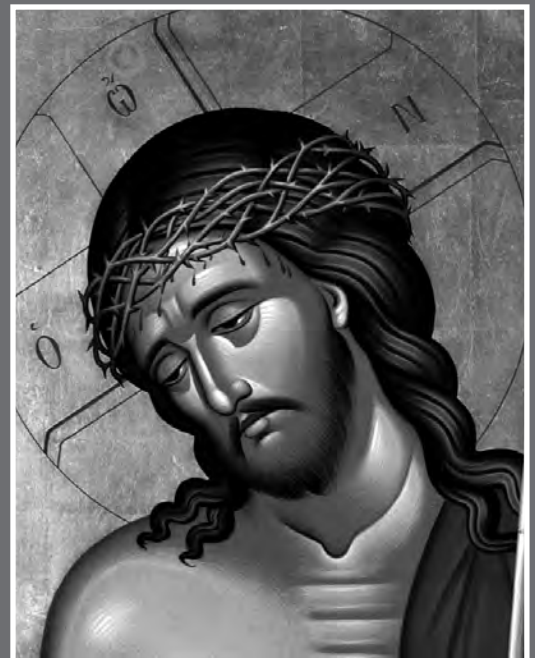
The other lenten ministries that we are offering are:

### Wednesdays

- 5:30 pm - Synaxis: "Meditations for Holy Week"
- 6:30 pm - Pre-Sanctified Liturgy

### Fridays

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





# EPIPHANY CELEBRATION

2016 WEST PALM BEACH 16



## GOYA - LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Saint Mark GOYA is already making a 'big splash' in 2016! On Saturday January 9 we had over two dozen GOYANs and their families travel up to West Palm Beach for the annual Epiphany Celebration presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios. From them, eight of our GOYANs proudly represented Saint Mark in the Cross Dive immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

Afterwards our GOYANs spent the afternoon playing a little celebratory paintball with the youth groups from Saint Nicholas and Saint Catherine. We are extremely thankful for the parents who not only joined us in worship during the morning services, but also those who bravely *chaperoned* our GOYANs in the paintball arena (albeit with high powered rifles)!

Finally to round out January, many of our GOYANs served as food runners at our Greek Festival take-out line. As we approach Great Lent, the calendar picks up with amazing events and retreats (*listed to the right*). If you would like to learn more about GOYA, please contact the office.

## WHAT'S COMING UP FOR GOYA...

- FEB. 17 - DISTRICT GOYA MEETING @ SAINT MARK (7:30PM)
- FEB. 27 - OFF-THE-WALL TRAMPOLINE CENTER (11:00AM)
- MARCH 6 - GOYA HANGOUT @ SAINT MARK (5:00PM)
- APRIL 2 - DISTRICT LENTEN RETREAT @ WPB (9:00AM)



## JOY - ANGELA MITCHELL

The Junior Orthodox Youth group of Saint Mark has had a busy holiday season. We visited our "shut ins" in December and lifted their spirits by singing Christmas carols. Following the caroling, the Zaparegos family hosted a fun get together for our JOY families at their home. What a terrific way to begin the Christmas season. Before the kids went back to school, we had our annual ice skating party. Lots of fun was had on the ice! We will continue to keep the JOY kids busy with our mini lenten retreat in February, mini golf outing in March, as well as Saturday of Lazarus and Holy Friday retreats in April. If you have not registered your 1st through 5th grader for JOY yet, it is not too late to do so. Please contact the church office for more information.



Instagram

FOR EVERYTHING SAINT MARK



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



## ORATORICAL FESTIVAL - HELEN LANG



Participating in the Saint Mark Oratorical festival is an excellent opportunity to develop and perfect your self expression of our faith, and your public speaking talent! The Saint Mark Oratorical Festival is March 13, 2016 immediately following the Divine Liturgy. The top two finishers in both the senior and the junior division will advance to the District level to compete on April 2, 2016 as part of our District GOYA Lenten Retreat. Last year we had a record 33 GOYANs participate, all of whom delivered beautiful speeches. We look forward to an even more successful event this year! Please see Mrs. Helen Lang, Mrs. Julie Vagelos or your Church school teacher for more information!

### 2016 Junior Division Topics (Grades 7–9)

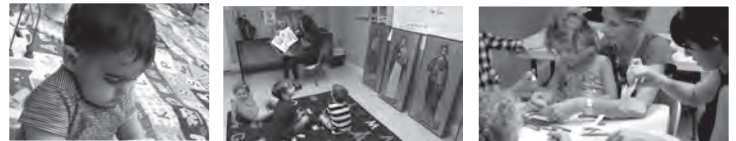
1. In the Old Testament we read that there is “a time to keep silence and a time to speak” (Ecclesiastes 3:7). What is the value of silence and quiet in a time when we are always “plugged in”?
2. Jesus fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish (Matthew 14:13–21). Discuss what this miracle teaches about our ability to serve humanity.
3. Discuss how icons play a helpful role in the prayer life of an Orthodox Christian.
4. Houses of worship and congregations have always been thought of as a sanctuary of peace and serenity. Recently they have become the vulnerable targets of violent crimes. Discuss the attitude of Orthodox Christians toward this issue today.
5. How might Orthodox Christians contribute and support the efforts to eliminate poverty and hunger in the world?

### 2016 Senior Division Topics (Grades 10–12)

1. How does gathering as a community of Orthodox Christians to participate in the Divine Liturgy influence your daily life?
2. In light of Genesis 1:24-27, the sixth day of creation, discuss how all living beings are connected and its impact on our responsibility for the planet.
3. How do you respond to people who question your belief in God and participation in the life of the Church?
4. Discuss how “the arts” (music, painting, sculpture, architecture, and others) can inspire a greater connection between God and an individual or community.
5. Human trafficking (i.e., the exploitation and enslavement of women and children) remains a tragedy even today. We know that all human beings are created by God in His image (Genesis 1:27); therefore, how can we as Orthodox Christians help these victims and assist in the efforts to eliminate human trafficking?

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

In the first twelve months of our Mommy + Me ministry, our group has grown by leaps and bounds! The parents and their children still gather in the Church to light candles, but this year instead of climbing up to the choir loft, we head next door to our new “early education classroom” to begin a short prayer service in front of a child-sized iconostasis. The class continues with story-time, music, crafts and free-play time. During the play time, the parents (and even a few grandparents) are led by Fr. Steven in a spiritual discussion about parenting with Orthodox values in a modern world. We will be meeting every other Tuesday at 10 at Saint Mark. 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 details.



### AHEPA - TIM SHARP

Consider joining the “New Generation” of AHEPAN Brothers which have recently included Dr. Steve Alman, Lucas Metropulos, Costa Athan, Harry Mirabile, Jim Dovas, Demetrios Pavlou, Theo Doukides, John Pelekanos, Anthony Intagliata, Joseph Pores, Vangelis Kaiser, Tom Prakas, Peter Karantonis, Bill Skoundridakis, Rick Kontos, Dr. Emmanuel Somers, Andrew Limperos, John Theodosakos, Dr. Spyros Magliveras, Ted Vagelos, Emmanuel Manos, John Voytilla.



*Some of our AHEPANs at our first chapter social of the year at the Beirgarten*

By joining the AHEPA Boca Raton Chapter 487 you become part of an organization that promotes Hellenism, Education, Philanthropy, Civic Responsibility, and Family and Individual Excellence. AHEPA is one of the largest Hellenic heritage groups in the world and is a major community service organization in North America.

Our Valentines Dinner-Dance is scheduled for Friday, February 12th at Bevenuto in Boynton Beach. The event starts at 7:00 pm with complimentary cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, followed by a delicious meal and dancing throughout the evening. A special 50:50 raffle will also be held to benefit the Dollars for TICs Scholars Foundation which was established by Brother Chuck Diamantis' daughter Kelsey and wife Diane to benefit students entering college and suffering with Turrets Syndrome. All other proceeds from the dinner-dance will go towards the chapter's scholarship fund, along with other Hellenic and philanthropic endeavors such as Hellenic Families in Need, PACE Center for Girls and Family Promise. Contact Tim Sharp at 561-213-1016 or [timsharp1958@gmail.com](mailto:timsharp1958@gmail.com) for more details on membership or the Valentines Dinner-Dance.

**PHILOPTOCHOS - PAM PARENT**



The women of Philoptochos hosted our annual Saint Mark Epiphany Luncheon and Vasilopita cutting on, Sunday January 10, to a sell-out crowd. Two hundred seventy-five parishioners and guests enjoyed a delicious pastichio dinner underwritten and prepared for us by the Orfanos family and Zorba's Greek Taverna. We thank them for their overwhelming generosity. Our Greek School children sang the Kalanda for our enjoyment as we chased out the old year and welcomed 2016. Thanks so much to the GOYA youth who helped serve the meals, Parish Council members who assisted all day long, and to all the Philoptochos women who set up, served and cleaned up. We appreciate the efforts of Ted Vagelos who was our entertaining emcee. It was truly a Saint Mark team effort. Through our Vasilopita sales we were able to donate over \$1000.00 to Saint Basil Academy. The proceeds of the luncheon will go to support the many charities of Philoptochos in the name of Saint Mark.



We have been busy, busy, busy, baking and working for our festival. Our women baked over 3000 koulourakia, 1500 kourambietes, 1500 finikia and 500 pasta flora. After preparing all those tasty treats, our many volunteers were busy at our booths selling pastries and coffee to our many happy customers.

Our membership event, "Margaritas, Mezethaka and Membership" was held on February 6. Our women enjoyed appetizers, wine and margaritas, but more important, wonderful fellowship. We are the third largest chapter in our metropolis and our chapter is on target to increase our membership to 175 this year. Come and be a part of our beautiful organization established by Archbishop Athenagoras to be the philanthropic branch of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.

We anticipate with great enthusiasm our fashion show, "The Season in Style," to be held on February 27, at the Delray Beach Marriott. A delightful luncheon will be served, and many lovely items will be raffled. Models will include men, women and children from our parish. Fifty-year members of Philoptochos will be honoured as well. Tickets are on sale in our hall after Liturgy each Sunday.



**SAVE THE DATE**

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2016  
11:00 AM  
Delray Beach Marriott**

To Volunteer for a Committee,  
Donate a Raffle or Become a Sponsor,  
Contact Athena Economou, Event Chair  
561.630.5826 [athenaae@aol.com](mailto:athenaae@aol.com)

**St. Mark Ladies  
Philoptochos Society**  
....  
**Spring Fashion  
Show  
&  
Luncheon**  
....  
**To Benefit  
Philoptochos Charities  
and  
St. Mark Church**  
....  
**Honoring our 50 Year  
Members**  
....  
**Fashions by  
Mario Pucci Boca**

Circe + SWAG  
Men's Collection,  
DELRAY BEACH  
and  
JANIE AND JACK  
for Children,  
BOCA RATON

DISCOVER  
ORTHODOX  
CHRISTIANITY



TUESDAYS AT 6:30 PM  
2/2    2/9    2/16    2/23    3/1

# MOONLIGHT & Mistletoe

\* BALL AND SILENT AUCTION \*

## MOONLIGHT & MISTLETOE - DENISE ALMAN

The Moonlight & Mistletoe Ball was a most successful evening! Hostesses filled their tables with family and friends making it a sell-out event with 304 guests in attendance! Their creative and beautiful table designs of flowers, berries, lights, candles, ribbon, candy, figurines, Greek columns and glitter - lots of glitter, turned the ballroom into a magical Christmas wonderland!



The Auction Committee did an amazing job collecting donations and arranging them in beautiful packaging-perfect for Christmas gifts. We appreciate the generosity of our parishioners and local businesses for contributing items and services towards the auction.

The entertainment provided by The Islanders and DJ George, alternated Greek and American music keeping the dance floor full all night long!

The feedback has been only positive, from parish members as well as visiting guests. It was truly a reflection of the strong foundation we share through our love for our faith and our Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church family.

We left the ball with happy tired dancing feet and a song in our heart. A wonderful Christmas memory was made for all.



## MOONLIGHT & MISTLETOE BALL 2016!

Save the date for our ENCORE! Saturday, December 10 2016, at the Marriott at Boca Center. Music by The Islanders and DJ George!

## GREEK LANGUAGE SCHOOL - ANNA KAISAR



The Saint Mark Greek language school had an amazing start in 2016. Our

youngest students bid farewells to the old year (2015) and welcome the New Year (2016) with singing the Kalanda; during our Saint Mark Epiphany Luncheon.

On Friday, January 29th, and during our Saint Mark Festival, we celebrated the Three Hierarchs and the Day of Greek Letters. Fr. Mark led us in the celebration of an Artoklasia service (offered by Zaparegos family) for the feast of the Three Hierarchs - Saint Basil the Great, Saint Gregory the Theologian and Saint John Chrysostom. Afterwards, father offered a few remarks on the importance of our Orthodox faith, and its connection to the Greek letters and heritage.

Our students, parents and teachers attended the service. All the students said the Three Hierarchs Apolytikio and a few students from the fourth and fifth grade spoke about the Three Hierarch's Life and Mission.

It is the Greek school staff and faculty's prayer that all of the Saint Mark family, enjoy a healthy and blessed 2016!!!



## DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE - CHRISTINE BALDINO

The Daughters of Penelope hosted a fun evening reception on Friday Jan. 8 with a lovely turn-



out! We were pleased to welcome dignitaries who were able to attend: Connie Pillalis, Grand President; Stella Sirks, District Governor; Eleni Spanos, District Secretary; District Treasurer; Aspa Kostopoulos, National Liaison from Canada and Mary Denning, National Advisor to the Maids. Thanks to the group effort of our Boca Raton Chapter, we welcomed our sisters from Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach along with our many AHEPANS who came to support us. We enjoyed a delicious dinner with amazing desserts, a raffle with great prizes, and an evening filled with pride for the bonds of this wonderful sisterhood.

## SENIORS OF SAINT MARK - DIANE PATERAKIS

Happy New Year! Considering all of our theater trips, our barbecue rib dinner, potluck events, 2015 was very busy for our members. We believe that 2016 will be no different! On Feb. 17 at 12 pm we are inviting members and guests to a luncheon at the Delray Beach Golf Club. The cost is \$25 for members, \$26 for non-members. Then on Sunday Feb. 28 at 2 pm we will be attending the "Florida Follies" at at Olympic Heights High School. Tickets are \$28. After the show we will be going to Mamma Mia's for an early dinner. Please call Diane Paterakis for reservations for both events (561) 368-3728.

## AN INTERVIEW WITH OUR STEWARDS

KATHI SHARP INTERVIEWING SOPHIA CHRISTAKIS



*This week Stewardship Committee member Kathi Sharp had the chance to sit down with Sophia Christakis in the third 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):** Sophia, you were the Saint Mark choir director for many years and now serve as one of our chanters, but for those who may not know you, tell us about you and your family.

**SOPHIA CHRISTAKIS (SC):** My husband Paul is a pediatrician here in Boca Raton, FL and I am a Kindergarten teacher. We have four grown children, Luke, Georgia, Constantine and Barbara and have been blessed with a wonderful son-in-law, Peter, Georgia's husband

**(KS):** How long have you been a member of the Orthodox Church, and what does Saint Mark and Orthodoxy mean to you and your family?

**(SC):** I have been a member of the Orthodox Church since birth. I had the blessing of growing up in a priest's family and have always loved our faith. Saint Mark has been our home parish for 28 years. The prayers of our fellow parishioners and our priests have helped us through hardships, such as the loss of our parents, and blessings, such as watching our children grow. We have always kept the Church and our faith as the center of our family. In a world where there is so much confusion and evil it is the place we go to for strength and hope. I remember how devastating and confusing everything felt on 9/11. It seemed that the end was close at hand. Paul and I texted each other and we immediately drove to Saint Mark that day to pray together and ask our Lord to protect and guide us. Participating in the Liturgy has brought us many blessings and I feel has helped our children grow into adults who understand and value their Orthodox Christian Faith.



By attending Sunday School, speaking in the Oratorical Festival, participating in GOYA, the Choir and Syrtaki, and serving in the altar our children learned to love Saint Mark and have kept the Church as a priority in their lives as young adults.

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

**(SC):** I believe that everything we have, including our spouse and especially our children, are gifts from God. So for me

the greatest gift I have been given is the love of my family. The Lord has also blessed me with a love of music, which I have shared with our parish at various times and in various ways. When I am chanting the Liturgy or any of our beautiful Orthodox hymns I feel closer to God than at any other time. I pray that He will allow me to serve Him for many years to come.

**(KS):** Can you think of or suggest a ministry that you would like added at Saint Mark for the benefit of our faithful?

**(SC):** I feel that our parish has many wonderful ministries. The only thing that comes to mind right away is a service to bring our elderly who can no longer drive to church. It is very sad to think that we may have some parishioners in the area who can no longer drive and because of this are not able to attend services. It would be wonderful if we could come up with a carpool system or something that would allow these pillars of our community to be able to be with us during the Liturgy.

## 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)



# GET TO KNOW THE 'REAL' YOUNG ADULTS



KELSEY DIAMANTIS - CO-FOUNDER OF "DOLLARS 4 TIC SCHOLARS"

*"REAL" (Revitalizing Emerging Young Adult Leaders) is a nation-wide initiative from the Archdiocese to recommitt itself to ministering to our faithful young adults. Our goal at Saint Mark is continue to provide opportunities for our young adult believers to grow in their faith, and to equip them for a life of service to God and others. Kelsey Diamantis is one such 'REAL' young adult who has not only remained committed to her faith, but has already made a lasting impact in her philanthropic work.*

**FR. STEVEN (FS):** Kelsey, you have been a part of Saint Mark for many years, but for those who may not know you, tell us about you and your family.

**KELSEY DIAMANTIS (KD):** I was born in Boca Raton. Here at Saint Mark, I attended Sunday School as well as Greek School. I danced in the Syrtaki group at Saint Mark for many, many years (since I was at least 5 or 6!) and I also participated in GOYA as a youth (serving as vice-president during the last few years). I am now a part of the "REAL" young adult ministry here at Saint Mark.

My family has been a part of this community ever since I was a child. My father is Chuck Diamantis – who is an active AHE-PAN, and my mother Diane and my younger brother Peter are also longtime members here. Though our schedules may pull us in different directions, we always enjoy attending church together as a family.

**(FS):** What does your faith, and the Saint Mark family mean to you?

**(KD):** Orthodoxy has always been an important aspect of my life. I've always been very faithful, and I do my best to serve God throughout my daily life. The Saint Mark family has always been there in times of need, and going to church every Sunday is a sweet reminder that I have so many people around me who love and are there to help me to reach my greatest potential. I find that here, I am constantly strengthening my faith and bonding with friends, and as I have gotten older, I truly appreciate the traditions of our faith.



**(FS):** How has your faith led you to make a difference in the world around you?

**(KD):** Living through God's word, I have always had a calling to help others. I am a 4th grade teacher (at a Catholic school actually) and I absolutely love it! I love guiding children towards their highest potential and the calling of faith that God wants.

People may not know this, but I was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome at the age of 11 after showing symptoms at the age of five. When I was applying for colleges, I couldn't find any scholarships for students with Tourette's. My mom and I looked year after year, but still, nothing. Once I graduated, we said to each other "let's do this! Ourselves!" We set out to

help those who are going through now, what I went through then. In doing so, we created "Dollars 4 Tic Scholars" - our non-profit scholarship program that awards college scholarships to students with Tourette Syndrome. We knew that this was the path God has set us on in order to help others. We have been so blessed with such amazing friends and family that help us with our program by volunteering to help with our fundraisers, or just the basics of going through applications! God is definitely watching over us.

**(FS):** That's amazing! I am sure that all of those young students really appreciate it. How can people help the foundation?

**(KD):** We are always looking for donations or for volunteers to help with our fundraisers. As a matter of fact, we have an awesome fundraiser coming up in

February! It's called: *"Friday Nite with Chelsea White!"* It's a comedy night on February 26 at 6:30 pm at the South County Civic Center and it's going to be AMAZING!!! Chelsea White is a producer for the show "Girl Code Live!" on MTV, and has Tourette as well. I consider her a "steward" in every sense of the word, as she has been so generous with her time, treasure, and talent for our upcoming event. We are so blessed to have Chelsea on board with us!!

For more information about how to register for *"Friday Nite with Chelsea White,"* and the foundation in general please visit our website:

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[WWW.DOLLARS4TICSCHOLARS.ORG](http://WWW.DOLLARS4TICSCHOLARS.ORG)

CLEAN MONDAY

MARCH 14, 2016

CONFESSION: 3:30-5:30pm

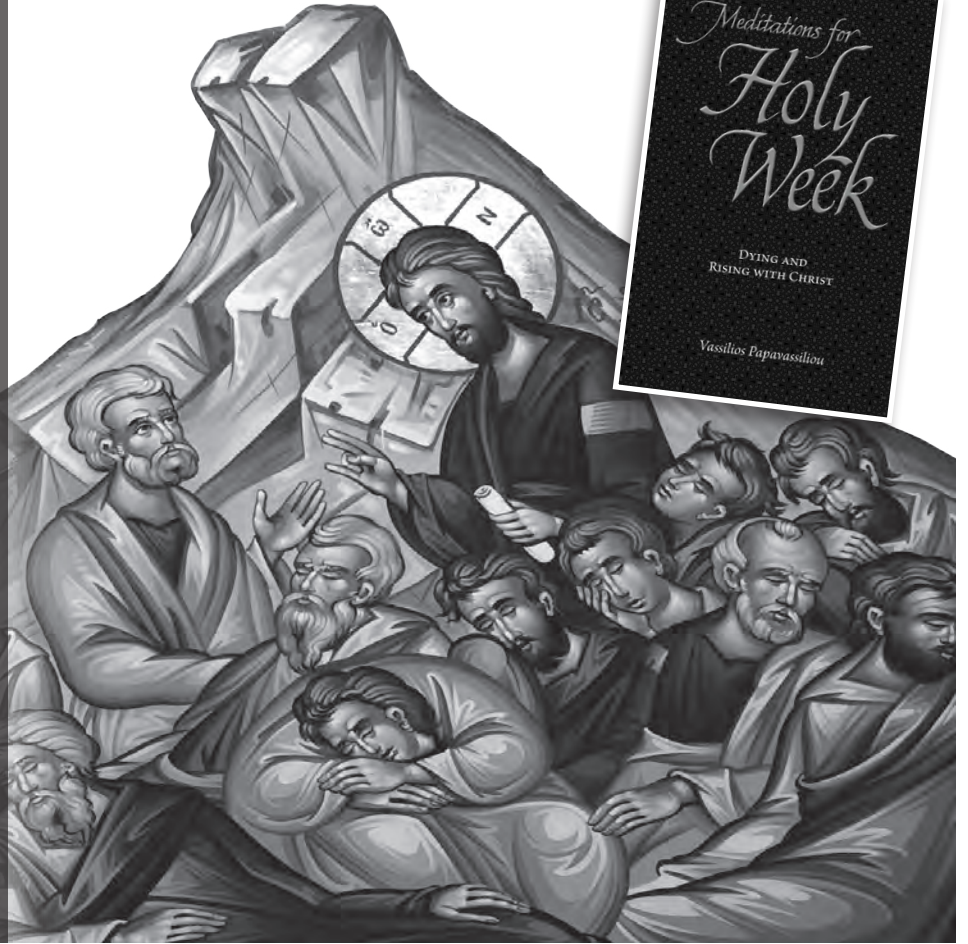
Call the office to schedule  
an appointment.

HOLY UNCTION: 5:30pm



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

2016 Lenten Focus:  
"Meditations for Holy Week"  
By: Fr. Vassilios Papavassiliou



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

If you would like to sign up for the Pascha card, donate an Easter lily in memory or honor of a loved one, or make a donation toward an item for Holy Week, please stop by the table in the Fellowship Hall following the Divine Liturgy.

### HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA DONATIONS

Many parishioners ask to donate for Holy Week/Pascha items.  
If you are so inclined, please fill out the form below and stop by the table in the hall.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unction Supplies (oil, cotton balls, bags) - \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Floral Wreath (Thursday evening) - \$275     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Holy Friday (Sheet for Christ's body) - \$40      | <input type="checkbox"/> Flowers for the Iconostasis - \$125          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charcoal - \$50                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Paschal Candle (Priest) - \$100              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rose Water/Rose Petals - \$75                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Palms for Palm Sunday - \$180                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box of Charcoal - \$25                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Case of Communion Wine (Commandaria) - \$140 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Box of Incense - \$30                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Saint Mark Easter Card - \$25                |

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_ In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Names as you would like them to appear: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Total: \_\_\_\_\_



.....  
**2016 GREEK FESTIVAL**  
.....

*“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” Matthew 18:20*

So now that the tents are down and the cleanup is complete we have an opportunity to reflect on what our festival really means to us. The countless hours of hard work and dedication by all of you is the greatest reflection of who we are as the Saint Mark family. Each and every one of us should be extremely proud and grateful that we have the opportunity to come together each day as part of our Church.

At every booth, the visitors to our community were greeted by people who were happy and proud to share for a few brief moments the greatness of our culture and more importantly our faith. Our visitors left our festival with a positive outlook on who we are and for some of them the question of how can they become a part of such a great community.

While there are many things that made this year extraordinary, one that stands out is the level of involvement of the youth of our community. The children of Saint Mark were there to make a gyro, take admissions, carry supplies, clean tables, run to get food for the take out line and to entertain our guests with the amazing dances from our Syrtaki. A true measure of our success as a community is the involvement of our young men and women.

Our treasurer and his team are working hard to get our final numbers and we will share this information with you as soon as possible and the initial reports are very positive. Even without the final numbers, we can all be extremely proud of what we have accomplished.

We would like to thank the Aegean Duo and our amazing DJ for the fantastic job that they did this year. We thank all of our sponsors and vendors for supporting us year after year. We thank Father Mark and Father Steven for their leadership and guidance to us all. We thank our employees and those behind the scenes that keep everything moving and we thank all of you for your sacrifice and dedication because without you there is no festival. We thank God for all of the blessings that he bestows on all of us.

Thank you,

Steve Giakouminakis and Joe Pores





**SAINT MARK**  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
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BOCA RATON, FL 33431

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