



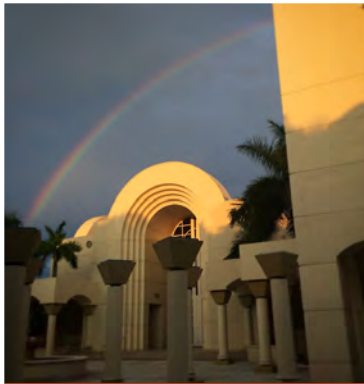
THE Message



SAINT
MARK

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

DEC 2015 & JAN 2016



"What Saint Mark Means to Me" - Kathi Sharp PAGE 3



The 4th Annual Men's Culinary



PAGE 5

The Seniors of Saint Mark
Christmas Luncheon
Sands Resort (Delray Beach)
DEC 10
12:00pm
\$33
(\$35 for non-members)



Community Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

On November 23, over 150 faithful from various religious backgrounds from all over Boca Raton gathered at Saint Mark to offer Thanksgiving to our Lord for His abundant blessings. Those in attendance were deeply moved as the clergy representatives assembled in the sanctuary offered prayers, reflections, and statements of mutual peace and gratitude on behalf of the faithful. We thank Virginia Barnes and the Saint Mark choir for their beautiful chanting, as well as the Parish Council members, ushers, and welcome team who served during this memorable event. We also thank the Philotochos for the wonderful reception that followed in the Hall.

COUNTDOWN TO MOONLIGHT & MISTLETOE

In just a few days the Saint Mark family will be gathering at the Boca Marriott in Town Center to begin celebrating our Lord and Savior's Nativity. The event will begin Saturday night, December 12, at 6:30 pm and will be filled with live Greek music from "The Islanders," as well as American music courtesy of "DJ G." This year's event will have a silent auction featuring fantastic items to bid on. All proceeds will not only benefit our Saint Mark parish, but the local philanthropic organization for displaced families: "Family Promise."

MOONLIGHT
& Mistletoe
* BALL AND SILENT AUCTION *

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

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

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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

"LEAVING STUFF BEHIND" Rev. Fr. Mark Leondis



My Dear Faithful,

Have you ever felt so overwhelmed, so discouraged, so hopeless, that you didn't know what to do? Have you ever felt like the world was crashing down on you? Whether it's issues with co-workers or family . . . whether it's illness or chronic pain . . . whether it's watching your child make the same mistake over and over again. . . whether it's that "difficult" talk you know you have to have with a friend. These overwhelming, daunting feelings can lead to deep dark discouragement.

So how do we climb out of the pit? At the beginning of the 20th century, Thomas Edison was working to develop a battery capable of powering an automobile. Things were not going well. The genius inventor had tried 10,000 experiments. All of them had failed!

Most people would be demoralized. Not Edison. His famous line sums up his determination, "I have not failed, I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

Edison is the kind of person I want on my team when the chips are down. That's the kind of optimism that we need in this life.

Another great example is King David. If Edison could see the silver lining in the depressing cloud, David knew the secret to soaring above it. David was seventy years old and ready to retire. After forty years on Israel's throne, it was time to pass the leadership baton to his son, Solomon, and his task was daunting:

- Who was he to fill the shoes of Israel's greatest leader since Moses?
- Who was he to pick up the harp of the great psalmist?
- Who was he to follow the man who was "a man after God's own heart"?
- And who was he to bring to life David's dream of building a temple for God?

Solomon was overwhelmed and scared . . . but King David's words to him were quite powerful: "Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Don't be afraid or discouraged by the size of the task, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you." (1 Chronicles 28:20)

God is your ladder out of the pit of discouragement and despair. That is what David reminded Solomon: "My God—the one who dropped Goliath, scattered enemies, and brought hope to a discouraged heart—is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you."

If you want to overcome the difficulties in life – the reality is that you can't do it alone – only with the Lord on your side. If you turn your life over to God, He will raise you out of that pit of pain, discouragement, isolation and sickness.

Come before God. Name your daunting task. Identify your frustrating challenge. Get "real" with your relationship to Him and about your discouraged heart. Then praise him and lean on him. He is your ever-present help. He will not fail you or forsake you.

Wishing you a blessed Nativity Season,

Fr. Mark Leondis
Father Mark

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

YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS WILL BE HANDING THE TOPICS AND DETAILS SOON

"WHAT SAINT MARK MEANS TO ME" - KATHI KARAGEORGES-SHARP

What does Saint Mark mean to me? In a word, Love.

My husband and I have been members here at Saint Mark since around 1991. It was actually the festival that brought us here...I say this because I was not an active member but at my core, I wanted to be more involved in my church and my faith. I had to change my actions, not just my thoughts. It was a process.

The festival not only brought us to Saint Mark but it brought the gift of Denise and Steve Alman into our lives. You see, I was getting my teeth cleaned by a beautiful Greek dental hygienist- Denise. During my appointment, we made plans to go to the Greek festival together. That night, the four of us met at the festival and it changed us forever.

Still, when I came to church, it was intimidating. I did not (and still do not) understand many of the sacraments of our beautiful faith and I could not explain any of it to my husband Tim (who grew up in the Lutheran denomination).

Fast forward to our daughter Kara's birth and baptism...Tim consequently decided to convert because he wanted to receive communion with Kara. We became God parents to four babies and, of course, Tim was chrismated. Now God presented us with real ties and responsibilities to our extended family. Over time, we became more involved with various ministries at different levels. Additionally, we had losses - my mom first in 2006 followed in 2011, 12 and 13 with the losses of Tim's dad, mom and my dad in that order. Our beloved Saint Mark family was there for us. Thank you all for that.

We have so many friends here now-and we continue to deepen these relationships and make new friends. When I come to church now, I feel love, not intimidation. I still do not know all of the sacraments but I do know that I am filled with love- to give and to receive when I am here. And I know that at the core of each of us, we all want the same thing- to be loving and to be loved-especially when we are among our Saint Mark family.

I have experienced it at Costco, in airports, schools, and the mall- when we see each other in these places, we reach out to each other- we are not strangers looking away but instead, we try to make a connection to each other, anchored through our shared belonging to Saint Mark. And I have seen it here at Saint Mark with strangers. I have a beautiful story of our Saint Mark family taking care of one another.

A few weeks ago, I was coming to church. In the parking lot, I saw someone holding a huge umbrella and several people around Ida, who had fallen. None of these people knew her but Gino was here ushering and someone notified him. He was coming out to see how she was, 911 had already been called, someone was holding ice on her wrist and was attending to her and, of course, the umbrella was shading her from the intense heat of the sun that morning. I happen to know the people in this scenario-from all walks of life- all ages- all good Samaritans coming to the aid of a parishioner trying to come to church. (For her son's memorial no less, which of course, none of them knew). She did not get to church that day, she left in an ambulance with Gino for the hospital. She has since had surgery to repair her broken wrist.

The situation brings tears to my eyes for what happened to Ida, especially under the circumstances of her trying to honor her departed and beloved son. However, the tears are a mixture of sadness and joy. I witnessed something so beautiful. The actions of those who cared for Ida were pure love and compassion.

Do you feel the love that is here at Saint Mark? We are all connected. Saint John writes in his First Epistle, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God."

Our love for God has helped us to build this magnificent sanctuary. Additionally, we are blessed with outstanding leadership and ministries. Our Love of God — our stewardship to Him, reflects the offering of our blessings back to God. Everything we have and that we are is because of God and belongs to God. He works through us and it is our obligation to serve Him in everything that we do, and that is shown by our financial support in our Stewardship.

I know we all love Saint Mark. And I know that we all appreciate all that our Church is and the abundance that we receive here through worship, fellowship, ministries, outreach, and more. We cannot afford to take any of what we have here for granted. What we have did not just happen through spontaneous combustion or serendipity- it was a process to get here. Let's all be part of the process as we move forward to preserve, protect, and expand the love and the experience that is unique to our beloved Saint Mark Church.

How do we do this? WE come from our heart center and give lovingly and generously of our time, treasure, and talent- our stewardship! So, rejoice in the experience available to us at Saint Mark! Be part of the Saint Mark Family!

Merry Christmas...

We invite you to join us in the celebration of our Lord and Savior's birth. We are offering a wealth of services (*listed below*) for our faithful to worship and glorify our Lord Jesus Christ during this Nativity season. You can also see our full parish schedule on our website for more services and events. www.saintmarkboca.net

- **Saturday, December 12 - 9 am**
Divine Liturgy - Saint Spyridon
- **Thursday, December 17 - 9 am**
Divine Liturgy - Saint Dionysios
- **Thursday, December 24 - 5:30 pm**
Christmas Eve - Royal Hours
Vesperal Liturgy - 6:30 pm
- **Friday, December 25 - 9:00 am**
Orthros - Nativity of our Lord
Christmas Liturgy - 10 am

...and a Happy New Year!

HOUSE BLESSINGS

As January rings in the New Year, the Church carries on the Tradition of celebrating the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ (Jan. 6) and in turn blessing the houses of our families with that same water. It is important that we begin 2016 in the right way, by giving thanks to God and asking for His blessings and protection to abide with us.

Fr. Mark and Fr. Steven will be making house visits in the beginning of January in the weeks before the Saint Mark Greek Festival. Below are the dates in which our clergy will devote to making these visits:

- **January 11 (Monday)**
- **January 12 (Tuesday)**
- **January 13 (Wednesday)**
- **January 18 (Monday)**
- **January 19 (Tuesday)**
- **January 20 (Wednesday)**

Please call Dawn Riger at the Church Office (561 994 4822) in order to request a house blessing. Due to the large size of our community, we will be scheduling house visits in groups nearby each other. After calling the office we will notify you of when a priest will be coming to your home. This is a service that we offer to our faithful stewards of Saint Mark.

SAINT MARK MINISTRY NEWS

GOYA - YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM



What an amazing fall it has been for our GOYA! Since our first gathering at Fr. Mark's house, we have had two GOYA "Hangout" nights at the Church, two District retreats (in Miami and Ft. Lauderdale respectively), a kayaking trip, and even a 5k color run!

The most recent of these events was "The Gateway" Advent Retreat at Saint Demetrios. The day began with the Divine Liturgy celebrating the feast of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple. After the service and brunch, the GOYANS took part in several activities and discussions that impressed upon them the significance of the feast, and the Virgin Mary's role in our salvation and the Christian Tradition at large.

The calendar year will conclude with our annual carolling trip to the Baby House, and the 2016 new year will continue our momentum with the Epiphany Celebration in West Palm Beach, Paintball, a trip to the "Off-the-Wall" trampoline center, and much more!

GOYA is open for all Orthodox youth from grades 6-12. If you are interested in learning more about our Saint Mark GOYA please speak with any of our youth leadership team members at Church or contact our logistics coordinator Dominique Cultrera at DominiqueCultreraGoya@gmail.com

COMING UP...

DEC. 10 - GOYA CAROLLING @ BABY HOUSE (5:45PM)
 JAN. 9 - EPIPHANY CELEBRATION @ WPB (9:30AM) &
 PAINTBALL @ HOTSHOTS (AFTER LITURGY)

JOY - ANGELA MITCHELL

The Junior Orthodox Youth Group of Saint Mark has been off to a busy start this ecclesiastical year! Following our annual kickoff party at Strikes bowling alley we held our first JOY retreat. What a huge success that was with Fr. Steven leading "Make a Difference Day." The kids learned about what it means to be "clothed in God's image" and how we can "clothe one another in His love." After a few games (and an impromptu game of charades), the children were able to help donate toiletries and common hygiene items to those in need, as well as make greeting cards for both our shut-ins and our hospital visitations. Then, on November 7 our JOY families took a weekend trip to the "Gumbo Limbo Environmental Complex." There our families had the opportunity to tour the turtle orphanage, hike the boardwalk trail, and get closer to nature. Upcoming JOY events include Christmas caroling on December 20, and ice skating on January 2. If you have not registered your children in 1st through 5th grades, for JOY, you may do so by calling the church office. It is never too late to get the children involved.



Instagram

FOR EVERYTHING SAINT MARK

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



PHILOPTOCHOS - PAM PARENT

This fall has been a busy and productive one for the women of Philoptochos of Saint Mark. November 1, was Philoptochos Sunday and the feast day of our patron saints, Cosmas and Damian. The Board took the oath of office during Liturgy, and we had a memorial service for our sisters who have fallen asleep in the Lord. A beautiful artoclasia was prepared in thanksgiving for our community as well. We thank Fr. Mark for providing a moving ceremony and tribute to Philoptochos. After Liturgy, the women of Philoptochos hosted a light luncheon in the hall as a thank you to our parishioners for their generosity to our many charities. As well, the members of Saint Mark donated \$1,000 to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and their philanthropic fund. It was a beautiful day in many ways.



On November 7, Philoptochos hosted our fourth annual Men's Culinary Delights to a sellout crowd of chefs and guests. Over 20 chefs competed for the honor of winning the "Golden Koutala," and we feasted on a cornucopia of tasty treats. Our talented chefs went all out and provided us with delicious samples of lamb chops, London broil, jambalaya, Greek taco dip, tiropita with honey, sufico and much, much more. The desserts were phenomenal as well. It was hard to choose between magic mango bread, pumpkin chocolate chip cookies, octopus cookies and other delights. Many guests sampled one of each! It was an evening of great food, fun and fellowship. As always, all proceeds of the evening will go to help us support the many charities of Philoptochos.

SWEET	SAVORY
1 - JIMMY ASHMEN	1 - TED VAGELOS
2 - BILL JOHNSON	2 - HARRY MIRABLE
3 - VINCENT BARNES	3(T) - T. COPULOS, G. DOUGLAS, C. HAMRICK

Coming up right after Christmas, on January 10, we will celebrate our annual Epiphany Luncheon and Vasilopita Cutting. On this day we honor parishioners who have made a significant contribution to the life of our church. A wonderful meal will be prepared. Help us usher in the New Year and honour those of us who serve our church community. This event is always a sellout, and reservations are required. See the enclosed flyer for details.

Calling all bakers! We will be baking our pastries for the Festival during the third week of January. Join us as we prepare koulourakia, kourabiethes, and finikia. We welcome all the women of Saint Mark. Details and sign-up will be forthcoming soon.



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

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

SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL - HELEN LANG & JULIE VAGELOS

Our Church School year is off to an amazing start, thanks to the Saint Mark families, we have surpassed all previous student enrollment, and are experiencing record attendance in church school classes each Sunday!

Our teachers prepare age appropriate lessons and activities each Sunday, beginning with a review of the weekly Gospel and introducing and reinforcing the history, and practices of the Orthodox Faith. Our K-2nd grade students began the year with a craft activity developed by Mrs. Giakouminakis, to the lesson of Adam & Eve, in the Garden of Eden. We are getting our church voices 'in tune', with the assistance of Mrs. Barnes, who is teaching the K-5th grade classes the hymns of our faith. The teachers and volunteers thank you for your support of the Church School Ministry, and welcome your participation in the classroom.

Looking ahead to this month, the Church School Ministry will be performing our annual Christmas Pageant on December 20th! We ask all of our students to play a role in the performance.

Finally, in other news, the "Saint John Oratorical Festival" speech topics, are now available! Please see the link below, for the 2016 topics. All students, in grades 4th-12th, are invited to develop speeches, and participate in the Oratorical Festival at Saint Mark on Sunday, March 13, and the District competition will be held during the District GOYA Lenten Retreat on April 2. It is never too early, to get started on your speeches!

We look forward to the 2016 Saint John Oratorical Festival, and anticipate a high level of participation from our students.

http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/religious/sjcof/2016_topics_only.pdf

SAINT MARK GREEK SCHOOL - ANNA KAISAR

Our Greek School on Sunday October 25th hosted its annual OXI Day Celebration and brunch. The blue and white color was proudly decorating the hall in honor of this great day in Greek history. It was a great pleasure to have Fr. Mark and Fr. Steven and many members of our community celebrating with us.

This year our Greek school students did an amazing performance



"REAL" (YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY) & OCF

The REAL (our young adults) and OCF (our college students at FAU and Lynn) groups came together for two great evenings of "Orthodoxy on Tap." Meeting at "Rafina Greek Taverna," our college students and young professionals gathered for fellowship and a couple of casual spiritual discussions over drinks and appetizers.

Our 1st discussion took place on October 15, where we discussed philanthropy in the Scriptures. Two days later, our young adults turned these thoughts into actions by volunteering to help the Habitat for Humanity complete a house for a local family (pictured below). Our 2nd get-together on November 12 got us ready for the Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos.



If you are a young adult interested in joining us, please call the Church office and speak with Fr. Steven to be included in our group messages. Our next "Tap" night is on Thursday, December 17 at 7pm at Rafina. There we

will be discussing Messianic figures in film and entertainment, in anticipation of the release of Star Wars: The Force Awakens. The following night, Friday December 18, we will then go as a group to see the movie at 8:10 pm at Cinemark on Airport Road. Tickets are now available online for purchase. Get your tickets today before all seats are gone!



For more information email: FrSteven@SaintMarkBoca.net

COUNTRY WESTERN DANCE - DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE



The DOP has had quite an active fall. October 17th 2015 the DOP held a special country western dance, where dozens of parishioners were able to dance and enjoy the night with good fellowship. A month later on November 15th we celebrated the DOP Founders Day with artoclasia for the health of the sisters and an Altar donation in loving memory of the deceased sisters. On behalf of all the members of Cassandra # 372 we wish all "Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!"

presenting the history of the OXI DAY. They recited poems, sang heroic songs and performed a play regarding the events of the 28th of October. It is our responsibility to keep our history and heritage alive and it is our responsibility to pass the torch of Faith, Greek language and heritage to the next generation.

Once again thanks to all who made this a fantastic memorable day. From the chefs and our volunteers, to the teachers, parents, grandparents, Godparents, relatives and friends and of course our Saint Mark Greek School children.

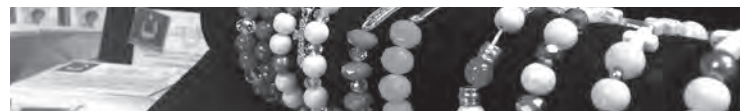
SAINT MARK CHOIR - VIRGINIA BARNES

The choir has had a great start this year. Our growth has been exciting and energizing. Along with some new adult members, we have gained quite a few young people as well, doubling the size of the choir! We are especially grateful to Father Mark and the Parish Council for providing us with more music stands and lights to accommodate more people.

The choir is preparing for the annual Christmas Pageant, which will take place immediately following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, December 20th. All are still welcome to join the choir. We rehearse each Thursday at 7:30pm, and warm up at 9:30am on Sundays.

And now for the most exciting news: Saint Mark will host the South-eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians Conference July 28-July 31, 2016. Along with the adult choir, there will be a youth choir for the children. I went to the conference in Saint Petersburg last summer, and singing with such a large choir (175 people) is an amazing spiritual experience. I find myself still gleaned knowledge from everything the guest conductor taught us that weekend. Best of all, I met choir members from all over the metropolis, which gives a feeling of support and encouragement. Being involved in this music ministry has been a blessing. Thank you to all that dedicate their efforts to the choir.

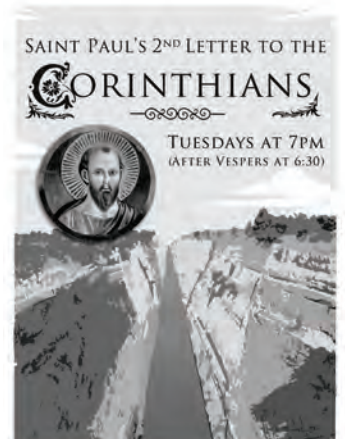
BOOKSTORE - YVETTE KOUTSOUPIS



"Attention holiday shoppers!" The Saint Mark Bookstore has just received a new shipment of merchandise for sale, including an expanded jewelry section. Now offering a bigger selection of bracelets, necklaces, and "Nazarene" solidarity pendants, this is the perfect time to come by the Bookstore and get some Christmas presents checked off the list!

BIBLE STUDY & SYNAXIS

Saint Mark is still conducting its weekly Bible Study, and Orthodox Discussion group "SYNAXIS." We are covering Saint Paul's 2nd Letter to the Corinthians in Bible Study every Tuesday at 7:00 pm (after vespers at 6:30 pm), and we are discussing the book "The Holy Angels" by Mother Alexandra every Thursday at 11:00 am (after Paraklesis at 10:00 am). Anyone and everyone is welcome. We look forward to seeing you there!



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 or by phone at 561-994-4822 for more details.



AHEPA - TIM SHARP



The Boca Raton AHEPA Chapter 487 has been busy the past two months. First, in October we hosted our District Governor (DG) Kostas Sofikitis, District Marshall Chris Kapakos, and District Warden, Steve Pavlakos. DG

Sofikitis talked about the District, and in particular the South Florida chapters working together to establish a unified promotion of our mission throughout South Florida. Our chapter was singled out as a model chapter in the area that will be the focal point for these unifying efforts.

Also during the DG’s visit we presented a check for \$1,500 to support the rebuilding of the Saint Nicholas Shrine and Church in New York City. The check was subsequently presented to the AHEPA Supreme Vice President Andrew Zacharides (above) later in October.

In other news, the Boca Raton AHEPA Chapter 487 and the Daughters of Penelope were well represented at the first annual Veterans Day Dinner-Dance held at Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church on Saturday, November 14, 2015. Over forty were present to celebrate the veterans who have proudly served our country, along with a very touching presentation on behalf of thousands of prisoners of war (POW) and still missing in action (MIA).



These gentlemen represented our country from World War II, Korea, Vietnam and Afghanistan and Iraq.

Veterans present from AHEPA Chapter 487 include Art Poly, Gus Anthony, Gus Constantinou, Alan Macaulay, Chris Danias, Frank Athanason, Andrew Arbes, Jerry Carignan, and George Barris.

If you are interested in joining this terrific group of AHEPAN brothers, contact the Church Office or speak with AHEPA Chapter 487 President Tim Sharp. Membership is open to all males 18 and older.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT - HELEN LANG

All elementary school age children are invited to participate in the Saint Mark Christmas Pageant on December 20th. Under the direction of choir director Virginia Barnes, the casting call for ‘angels, sheep, and lambs’, is open! See Virginia Barnes, for additional information, and bring your children to the Pageant on the 20th!



WIN A
 NEW
 RIDE

2016 MERCEDES CLA 250



TICKETS
 \$50

ENTER THE 2016 BOCA GREEK FEST CAR RAFFLE FOR A CHANCE TO WIN

2016 Mercedes CLA 250 4 Door | Raffle Tickets Available for Purchase for \$50 in the Church Office

The winning ticket will be randomly drawn from all raffle tickets on January 31, 2016. Vehicle depicted is for illustration purposes and may not depict actual vehicle in raffle. Winner must have a valid driver's license. All taxes, tag, fees, and additional options and expenses are the responsibility of the winner. If less than 1,000 tickets are sold, winner will receive half cash collected from ticket sales. If more than 1,000 tickets are sold, winner may opt for \$25,000 prize in lieu of car. Winner need not be present to win. Vehicle delivery will only take place at Mercedes-Benz of Delray Beach. Other alternatives will be at winner's expense.





ARCHANGEL MICHAEL AWARD

VAL PETROFF

This past November, Saint Mark's own Val Petroff traveled to Atlanta, to represent the Saint Mark Family at the Archangel Michael Awards Banquet and Ceremony. There, Val was given the Archangel Michael Award from His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios. We thank God for her service to Saint Mark over the years and offer our heartfelt "Axia" and Congratulations to her.

CLOTHES RECYCLING PROGRAM

Last year we teamed up with Partner Recycling in a clothing and shoe drive. Every item of gently used clothing that you donate in these bins helps clothe those in need here in our local South Florida community, *and* raises money for Saint Mark at the same time! What a great way to embrace the "season of giving!" For larger orders, or furniture donations, you can also call (877) 485-0337 for pick up service at your house.



This week Stewardship Committee member Kathi Sharp had the chance to sit down with Matt & Vivian Jenetopoulos in the second 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): Matt, you have been an usher and a member of our Stewardship Committee for some time now, but for those who may not know you, tell us about you and your family.

MATT & VIVIAN (M & V): We are in our 89th year. We have three wonderful children, and from them, eight grandchildren, and even two great grandchildren who are 2 and 3 years old respectively.

(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?

(M & V): We are both thankful for having been raised in the Greek Orthodox faith all of our lives. We were both baptized, and then married at Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in New Haven, Connecticut. We are even more grateful that all of our children were baptized Orthodox and have remained in the Church in their adulthood, each having been married in the Orthodox faith. Like us, Linda and Bill were married at Saint Barbara in New Haven, While Theo and Eileen were one of the first weddings celebrated here at Saint Mark. Finally, George and Marge

were married at our sister parish of Saint Andrew in Kendall, Florida.

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

(M & V): We have been blessed with organization and teaching talents. Over the many decades we have spent as active stewards in the Church, we have been able to volunteer for a number of ministries. Matt has served as a member of the Parish Council and has been elected Parish Council President at both Saint Barbara and Saint Mark. However, our real love is in education, and due to this we have both volunteered as Sunday School teachers for over 50 years, many of which Matt served as director of the program.

We have learned to Count our Blessings and move on facing whatever challenges may come our way, and God has always provided for us. We

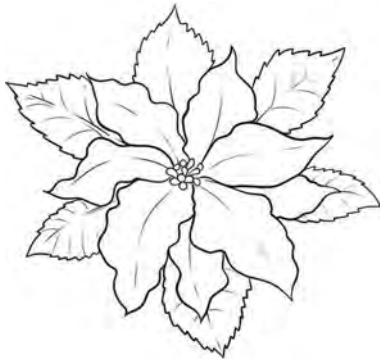
have never denied the will of our Lord, and we have always tried to do our best to meet the needs of whatever the Church, parish clergy, or our brothers or sisters in Christ have requested of us.

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

(M & V): We love all of the ministries! We find ourselves planning our calendars around the Church calendar. Let's just say, if housing was available at Saint Mark for parishioners, we would seriously consider living on campus!

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)



Saint Mark Christmas Card & Poinsettias Order Form

Once again, we are approaching the Nativity of our Lord and the joyful celebration of the Christmas season. We will be decorating our sanctuary with beautiful Christmas Poinsettias. If you would like to donate a Poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one please complete the Poinsettia portion of the order form below.

Also, we will be sending out our community Christmas card. With a \$25 donation you will be supporting the work and ministries of Saint Mark, all while helping to spread the joyful tidings of the birth of Christ throughout our community. The Christmas card will be mailed to the entire list of Saint Mark stewards, and will contain the names of all those who choose to donate below.

Please complete the order form below and make all donations payable to Saint Mark



Yes, I would like to make a \$25 donation to the Christmas Card

Please PRINT YOUR NAME LEGIBLY as you would like to see it on the Christmas Card.

Yes, I would like to donate ____ Poinsettia(s) at \$25 each.

I _____, offer this (these) poinsettia(s) to Saint Mark.

In Memory of ____ or In Honor of ____ (Please check one).

SAINT MARK

Epiphany Luncheon & Vasilopita Cutting

SPONSORED BY PHILOPTOCHOS

Sunday, January 10th 2016

Following Divine Liturgy
in the Saint Mark Fellowship Hall

Join us as we celebrate the beginning of 2016
with fun and fellowship!

TEA CUP AUCTION
50/50 RAFFLE

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Adults – \$25

Families – \$60

*(Includes 2 adult tickets and up to 3 children under age 12,
\$10 for students ages 13-18)*

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Pam Parent – (561) 706-2457

Niki Core – (561) 989-3688

Suzette Johnson – (561) 573-1057

Passport to Greece

JANUARY 28-31, 2016

WWW.GREEKFESTIVALBOCA.ORG

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
Call the Church Office to Sign Up
(561) 994 4822





SAINT MARK
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
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BOCA RATON, FL 33431

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