

THE Message



THE
RESURRECTION
OF CHRIST

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

APRIL–MAY 2015



Paschal Celebration
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COME RECEIVE THE LIGHT

SAINT MARK PREPARES FOR THE FEAST OF FEASTS

The season of Great Lent has finally brought us to the eve of Holy Week. This seven-day journey will begin on April 5 with our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Together, we will experience the joys of the coming of the Bridegroom and the sorrows of our Lord's betrayal in the garden, His arrest, trial, and Crucifixion. Finally, the week will bring us to Holy Saturday evening, where we will gather just before midnight at the empty tomb of Christ to receive the Resurrected Lord and worship Him as the myrrh-bearing women did. We invite all to *"Come Receive the Light!"*

Holy Week Coverage Continued on Page 4

THE FEASTDAY CELEBRATION OF SAINT MARK



On Friday, April 24, at 7:00 pm, we will hold our annual Feastday Vespers of the Apostle and Evangelist Mark, the patron saint of our Church. Following Vespers, all those in attendance will gather outside the Church for a special blessing of our exterior mosaic icon of Saint Mark. A reception, sponsored by the Philoptochos, will take place immediately afterwards in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00 pm. The next morning on April 25, we will celebrate the culmination of the Feast with the Divine Liturgy.

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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Choir: Virginia Barnes

Chanters: Ramona Bean,
George Demopoulos, Art Poly

Ushers: Tim Sharp

Acolytes: Brian Giusti & Tom Bean

Church School: Helen Lang

Youth Choir: Virginia Barnes

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

Seniors: Diane Paterakis

Syrtaki:

Mark Christakis & Jenny Saiger

Greek School: Anna Kaiser

Bookstore: Yvette Koutsoupis,
Barbara Tasiounes, Stella Pores

Welcome: Elaine Zographus

Readers: Vivian Jenetopoulos

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& Irina Giakouminakis

The Message: Fr. Steven Klund

PASTORAL MESSAGE

Rev. Fr. Mark Leondis

My Dear Faithful,

Christ is Risen . . . Truly He is Risen!

We exclaim this beautiful exhortation for 40 days after the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We greet each other with these words, instead of the usual “hello, how are you?” What a beautiful way to bring the resurrected Christ into our lives on a daily basis. What an amazing way to keep the resurrected Christ alive in our every day lives for more than one evening.

One of the beautiful icons that adorn our Saint Mark Church is the icon of the Resurrection, or the Descent into Hades. At Saint Mark, this is located on the East wall to the right of the Altar (and right of the Crucifixion icon). It is most descriptive and symbolic and richly tells us the beautiful theology of the Orthodox Christian Church.

One of the most scenic elements of this icon is the depiction of Adam and Eve with their outstretched hands reaching to our Lord. And, in turn, Jesus Christ is lifting them up. We know that Adam and Eve had died many years earlier . . . their story appears in the Book of Genesis, the first Book of the Old Testament, which was written many centuries before the birth of Christ.

Our tradition tells us that after Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden for disobeying God and eating from the “tree of life,” the gates of paradise were closed. For all those who died after this, Paradise was not open and all went to Hades. It wasn’t until Jesus Christ died and descended into Hades, to offer “new life”, that those who were suffering were offered a better way. Now, we too are offered a better way and can enter eternal life in Paradise with our Lord and Savior.

To do this, we must be like Adam and Eve and “reach up” to our Lord and Savior. We can “reach up” out of the sinfulness of the world that surrounds us and place our hands with the Risen Lord. We can “reach up” to our Lord and leave the pride, ego and ugliness of this world and embrace the Risen Christ. We can “reach up” to Him who gave us everything, even His life.

Our Lord is extending His hand to us on a daily basis . . . He is offering us new life in Him. We must “reach up” and take hold; grasp the King of Kings, the Lord of Hosts . . . this is how we work in synergy with our Lord.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, “Reach Up” and our Lord will raise you up to be with Him. Your lives will be renewed and the power of the Risen Lord will transform your lives forever.

Christos Anesti . . . Alithos Anesti!

Fr. Mark Leondis



HOLY WEEK SERVICES

APRIL 5-12, 2015

4/5/15	BRIDEGROOM SERVICE	6:30 PM
4/6/15	BRIDEGROOM SERVICE	6:30 PM
4/7/15	BRIDEGROOM SERVICE	6:30 PM
4/8/15	HOLY UNCTION	6:00 PM
4/9/15	LITURGY OF LAST SUPPER 12 GOSPELS	9:00 AM 6:30 PM
4/10/15	ROYAL HOURS APOKATHELOSIS LAMENTATIONS	9:00 AM 3:00 PM 7:00 PM
4/11/15	DIVINE LITURGY RESURRECTION VIGIL PASCHA DIVINE LITURGY A LIGHT MEAL TO FOLLOW IN THE HALL	9:00 AM 11:00 PM 12:00 AM
4/12/15	AGAPE VESPERS	11:00 AM

SPRING EVENTS

Come Receive the Light!

We are approaching the most joyous time of the ecclesiastical year! During the time, between Holy Pascha and Christ's Ascension we celebrate our Savior's victory over death for 40 days. Soon many of us will leave for vacation, but there is still plenty happening before then.

Saturday of Lazarus (4/4)

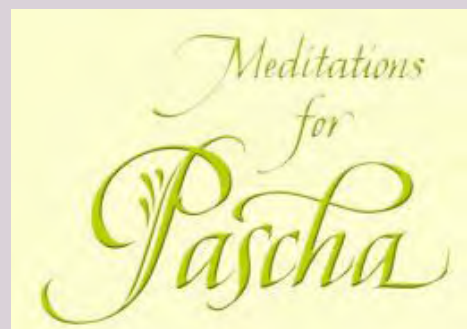
- 9:00 am - Divine Liturgy
- 10:30 am - Family Palm Folding
Joy Confessions
- 11:00 am - St. Stephen's Camp
GOYA Meeting

Holy Friday (4/10)

- 9:00 am - Royal Hours
- 10:00 am - GOYA Retreat
- 1:00 pm - JOY Retreat
- 3:00 pm - Apokathelosis Service

Spring Synaxis (April 21-May 26)

- Tuesday Nights at 7:00 pm
After Vespers at 6:30 pm



Saint Mark Feastday

- Fri., April 24 - Vespers 7:00 pm
- Sat., April 25 - Liturgy 9:00 am

GOYA Olympics - Ft. Lauderdale

- May 15 -16 - Olympic Games

Sunday School Graduation & AHEPA Breakfast

- May 17 - After Divine Liturgy

JOY End-of-Year Party

- May 24 - After Divine Liturgy

Greek School Graduation

- Fri., May 29 - 4:00 pm

2015 District Calendar Meeting

- June 6 - (Ft. Lauderdale)

Saint Mark Greek Week Summer Camp

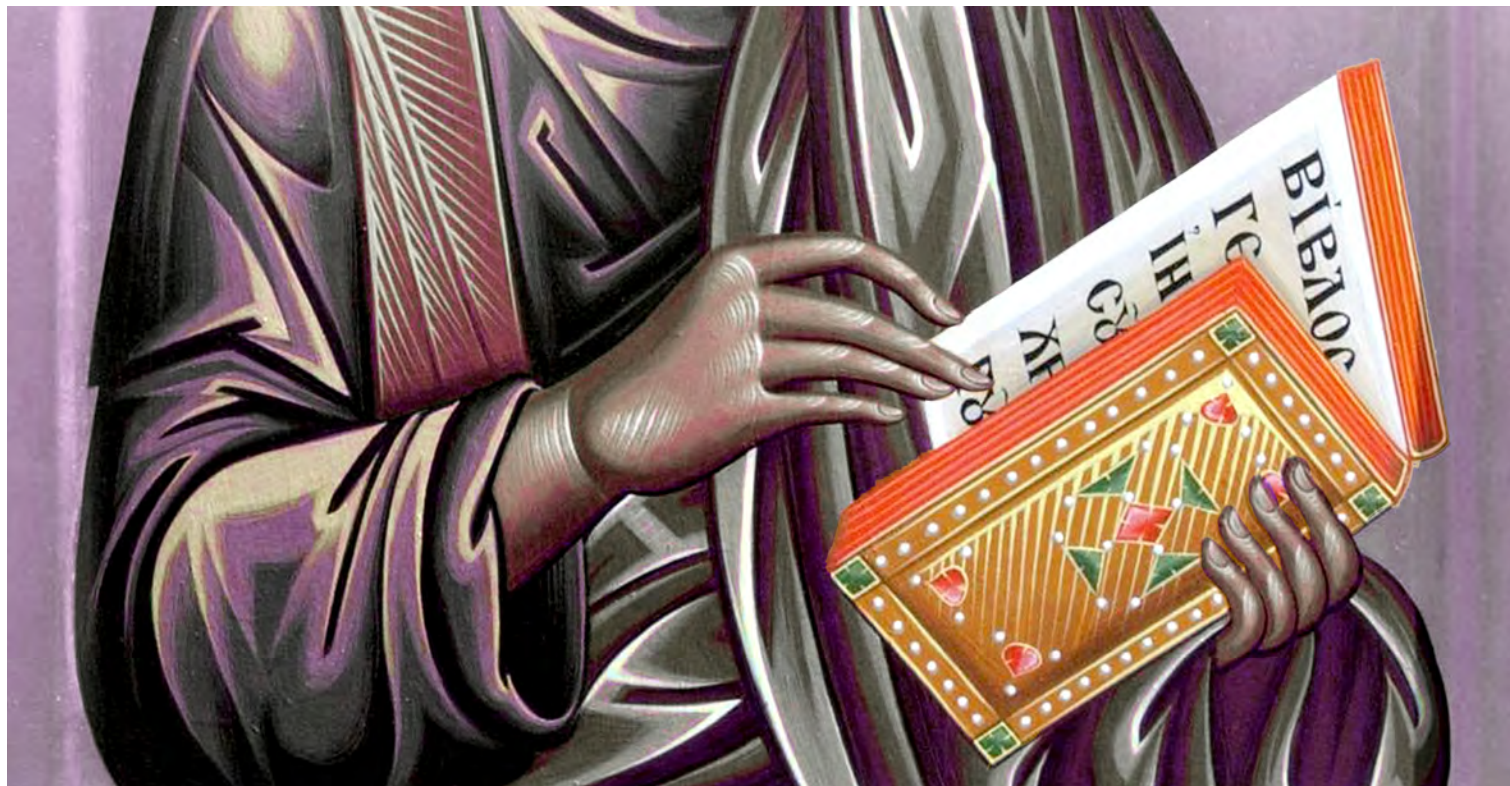
- June 8 - 12 (9 am - 2 pm)

St. Stephen's Summer Camp

- June 28 - July 4

HOLY WEEK MEDITATION & STUDY GUIDE

..... FR. ANDREW J. DEMOTSES



The services of Holy Week transform us into eyewitnesses and direct participants in the awesome events of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In readings taken from both Old and New Testaments, in hymns, processions, and liturgical commemoration, we see the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies, and the mighty acts by which God Himself, in the person of Jesus Christ, grants us forgiveness for our sins, and rescues us from the pain of eternal death.

PALM SUNDAY EVENING

— *Matthew 21:18-43*

This evening's service calls to mind the beginning of Jesus' suffering. The Gospel describes the plotting of the priests and elders to trap Jesus into convicting Himself as a religious heretic. Through parables, Jesus tells us of His coming betrayal, trial, conviction and execution by crucifixion. The hymns of this service commemorate two things; the first, the prophetic figure of Joseph, who, while virtuous, nonetheless suffered unjustly at the hands of his brothers before being greatly rewarded, and the second, the parable of the fig tree, which in failing to bear fruit, became a symbol of fallen creation, and of our own lives, in which we also have failed to bear spiritual fruit.

HOLY MONDAY EVENING

— *Matthew 22:15-46; 23:1-39*

This evening's theme is the need for watchfulness and preparation, lest we be called unprepared before the awesome judgement seat of Christ to render an account of ourselves. The Gospel reading contrasts the efforts of the Pharisees to trick and discredit Jesus, with the forceful resistance which Christ mounts against their evil. The hymns remind

us of the parable of the Ten Virgins, in which the faithful Christian is exhorted to vigilance.

HOLY TUESDAY EVENING

— *John 12:17-50*

The need for true repentance is the concern of Tuesday evening's service. This transformation from the life of sin to a life of faith and obedience is exemplified for us in the person of the sinful woman who received the gift for forgiveness when she anointed Jesus with myrrh and washed His feet. The highlight of the service is the hymn written in honor of this woman by St. Kassiani. The Gospel meditation foretells of the coming suffering of Christ and recalls His inner struggles and agony.

HOLY WEDNESDAY EVENING

— *Unction Epistle Readings*

Epistle Readings: *James 5:10-16, Rom. 15:1-7, I Cor. 12:27-31-13:1-8, II Cor. 1:8-11, Gal. 5:22-6:2, & I Thess. 5:14-23.*

Gospel readings: *Luke 10:25-37, Luke 19:1-10, Matt. 10:1 & 10:5-8, Matt. 8:14-23, Matt. 25:1-13, Matt. 15:21-28, & Matt. 9:9-13.*

The primary theme of Holy Wednesday is our human need for the healing and forgiveness that comes into our lives when we establish a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We are reminded that the way to this relationship is to be found, above all else, through the life of prayer. In the Sacrament of Holy Unction, the faithful are anointed and thus, healed both physically and spiritually. They are also reconciled to God and one another so that they might receive the gift of the Holy Eucharist instituted by Christ at the Last Supper.

HOLY THURSDAY MORNING – *Last Supper Gospel Passages*

Matt. 26:2-27:2, John 13:3-17, & Luke 22:43-45

On Holy Thursday morning, we ascend Mt. Zion with Christ and the Twelve, and enter into the upper room. Once there, we witness the awesome moment when, at the Last Supper, Christ abolishes the ritual practice of the Old Covenant and establishes the ritual of the New Covenant, prophesied by Jeremiah, through the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The faithful receive Holy Communion at that Holiest of Liturgies.

HOLY THURSDAY EVENING – *Crucifixion Gospel Passages*

In this service, we commemorate the undeserved suffering of Jesus Christ, endured for our sake, so that we might be reconciled anew to God our Father. The Gospel readings witness for us the betrayal and arrest of Jesus, his trial and conviction, and finally his torture, crucifixion and death at the hands of a sinful humanity. This evening's service also includes the procession representing Christ carrying His own cross along the Via Dolorosa, and ends when we see before us the King of Glory crucified. The Gospels are as follows:

*John 13:31-18:1, John 18:1-29, Matt. 26:57-75, John 18:28-19:16
Matt. 27:3-32, Mark 15:16-32, Matt. 27:33-54, 23:32-49,
John 19:25-37, Mark 15:43-47, John 19:38-42, & Matt. 27:62-66*

HOLY FRIDAY MORNING – *Crucifixion Gospel Passages*

*I Cor. 1:18-2:2, Matt. 27:1-38, Luke 23:39-43,
Matt. 27:39-54, John 19:31-37, & Matt. 27:55-61*

In this service, we are once again reverent witnesses to the undeserved suffering of Christ, to his terrible passion and death. What is remembered in a special way through liturgical commemoration and procession, is the faithfulness and love of Joseph of Arimathea who tenderly removed Christ's body from the cross, wrapped it in clean linen, and carried it to his own unused tomb for burial.

HOLY FRIDAY EVENING – *Crucifixion Gospel Passages*

Ez. 37:1-14, I Cor. 5:6-8, Gal. 3:13-14, & Matt. 27:62-66

On Good Friday evening, the theme is Christ's descent into Hades during which the Gospel of repentance and reconciliation with God is shared with those who died before Christ's saving dispensation in the flesh. The service begins with lamentations sung as we stand before the tomb of Christ commemorating His unjust punishment and the shedding of His innocent blood. But the service ends on a note of joy and hope, with the reading of the Prophet Ezekiel in which he describes his vision of our resurrection yet to come; in the midst of despair, we are told there is hope, for not even death can separate us from the unfailing love and power of God. Death is about to be conquered and faithfulness rewarded.

HOLY SATURDAY MORNING – *Rom. 6:3-11, Matt. 28:1-20*

On Holy Saturday morning we celebrate the theme of faithfulness receiving its reward. The crucifixion is over, Christ is buried, the twelve apostles and other disciples are scattered and defeated. And yet, three myrrh-bearing women come in faithfulness to perform the last act

of love--to anoint Jesus according to the Jewish burial custom. Their unwavering devotion is rewarded--they are the first to share in Christ's triumph over evil and death. They are the first witnesses to the Resurrection. This joy is commemorated through the scattering of bay leaves and rose petals by the priest.

HOLY SATURDAY EVENING

– *Mark 16:1-8*

The lamentations of the previous night are repeated and the church is plunged into darkness to symbolize the despair and defeat experienced before the dawn of Christ's victory over the Enemy of our salvation. Late in the evening, a single light emerges from the altar representing the victory of Christ over death, the defeat of the Prince of Darkness by Jesus, the Light of the World. As the light is passed from person to person, it pushes back the darkness of the church and defeats it completely. Precisely at midnight, the Resurrection is proclaimed in song and triumphant procession, and after the Liturgy, its light is carried into our homes so that they too might be filled with its light and warmth and triumph.



EASTER SUNDAY MORNING

– *John 20:19-25*

Christ's Resurrection and victory is affirmed in this morning's theme. The Gospel is read in several languages to illustrate the universality of the Good News of the Resurrection and its proclamation to the very ends of the earth. Love, forgiveness, reconciliation, triumph and joy--these are the gifts which we receive because Christ lived and died and triumphed for our sake.

GLORY BE TO HIM FOR ALL THINGS, AND MAY YOUR
EASTER BE BLESSED!

THE MYRRH BEARERS

FR. ALEXANDER LEONDIS

On the second Sunday after Easter the Church commemorates the Myrrh-Bearing women. This is but another assurance of our Lord's resurrection.

Jesus died at 3 o'clock in the afternoon on Good Friday. At sundown on Friday the Sabbath began. Work of any kind or even burials were not permitted on the Sabbath for it was the holy day. Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for permission to bury Jesus. Pilate questioned the centurion to determine whether Jesus was already dead. When the centurion affirmed the death of Jesus, Pilate gave Joseph permission to bury the Lord.

Joseph bought a linen shroud in which to wrap the body of Jesus. Time was quickly passing and sundown was approaching. Joseph had two alternatives. The first alternative was to leave Jesus on the Cross until Sunday morning, in which case decomposition of his body would take place and this would be considered a sign of rejection and insult. The second alternative was to bury Jesus hastily, before sundown, and complete the burial rite with myrrh on Sunday morning. Joseph chose the second alternative.

Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus and the three Mary's on Friday began burial preparations. They wrapped Jesus' body in a shroud, sprinkled some myrrh and aloes on the shroud and laid the body in a new tomb. They sealed the opening with a large stone. Hastily, they returned to their homes before sundown with plans to return Sunday morning to the tomb in order to complete the remaining burial procedures.

In Mark 16 we read the account; "And when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him." They purchased the necessary spices on Saturday evening, because the Sabbath was over at sundown.

"And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen." Sunday morning at sunrise, with the necessary ingredients for a proper funeral, the Myrrh-Bearers arrived at the tomb.

"And they were saying [on the way] to one another, who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb;" they asked this because the women went alone to complete the burial rite and had no men with them to roll the stone away.

"And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed." They probably questioned themselves asking did we come to the right tomb? Did someone take his body?

And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him."

The angel assured them that this was the right tomb. In Luke 24:5

we see the angel also saying: "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"

The Myrrh-Bearers knew whom they were looking for. Their faithfulness to the Lord even after his crucifixion did not waver. This is a special strength of women. They came to the tomb without men to roll away the stone. They came in faith, they were driven to serve the Lord and, when they came, they discovered that the angel rolled away the stone. They came without fear. His disciples, who were men, locked themselves behind closed doors in fear of the Jews and in fear of failure. The Myrrh-Bearing women came to anoint the dead Lord with myrrh and became the first to become anointed with and to anoint others with the good news "He is risen." Faith is to rely on God's will and not on our own. That's when miracles begin to happen.

The Myrrh-Bearers were asked by the angel; whom do you seek? What are you looking for? Almost 2,000 years later we are asked whom do you seek, what are you looking for?

The Myrrh-Bearers shared a broken dream. One week earlier, Palm Sunday, their master was triumphantly paraded into Jerusalem. Their spirits soared. Then Golgotha shattered their dreams, reducing their high expectations to zero.

Disappointments, that's life. We all share moments of high expectations and broken dreams. Each day we see incidents of death, destruction, violence, bigotry, animosity and suffering. Why does it have to be like this? We want something better out of life. Our hearts are searching desperately for the answer to the question, why. What are we looking for? Aren't we here to find something?

Mary Magdalene and the Myrrh-Bearers hurried to the tomb on the first Easter morning. They came desperately looking for the Lord. We too are looking, but are we looking desperately enough to find him? If we are desperate we will find him, but not in an intellectual historical acceptance of his existence. Nor will we find him in the criteria, that we set. We pick and choose parts and allow the puzzle of our spiritual life to remain an enigma, a puzzle. This happens when

we feel that we have the right to accept God's will only when it agrees with mine. We will not find God in the empty tombs of our house, business, pleasure, friends, and possessions unless he is alive within us.

If we are desperate enough, we will find him buried in our hearts, not as a dead person, but as a living reigning Prince of Peace. Look, my brothers and sisters for the Lord, but not in the tomb for he is not there. The tomb is empty. The Myrrh-Bearers gave witness to this.

Jesus is risen and by the Holy Spirit, He lives deep within your souls. Find Him there and you will clearly see that Jesus lives deep within your neighbor's soul as well. The heavenly messenger addresses us who seek a deeper meaning for our life; "Do not be amazed you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, He is not here."

He is risen, my brothers and sisters!

He lives, in you and in me!



DEATH IN THE ORTHODOX TRADITION

..... FR. MARK LEONDIS



When St. Paul talks about death, he uses a figure of speech which compares the earthly body to a tent that is used for a time and which at death is exchanged for a heavenly house (2 Corinthians 5:1-4).

“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.”

This reminds us of the words of our Lord Jesus when He spoke of heaven as a place where there would be many rooms for His people to live in. “Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:1-3). When the moment of death comes for the believer, he will move from the tent he is presently living in – his earthly body – and will take up residence in a permanent home that our Lord has prepared for him.

One of the most beautiful illustrations of what death really is like for the Christian believer is the following. There was a little boy who had an incurable illness. Month after month, the mother tenderly nursed him. But as the time went by, the little fellow gradually began to realize he would not live. One day he asked his mother: “Mom, what is it like to die? Does it hurt?”

Tears filled the mother’s eyes as she fled to the kitchen to see about something on the stove. She knew the question had to be faced. She leaned against the kitchen cabinet, her knuckles pressed white against the wall, and breathed a quick prayer: “Lord, tell me how to answer him.” Immediately she knew what to say.

She returned to his room. “You remember when you were a tiny boy you used to play so hard, when night came you would be too tired even

to undress, and you would tumble into mother’s bed and fall asleep? That was not your bed. It was not where you belonged.

“In the morning you would wake up and find yourself in your own bed in your own room. Your father had come with big strong arms – and carried you into your own bed. That’s what death is like. We fall asleep. Then our heavenly Father picks us up with His mighty hands and carries us to heaven. Later, when morning comes, we wake up and find ourselves not in a strange place but in our own room – in a place where we belong.”

That is what death is for the Christian: moving day. We move from one room in our Father’s house (a temporary room which St. Paul calls a tent) to a permanent room -- which shall be our very own in heaven. It is, in effect, a true homecoming. As the door closes on this life, God opens a new door to a heavenly life.

As surely as God sent us to earth, He has given us a return ticket. As Jesus said, “I come from God and I go to God.” Life is like a round-trip journey. We come from God and ultimately we go back to Him.

St. John Chrysostom summarized the Christian’s attitude toward death when he wrote:

“When a dear one dies, the unbeliever sees a cadaver, but the Christian sees a body asleep. The unbeliever says that the dead person has ‘gone’. We agree, but we remember where he has gone. He has gone where the apostle Paul is, where Peter is, where the whole company of the saints are. We remember that he will rise, not with tears of dismay, but with splendor and glory.”

Thus, physical death, the separation of soul and body, which occurred as a result of sin and as punishment for it, loses its fearful aspect for those who have been redeemed in Christ. It opens the door to a glorious new life with God in heaven. Death is now swallowed up in victory (I Cor. 15:54). “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (I Cor. 15:21-22.).



ORATORICAL FESTIVAL - HELEN LANG

This year was a record turnout for our parish Oratorical Festival. Following the Divine Liturgy on the Sunday of Orthodoxy on March 1, 22 GOYANs gathered on the solea and professed their faith to a panel of judges and enthralled parishioners.

In accordance with the guidelines issued from the Archdiocese of America, the GOYANs prepared their 3-4 minute speeches on one of the six topics offered. It was immediately clear from the moment the first speaker stepped up to the podium that the participants took great pride and care in preparing their speeches. There could not have been a more fitting way to honor the lasting victory of the Ecumenical Councils than

having the future generation of the Church offer their own witness to the same Christian Truths.

Apollo Dailey emerged as the first place presenter, followed closely behind by Anastasia Gavrilos and Zachary Cotronakis. All three will be moving on to the District competition on April 28. We are very proud of all the young contestants, and we hope that our top three finishers represent our Saint Mark family well at District!



JOY - ERIN KONTOS

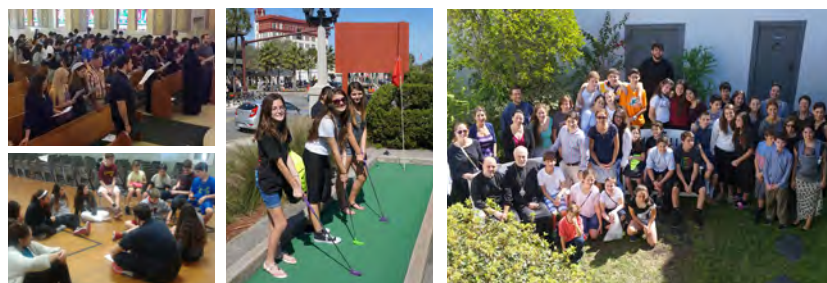
Over the last couple of months we have had multiple events for our JOY ministry. Most recently we all gathered together for a very fun and well attended mini-golf outing.

However, before our round of golf, we came together at Saint Mark for a special pre-lenten afternoon retreat. We focused on the story of Zacchaeus, the repentant tax collector. The children took part in crafts and spiritual discussions, before finally putting themselves to the ultimate "Zacchaeus tree climbing" race on our new playground.

After such a wonderful afternoon, we can look forward to our next retreat on April 10, on Holy Friday afternoon, from 1-3 pm here at Saint Mark.



GOYA - LENTEN RETREATS



The GOYANs have had a phenomenal start to Lent. On March 7, two dozen GOYANs made the drive down to Saint Sophia in Miami to attend the "Voyage Through Lent" District Retreat. There we worshipped, had spiritual discussions, and played ridiculously fun games like "Hungry Hungry Humans."

A week later, a group of 40 GOYANs and advisors travelled to St. Augustine to attend another retreat at the OCMC headquarters, this time focusing on Christian missions. The next morning we were able to celebrate the Divine Liturgy of the Veneration of the Holy Cross at the St. Photios Shrine and visit with His Grace Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos, the founder of the Mission Center.

We are so grateful for these opportunities and look forward to our next event, the District GOYA Olympics in Ft. Lauderdale on May 15-17. If you are interested in joining the Saint Mark GOYA in any future events, please call the office (561)994-4822 or email office@saintmarkboca.net to learn more.

POST-RESURRECTION LITURGY MEAL

Please note, the Saint Mark Family will be offering a complimentary "Breaking the Fast" Meal following the Resurrection Liturgy in the Fellowship Hall. Traditional "Mageiritsa" (Lamb Soup), sweet bread, eggs and cheese will be offered. Feel free to bring your "basket" of what you've been fasting from during Lent to be blessed! All are welcome to attend as one family in Christ!



SENIORS OF SAINT MARK - DIANE PATERAKIS

Last month the Seniors of Saint Mark went to see "The Florida Follies," and then on March 28 we attended the Delray Beach Playhouse to see Neil Simon's play "They're Playing Our Song."

April brings us rain, flowers, birds, and more fun. Join us at the Deer Creek Country Club in Deerfield Beach for lunch on Tuesday, April 28. Admission is \$27 for members and \$29 for non-members. We will be seated at 12 pm.

If you are interested in learning more about the Seniors of Saint Mark, or any of our upcoming events, please contact:

Diane Paterakis - (561) 368-3728

Elizabeth Zographus - (561) 495-2812

SAINT MARK Mommy + Me MONDAYS @ 10AM (BI-MONTHLY)

We will continue our bi-monthly classes (starting April 6). 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 2015

Even though Pascha has yet to arrive, we are already gearing up for the 15th annual Saint Mark Greek Week Summer Camp. This year we will focus on Iconography and how icons give us a glimpse into the heavens. If you are interested in helping us develop summer camp for our children, please speak with Fr. Mark or Fr. Steven or contact us at the Office (561)994-4822, or office@saintmarkboca.net

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

As we continue to offer Christ-centered ministries and educational programs for our Saint Mark Family, we encourage you to continue to offer your stewardship for 2015. Stewardship is the backbone of our Church Operating Expenses, and we rely on it to properly fund our Church.

Please note that to be a member in good standing, according to our By-laws, one must become a member by May 1. If you have not done so already, please send in your stewardship pledge envelope for 2015. Join the family!!!

	MARCH - 2014	MARCH - 2015
STEWARDS:	374	394
AMOUNT PLEDGED:	\$336,248	\$421,111
AMOUNT RECEIVED:	\$139,392	\$204,860

SAINT MARK CHOIR - VIRGINIA BARNES

One of the joys of the Saint Mark music ministry is sharing our hymnography tradition with our young believers. This year we have been visiting the church school classrooms regularly to sing hymns with the children. Something very exciting happened while preparing them for the Apolotikion for the Sunday of Orthodoxy: At least one child in every classroom said, "Oh, I remember this from last year!" and proceeded to turn the music over and sing from memory! This challenged the other children to learn the words well enough to turn their papers over, too.

I think that is what we were all hoping for with this ministry; to teach the children the hymns of the Church and to build up the choir with young voices.

Each time that I open the door to a classroom, I hear one if the children say, "Yay, it is singing time!" I feel so encouraged when that happens and, in turn, I try to encourage our young people to join the Saint Mark Choir when they reach sixth grade.

I feel honored to be able to teach our wonderful young people the hymns of the Church, and have the opportunity to get to know each of them.

AHEPA - TIM SHARP

AHEPA Chapter 487 held its annual Valentines Dinner-Dance on February 6 at Benvenuto in Boynton Beach. Over 200 guests attended the affair and, in addition to the wonderful time had by all, we raised over \$3,000 towards our college scholarship program, which is offered to eligible students who are or will be attending college pursuing undergraduate studies (see more detailed information below). In addition, as part of a 50:50 raffle, we also raised an additional \$1,500 towards the rebuilding campaign for Saint Nicholas Church and Shrine in New York City. Saint Nicholas, located near the former twin towers, was the only house of worship destroyed during the terrible tragedy on September 11.

The Order of AHEPA Boca Raton Chapter 487 is also offering multiple scholarships for those attending college pursuing undergraduate studies. For more information, contact either:

Chuck Diamantis - (561)487-9526 or dianediamantis@gmail.com

Gus Constantinou - (561)495-2645 or gusandthelma@comcast.net

GENERAL ASSEMBLY PARISH COUNCIL MESSAGE

..... GIRARD MITCHELL

Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church is more than just a beautiful edifice with magnificent iconography. We are a vibrant and living body of faithful people from all corners of the globe.

This past January, I worked in the Loukoumades booth with a newly relocated parishioner - Ted Vagelos. He said that the Greek Festival is not so much a fundraiser for the church or for sharing our culture with the surrounding community, but rather it's a way for fellow parishioners to get to know each other better. And it's true. I can attest to the camaraderie that I saw throughout our 2015 Festival. It was hard work, but we all were smiling because we were all working for the common good of our Saint Mark family.

The Festival is not the only opportunity we have to work and be together in fellowship. We have various events throughout the year where that fellowship happens:

- Golf Tournament - Charlie and Christine Zacharias
- Men's Culinary Night - Philoptochos
- Mistletoe Dance - Irene Alexandrou
- Valentine's Dance - AHEPA
- Celebrity Cruise - about 90 parishioners and friends
- Saint Mark Nameday Vespers and Reception
- As well as countless other events and activities

I encourage all of us to take advantage of the programs offered through Saint Mark. The ministries offered by our Church run the full spectrum of ages and interests. From Mommy + Me to the Seniors of Saint Mark, we have something for everyone.

Some terrific things have happened over the past year. THE MORTGAGE IS RETIRED. This enables us to save money every month to hold in reserve. There are several active committees looking at improving our Church:

- Parish Council Team Chartering (facilitated by Tim Sharp)
- Sound System
- Growth and Planning
- Long Term Master Plan (tied in with Growth and Planning)

Because of the work of many different people over the years, I can report that we are at a point of financial stability, but we still need your support. Strong Stewardship is the backbone of the Church. I have served on the Parish Council for seven of the last 12 years and, in that time, I have served with many different parishioners and personalities. But one thing remains constant: the Parish Council has worked and will continue to work for the growth and well-being of the Church. We are looking after the day-to-day decisions that involve every aspect of the Church. I'd like to take a moment to thank John Koutsoupis for his work over the years as the Parish Council President. I appreciate his friendship and want to acknowledge his dedication to the Saint Mark family.

As we move forward as a community, you will continue to get updates through emails and home mailings. Larger recommendations will be brought forward to you in a General Assembly with proposals to keep Saint Mark as the South Florida jewel that it is. I am excited for what the future holds for our parish.



CHALLENGE
ACCEPTED

ST. STEPHEN'S
CAMP

JUNE 28-JULY 4

REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 15, 2015
WWW.ATLMETROPOLIS.ORG

#SSC2015



SAINT MARK GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SAINT MARK GREEK WEEK SUMMER CAMP



JUNE 8-12 • 9:00 AM-2:00 PM (*childcare from 8-9 am and until 5 PM*)

1. Name _____ Grade attending in Fall 2015 _____
Circle T-Shirt Size: YOUTH: Small, Med, Large; ADULT: Small, Med, Large, X-Large
Phone Number: _____ Emergency Contact: (Name/Cell) _____
Please list any allergies or medical concerns/conditions: _____

2. Name _____ Grade attending in Fall 2015 _____
Circle T-Shirt Size: YOUTH: Small, Med, Large; ADULT: Small, Med, Large, X-Large
Phone Number: _____ Emergency Contact: (Name/Cell) _____
Please list any allergies or medical concerns/conditions: _____

3. Name _____ Grade attending in Fall 2015 _____
Circle T-Shirt Size: YOUTH: Small, Med, Large; ADULT: Small, Med, Large, X-Large
Phone Number: _____ Emergency Contact: (Name/Cell) _____
Please list any allergies or medical concerns/conditions: _____

4. Name _____ Grade attending in Fall 2015 _____
Circle T-Shirt Size: YOUTH: Small, Med, Large; ADULT: Small, Med, Large, X-Large
Phone Number: _____ Emergency Contact: (Name/Cell) _____
Please list any allergies or medical concerns/conditions: _____

REGISTRATION FEES

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

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

Lunch and snacks provided daily

Make checks payable to Saint Mark Greek Orthodox Church

Payment is non-refundable

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

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



SAINT MARK
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
2100 NW 51ST STREET
BOCA RATON, FL 33431

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