



ΙΕΡΟΣ ΝΑΟΣ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΙΑΣ ΜΑΓΔΑΛΗΝΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΑΡΚΕΛΛΗΣ



STS. MARY MAGDALENE & MARKELLA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

2020 FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER



3714-16 Dublin Road, Darlington, MD 21034

PRESIDING PRIEST

THE REV. FR. ELEFTERIOS PLEVRAKIS

Office: 410-457-0303

Email: frelefterios@gmail.com

Website: stsmm.org

OFFICE HOURS

TUESDAY - FRIDAY

10:00 A.M. - 2:45 P.M.

QUESTIONS? CALL OR VISIT US

(FOR OFFICE VISITS PLEASE CALL IN ADVANCE)

LETTER FROM THE PRIEST

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I hope this newsletter finds you well and that your lives are filled with good health and heart-filled gratitude towards our Lord.

As we all know, we are fast approaching the beautiful period of the Triodion. In these few weeks we begin our spiritual strength training so we can enter into Great Lent with the ascetic virtues the Church has passed on to us through the liturgical Tradition. In the First week we learn about the Publican and the Pharisee where we learn the importance of repentance and to never put ourselves above others. On the second week we learn through the Parable of the Prodigal Son that God is forgiving when we turn back to Him. We should never think that sin can ever be stronger than love. The third week is Meatfare (Judgement Sunday). Here we learn about the Second Coming of Christ when He will be coming to judge the living and the dead. This underscores the opportunities we have today in strengthening our faith in God so we do not find ourselves far from the eternal life of God. Lastly, we enter into Cheesefare (Forgiveness Sunday), where we come together as one faithful body to seek forgiveness from each other and to enter into the journey of Great Lent with a light heart.

Words cannot describe how important these few weeks are in preparing ourselves to witness the Resurrection of our Lord. Do not take lightly this opportunity to fast and to better yourselves through prayer and almsgiving. All of you will feel accomplished and completely rejuvenated. I pray that the Holy Spirit guides all of you through this time period, and if there is anything anyone needs from me, do not hesitate to contact me.

In Christ,

Fr. Elefterios

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Winter has been good to us so far, let us hope that February will not bring surprises. We have a new Parish Council I am happy to say that is full of energy and determination for a better year.

Our Parish Council Members are: Fotini Kaminaris – President, Argie Mimaros- Vice President, Denny Kougianos – Treasurer, Christina Varkarota- Secretary, Shellie Kioutas- Correspondence Secretary, and members at large, Deanna Mojarrad, Yiannis Giannas, John Gikas and Gus Kaminaris. We already have worked planning events to get you out of the gloomy days of February. Join us on February 16th for our Godparents Day. Bring your God child and reconfirm the oath you once made in front of Christ on their behalf. Stay and enjoy a delicious meal that will be offered. Then on February 28th, plan to join us for our Annual Bingo Event. Lucky participants will win beautiful purses, exciting gifts, and most of all have fun. This is one of our most successful fundraisers, bring your friends and help make it a really profitable one.

Through all the events, please don't forget your Sunday worship. Life gives us so many changes but the word of Jesus Christ and the truth of His gospel remains constant. We should never lose our spiritual relationship with our Creator. We are extremely grateful for the ones who have responded to the 2020 Stewardship Campaign. We do need all of your support so we can cover the needs of our beloved Church. Without your commitment, we are not able to foresee the future and be able to cover our Church's obligations.

With Love in Christ,

Fotini Kaminaris – President of the Parish Council

LADIES OF PHILOPTOCHOS

Successful Year in Review: 2019

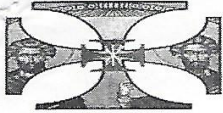
We want to express our gratitude towards our Ladies of Philoptochos for all their hard work this past year. Below is a list of the community outreach programs and donations that the Philoptochos has taken part of in 2019.

For the church - purchase of a new commercial grade stove

Monetary donations to Wilsons Ministry Center, Kaufman Cancer Center, St. Michael's Home for the Aged, local request for assistance, high school scholarship, St. Basil Academy back to school initiative, and the Harford Family House. They also provided monetary assistance to the National Philoptochos Society as well as the Metropolis of New Jersey Philoptochos Society for the numerous national and international initiatives that are organized by them.

They have been, and continue to, provide bagged lunches once a month for the homeless shelter and initiated and organized the Thanksgiving food collection which provided complete Thanksgiving meals plus additional supplies to more than a dozen local families in need of assistance.

They are hoping to get additional members involved in the Philoptochos because with more members they can continue to grow as a ministry and provide more services to the church and to those in need within our local communities. If you are interested in joining, please see Mrs. Maria Giannas, Philoptochos President.



Sts. Mary Magdalene & Markella Ladies Philoptochos Society, #1043

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc., is the duly accredited women's philanthropic society of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of the Society shall be:

- To help the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church through fund raising efforts; and
- To promote the charitable, benevolent, and philanthropic purposes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, through instructional programs, presentations, lectures, seminars and other educational resources;

2018 Philoptochos Membership

The ladies Philoptochos society of Sts. Mary Magdalene & Markella is a very active and integral part of our church supporting her growth and charitable projects in a variety of ways.

Becoming a member of our Philoptochos does not require a lot of your time, nor does it require that you attend every meeting and/or event. Please consider joining the Philoptochos and experiencing the true meaning of Philoptochos - philanthropy, fellowship and faith in action.

Member Name: _____

Member Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Home telephone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Stewardship Amount: \$ _____ **

** Please note that for each paid member \$15 will be sent to National Philoptochos and \$8 will be sent to our Metropolis on NJ Philoptochos to support national and regional initiatives. Any stewardship amount over \$23, will stay with our chapter and be applied to our many local and charitable projects. **

Please complete the form and mail your stewardship check to: Sts Mary Magdalene & Markella Ladies Philoptochos, #1043, Attention: Tina Stavrou, Treasurer, PO Box 1575, Bel Air, MD 21014.

STS. MARY MAGDALENE & MARKELLA PHILOPTOCHOS CALENDAR

09/08/2019- General Meeting: Welcome new board members. Review calendar and finalize dates. Brainstorm about Charitable opportunities and plan upcoming year. Discuss Apple Festival preparations. Brainstorm about other Fundraisers and add to calendar. Start calendar for Coffee Hour duties

10/13/2019- General Meeting: Discuss annual Thanksgiving Food Drive

11/10/2019- General Meeting: Discuss and plan for Agia Barbara's celebration which falls on Wednesday - 12/04/2019. Decide when to host luncheon and various duties. Discuss and plan for Christmas Cookie and Vasilopita Fundraisers

December Fundraiser: Sell Christmas cookies and Vasilopitas

01/05/2020- Cutting of the Vasilopita and our yearly passing of tray to collect money to benefit St. Basil Academy.

02/09/2020- General Meeting: Discuss and decide about annual Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser. Start planning for our yearly church Festival

03/08/2020- General Meeting: Discuss and plan for Easter activities. Decide when to start the Easter Bread and Easter Flower fundraisers. Greek Orthodox Easter 4/19/20. American Easter 4/12/20. Discuss and prepare for High School Graduate Scholarship. Select actual date for scholarship presentation. We will meet in May due to the Easter holiday?

4/12/2020 is Greek Palm Sunday and American Easter

04/12/2020 Palm Sunday: Easter Bread and Easter Flower Fundraisers


04/17/2020 Holy Friday: Meet at church to decorate the Epitaphio and our church for Easter.

05/10/2020- General Meeting: Final discussions for Festival and Sts. Mary Magdalene and Markella name-day celebration. Plan our yearly Philoptochos party.

June 2020- Philoptochos Group Dinner- Date to be Determined

June 2020- Our Church Festival

Preparation for Great Lent

 johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/01/preparation-for-great-lent.html

By S. V. Bulgakov

The preparation for Great Lent begins soon after the feast of the Theophany of the Lord corresponding to its historical commemoration that soon after His baptism Jesus Christ left for the desert for a fast, in commemoration of which the Holy Forty Day Fast was established. Beginning with the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the preparation for Great Lent comes to an end with Cheesefare Sunday. The Holy Church for a long time begins to prepare the faithful for Great Lent as a redemptive time for an all general spiritual cleansing and sanctification. This cleansing and sanctification are possible only under the condition of the complete remission of sins, the complete change of a life view in ideas, feelings and actions, the complete renewal and spiritual revival. But such revival requires the sustained, serious, painful and tenacious spiritual struggle, by which it gradually should revive to compel and ingrain itself. Besides this the determination for such a spiritual struggle and its persistence also depends on us, but it depends more on the mercy of God, who revives it in the heart and is accomplished by His all-acting grace. Therefore we should pray a lot and with diligence, so that the Lord will send us to the door of repentance, to break the hardness of our hearts and to stir up grief about our sins, without which there cannot be true repentance; to inflame our heart with love for Him, without Whom even the most sincere repentance would not be strong enough; to enliven and give wing to our spirit with sacred hope, without which the trembling heart would be suppressed with sorrow. That is why the Holy Church prepares us beforehand for our entrance into the sacred and redemptive days of lent and repentance, and beforehand makes an effort to remove everything that interferes with our coming to true repentance, and beforehand makes an effort to teach us that the sincere spirit of humility and contrition to be acquired is required from us.

Preparing believers for the Holy Forty Day Fast, the Holy Church in its services, according to its own expression, acts as the commander who with timely and wise words encourages the warriors before doing battle with the enemy. Therefore in its preparatory services it does not forget to tell everything that may position the faithful for fasting and repentance. In its sacred commemorations it returns to the first days of the world and mankind, to the blessed condition of the forefathers and their fall, to show the beginning of sin and to awaken in us contrition for sins, and to the time of the coming on earth of the Son of God for the salvation of mankind in order to turn us to God. Continuing in the preparatory season, the Holy Church accustoms the faithful to the ascetical struggle of fasting and the gradual incorporation of abstinence. After eating meat all during the week following the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, it reinstates the Wednesday and Friday fasts and then builds up to the highest degree of preparatory abstinence by prohibiting the eating of all meat products but with the allowance to use cheese products. The special preparation for the Holy Forty Day Fast is undoubtedly an ancient established practice of the Holy Church. Thus, the already famous preachers of the Fourth Century Saints Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria and others left us their discussions and sermons, spoken by them in view of the fast not already come, but only expected. From *Handbook for Church Servers*, 2nd ed., (Kharkov, 1900) p. 488

FEBRUARY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

February 2: Sunday - Presentation of our Lord

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

February 7: Friday - Forefeast of St. Theodore the Commander

Service will take place at St. Theodore in Lanham, MD

- † 7:00 p.m. - *Hierarchical Great Vespers*

February 8: Saturday - St. Theodore the Commander

Service will take place at St. Theodore in Lanham, MD

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Hierarchical Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Hierarchical Divine Liturgy*

February 9: Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee - **Triodion Begins**

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

February 16: Sunday of the Prodigal Son - **Godparent's Day Luncheon**

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

February 22: Saturday of Souls

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

February 23: Judgment Sunday (Meatfare)

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

February 29: Sunday - Saturday of Souls

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

WHEN TO SIT OR STAND DURING THE DIVINE LITURGY

(Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral - Norfolk, Virginia)

People have been asking me the important question of what is the proper etiquette when sitting or standing in Church during the Divine Liturgy. To best explain, I have referenced the guidelines provided by one of our sister parishes, the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Norfolk, Virginia. Their guidelines, which I also agree with, state:

The traditional posture for prayer and worship in the Orthodox Church has been to stand. In the Orthodox “old countries,” there are usually no pews in the churches. Chairs or benches on the side walls are usually reserved for the elderly and infirm. In North America, we have tended to build our churches with pews, and since we have them, we need to figure out when we may sit and when we should stand. It is fully acceptable (even preferable) to stand for the entire service. If you prefer this, it would be better to find a place closer to the back or side of the church so as not to stand out or block someone’s view.

When should you definitely stand? Always during the Gospel reading, the Small and Great Entrances, the Anaphora, the distribution of Holy Communion, whenever the priest gives a blessing, and the Dismissal. In many parishes, the Divine Liturgy books in the pew have suggested times when sitting is acceptable. Follow those instructions (it’s probably safer than to follow what the people are doing in the first couple of rows). It is never wrong to stand in church.

(Note: Many parishes also follow the practice of kneeling on Sundays during the Cherubic Hymn, consecration, and the “Our Father.” Strictly speaking, this is not correct, because every Sunday is a “little Pascha” in which the Resurrection is remembered — hence, no kneeling. The “kneeling prayers” said five weeks after Pascha, are said after the Sunday Liturgy, “reinstating” kneeling for Vespers, Matins, and weekday Liturgies only. If the tradition of the parish you are visiting is to kneel, and everyone kneels, it’s better to do so than to stick out like a sore thumb. If there is a mixture of standing and kneeling, then stand.)



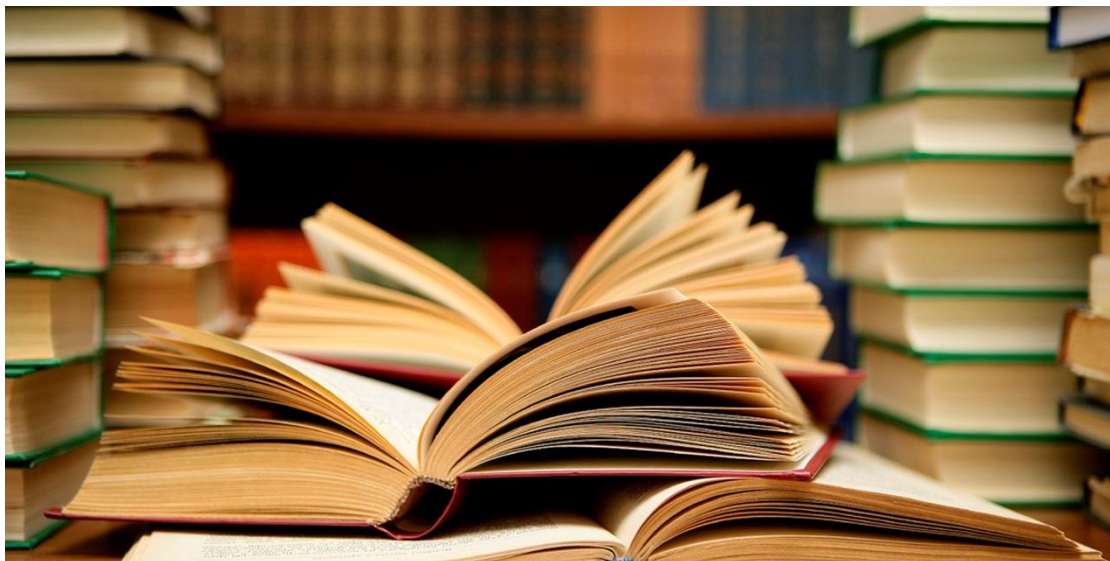
“Mystagogy” Resource Center

-By John Sanidopoulos

<https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/>

STS MARY MAGDALENE & MARKELLA

****PARISH LIBRARY****



MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT THE ORTHODOX FAITH. FOR THIS REASON, WE ARE EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT OUR PARISH HAS PUT TOGETHER ITS COLLECTION OF BOOKS FOR CHECKOUT. BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ALL STEWARDS OF THE CHURCH. THEY CAN BE CHECKED OUT LIKE YOUR TYPICAL LIBRARY. WE ALSO HAVE THE CHECKOUT PROCESS AVAILABLE THROUGH OUR WEBSITE.

ORTHOPRAXIA BOOK CLUB SESSION



JOIN US ON **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH** FOR ANOTHER SESSION OF OUR BOOK CLUB. SINCE WE ARE GOING INTO THE TRIODION PERIOD, WE ARE GOING TO LOOK INTO THE FIRST FEW GOSPEL READINGS OF THE PERIOD. WE WILL BE HOSTING IT AT OUR FUNCTION HALL STARTING AT 7:00 P.M.

**STS. MARY MAGDALENE AND MARKELLA YOUTH
BAKLAVA CHEESECAKE BAKE SALE**



CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR WITH A DELICIOUS BAKLAVA CHEESECAKE
THAT WE GUARANTEE WILL BRING A SMILE TO YOUR FACE.

CAKES HAVE 14 SLICES AND THEY COST \$35.00. ALL PROCEEDS WILL HELP
THE YOUTH PROGRAM OF THE PARISH. PLEASE CONTACT FATHER
ELEFTERIOS AT FRELEFTERIOS@GMAIL.COM IF YOU ARE INTERESTED.

This Bake Sale will end on February 29, 2020.

****IF YOU BUY 5 OR MORE WE WILL EVEN DELIVER THEM TO YOU****

GODPARENTS DAY LUNCHEON



WE WOULD LIKE TO INVITE ALL THE FAITHFUL TO OUR
GODPARENTS DAY CELEBRATION.

THIS SPECIAL DAY WILL BE HOSTED ON **SUNDAY,**
FEBRUARY 16, 2020 AT OUR BEAUTIFUL FUNCTION HALL.
THERE WILL BE A DELICIOUS MEAL PREPARED AS WELL AS
BEVERAGES AND DESSERTS.

LET US GATHER TO HONOR OUR GODPARENTS FOR THEIR
HARD WORK IN KEEPING US CLOSE TO OUR FAITH IN GOD.



Proceeds to benefit

Sts. Mary Magdalene & Markella

Greek Orthodox Church

Friday, February 28th, 2020

Saint Matthew Lutheran Church

1200 E. Churchville Rd. Bel Air, MD 21014

Doors Open at 6:00pm Bingo Starts at 7:00pm

20 EXCITING GAMES & SPECIAL RAFFLES

Outside food and drinks are not allowed

Tickets at the door \$25. Reserved Tickets: \$20 per person.

Contact: Fannie Kaminaris 443-463-6458 or

Argie Minaros at argiesthumbsup@gmail.com

Latest Fashion of Tory Burch and Michael Kors Bags

Special Games and Raffle items

Great food, snacks, desserts, beer and wine available



FLOWER DONATIONS FOR SALUTATIONS OF THE THEOTOKOS



OUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY INTO GREAT LENT WILL OFFICIALLY BEGIN NEXT WEEK AS WE CELEBRATE THE SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE. THIS ALSO MEANS THAT SERVICES OF THE SALUTATIONS OF THE THEOTOKOS WILL BEGIN SOON AND ARE SEEKING DONATIONS FOR THE DECORATING OF THE ICON OF THE PANAGIA. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE REACH OUT TO MRS. FOTINI KAMINARIS, OUR PARISH COUNCIL PRESIDENT.



WE WANT TO LET THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY KNOW THAT WE ARE ALSO ACCEPTING ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS FOR YOUR NEXT DONATION TO THE CHURCH. HERE IS A LIST OF DEPARTMENTS THAT YOU CAN DONATE TO:

**BUILDING FUND
CHURCH SUPPLIES
GENERAL DONATION
LADIES OF PHILOPTOCHOS
STEWARDSHIP
YOUTH GROUP**

JUST VISIT THE WEBSITE AND PRESS "DONATIONS." IT IS FAST, CONVENIENT, AND GREAT FOR RECORD KEEPING.

*FOR GREEK SCHOOL, PLEASE SPECIFY BY WRITING THAT IN THE NOTES; OTHERWISE, YOUR DONATION WILL BE ADDED TO THE GENERAL YOUTH FUND.

STS. MARY MAGDALENE & MARKELLA PARISH DIRECTORY



WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF PRINTING A DIRECTORY FOR THE STEWARDS OF OUR CHURCH. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE ADDED TO THE DIRECTORY, PLEASE EMAIL FATHER ELEFTERIOS AT FRELEFTERIOS@GMAIL.COM WITH THE ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, AND EMAIL. THIS DIRECTORY WILL HELP PEOPLE IN STRENGTHENING THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH.

We cordially invite you to
a Globe Entertainment & VIP International Inc presentation

George Dalaras "Songs of our Life"

featuring *Michalis Tzouganakis*

with *Aspasia Stratigou & Alexandros Tzouganakis*



Sunday Feb 16th

7pm show

at the **Hard Rock Hotel & Casino**

1000 Boardwalk, Atlantic City, NJ 08401

GET TICKETS: www.globeent.com

For the benefit of the charitable organization Ark of the World

2020 PLEDGED STEWARDS

Alatzas, George & Rene

Alsup, Andrew & Vasilias

Babiak, Christopher & Leslie

Bontzos, Stylianos & Kalliopi

Caprinolo, Lee & Mary

Cioloa, Bogdan & Anca

Demedis, Olympia

Dermatis, Minas & Panagiota

Diamandaras, Helen

Diniakos, Kostas & Elvira**

Fokianos, Konstantinos & Maria

Giannaras, Chris

Giannas, Apostolos & Maria

Giannas, Erene

Giannas, Ioannis

Giannas, Stylianos & Maria

Gikas, John & Lola

Kaitis, Dr. Angela

Kaminaris, Gus & Fotini

Kanaras, Louis & Eleni

Karas, Aimee

Karas, Andy

Karas, Bethany Anne

Karas, Daphne

Karas, John & Belinda

Karas, Katie

Karas, Michael & Linda

Karas, Peter & Kim

Karas, Scott

Karas, Steven

Karellas, Eugenia

Kioutas, Nick & Shellie

Konstant, Gus

Kougianos, Alex & Daniela

Kougianos, Dionisios & Argiro

Marvelis, Vasilios & Efthymia

Millon, Edward & Florence **

Mimaros, Dimitrios & Argie

Mojarrad, Deanna

Nikitaras, Andreas & Nicole

Nikitaras, Christos & Angela

Plevrakis, Fr. Elefterios & Esther

Prapas, Spiros

Roros, Bill & Mary

Roros, Georgios**

Sarapis, Stavros & Marina

Sarris, Sam

Sollon, Dafne**

Stakias, Stellios & Tina

Stelato III, James

Sudeck, Virginia

Tsiatsoulis, Leonidas & Eirini Anastasiou

2020 PLEDGED STEWARDS

Varkarota, Christina

Yiannouris, Ioannis & Shawn

Total 2019 Stewards: 54

Number of New Stewards for 2019 (**): 4

Pledged: \$53,160.00 / Collected: \$13,495.00

Outstanding Balance: \$39,665.00

Average Stewardship Pledge: \$ 984.44