



THE Veil

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
ST. MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

MARCH 2024
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...and more inside!



Fellowship Hour

How It Works and How You Can Help

ALYSSA M. AND IRENE L. | FELLOWSHIP HOUR LEADS

Several years ago, St. Mary's leadership made the decision to invite entire parish to help provide for the "Fellowship Hour" we all enjoy after the liturgy. Every church has their own method of organizing this continued breaking of bread and fellowship together, and most churches have employed multiple ways of organizing it over time. There is no one right way!

Here are a few of the highlights of how we currently manage this at St. Mary's.

- 1. Hosting is Organized Alphabetically by Last Name.** Everyone in the parish is asked to host once-a-month based on their last name as follows:
 - **1st Sunday:** A-D (Lead: Cathy D.)
 - **2nd Sunday:** E-K (Lead: Edward H.)
 - **3rd Sunday:** L-O (Leads: Ioana M. & Alyssa M.)
 - **4th Sunday:** P-Z (Lead: Matt & Melanie T.)
 - **5th Sunday:** All Groups (Lead: Irene L.)
- 2. Hosting Involves Setting-up, Providing Food, and Cleaning.** During this once-a-month service, everyone is asked to participate in some way based on their skills, abilities, and finances. We need people to prepare the coffee and tea ahead of time; to bring food to share (potluck!) for what has lately been at least 100+ people; to set-out the food & serving utensils, and to help clean-up by washing dishes, taking trash out, wiping down tables, and sweeping the floor. The church school director coordinates volunteers to provide and serve food downstairs in the church library for the pre-K through 5th graders. (*cont'd on p.4*)



Saint Mary
ORTHODOX CHURCH

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God Grant You Many Years!

Don't see your name? Join us on Realm and fill out your profile. If you include your birthday and nameday, you'll see them here.

BIRTHDAYS

Tanya D.
Clara M.
Emilia J.
Tep R.
Renee L.
Kieran H.
Julia P.

Joshua F.
Lydia T.
Sarah J.
Michael M.
Todd S.
Christine S.
Gabriel F.
Talia B.

Zac W.
Laila G.
Sarah J.
Pete D.
Sophia D.
Nadine T.
Bogdan M.

NAMEDAYS

Patrick O.
Laila G.

ANNIVERSARIES

David & Amy D.
Scott & Kristen S.



Jump on the Mealtrain for the Faber Family

Glory to God for the arrival of baby Colby in the Faber family on January 29! Please help Caleb and Lacie adjust to being a family of four, and little Clara adjust to being a big sister, by blessing the family with meals. Please note the family avoids shellfish, pork, and mushrooms!

Learn more and sign up at mealtrain.com/trains/6zg4wy

SIGN UP FOR THE PSALTER PRAYER GROUP

Sign up by joining the **Psalter Prayer Group** on Realm, then either post on the page or through the group chat to let Libby know that you'd like a kathisma assignment. Please note that **you must make a post** to get an assignment!

Don't wait! Great Lent begins March 18.



NOTICE: Communications Manager Sophia P. has Returned from Maternity Leave

You can resume sending Sophia additions to the weekly bulletin, newsletter, Realm posts, and other communication needs.

Thank you!

The Sitka Icon is Visiting St. Mary's this Lent

FRIDAY, MARCH 29, FOLLOWING AKATHIST & HOLY UNCTION STARTING AT 7PM

2024 Parish Council Officers

Newly elected at the Parish Assembly on February 4, 2024

President: David D.
Vice President: Ileana C.
Secretary: Joseph J.
Treasurer: Chris G.
Epitropes: Claudia S., Jonathan J.
Auditors: Yara C., Ellen R.
Members-at-large: Anna C.,

Sdn. Ken L., Ioana M., Bogdan M., Christopher T., James T.
Delegates to 2024-25 Episcopate Congress: Psa. Stephanie S., Bogdan M.
Alternates: Elaine P., Eugene H.



March

2024

SUNDAY	1 MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
25 THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE 9am-11:30am Matins & Liturgy 6pm-8pm Men's Fellowship	26	27	28 7pm-7:45pm Vespers 7:45pm-8:45pm Lord of Spirits Study Group	29 ST. JOHN CASSIAN 7am-8am Divine Liturgy	1 1pm-2pm Philokalia Book Group	2 10am-11am Liturgy 11am-2:30pm Retreat 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism: The Sacraments 5pm-6pm Great Vespers
3 PRODIGAL SON 9am-11:30am Matins & Liturgy Church School	4	5	6 7pm-7:45pm Vespers 7:45pm-8:45pm Lord of Spirits Study Group	7	8 1pm-2pm Philokalia Book Group	9 10am-11:30am Memorial Liturgy 12pm-3pm St. Mary Tea 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism 5pm-6pm Great Vespers
10 MEATFARE / LAST JUDGMENT Project Mexico Fundraiser 9am-11:30am Matins & Liturgy Church School	11	12	13 7pm-7:45pm Vespers 7:45pm-8:45pm Lord of Spirits Study Group	14 7pm-9pm Parish Council	15 1pm-2pm Philokalia Book Group	16 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism 5pm-6pm Great Vespers w/ Group Confession
17 CHEESEFARE / FORGIVENESS SUNDAY 9am-11:30am Matins & Liturgy Church School	18 7pm-8:30pm Great Canon	19 7pm-8:30pm Great Canon	20 10:30am-12pm Pre-sanctified Liturgy 7pm-8:30pm Great Canon	21 7pm-8:30pm Great Canon	22 10:30am-12pm Pre-sanctified Liturgy 1pm-2pm Philokalia Book Group 7pm-8pm Akathist	23 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism 5pm-6pm Great Vespers
Great Lent March 18 - April 26						
24 SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY 9am-11:30am Matins & Liturgy Church School	25 ANNUNCIATION 7pm-8:30pm Vespertal Liturgy	26	27 7pm-8:30pm Pre-sanctified Liturgy	28	29 10:30am-12pm Pre-sanctified Liturgy 1pm-2pm Philokalia Book Group 7pm Akathist, Uction, Sitka Icon Visit	30 10am-11:30am Memorial Liturgy 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism 5pm-6pm Great Vespers
Great Lent March 18 - April 26						
31 ST. GREGORY PALAMAS 9am-11:30am Matins & Liturgy Church School	1	2	3 7pm-8:30pm Pre-sanctified Liturgy	4	5 10:30am-12pm Pre-sanctified Liturgy 1pm-2pm Philokalia Book Group 7pm-8pm Akathist	6 10am-11:30am Memorial Liturgy 3pm-4:30pm Adult Catechism 5pm-6pm Great Vespers
Great Lent March 18 - April 26						

Events are subject to change. Please check the calendar at stmaryorthodox.org/calendar for the most up-to-date event listings.

Doxacon Returns on November 1-2 at Catholic University of America

BY THE DOXAICON TEAM

This year's Doxacon features tabletop gaming sessions, a Writer's Workshop led by Dn. Nicholas Kotar, and (of course) our speakers! If you would like to speak, please visit our website at doxacon.org and click "Follow the Link" to read the full Call for Papers and submission details. Paper proposals are due April 15, 2024.

Here's an excerpt from our call for papers:

Theme: Echoes of the Incarnation

This year at Doxacon, we are inviting you to explore the echoes of Christ's incarnation in speculative fiction.

Throughout human history, there have been echoes of Christ's incarnation in pagan stories, which pointed forward toward Christ, and, on this side of the incarnation, point back to, and have the depths of their meaning revealed in the incarnation. Christ is the center to which everything past and future points. He is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. Regardless of when stories were written or who wrote them, if there is a sacrificial or redemptive element, they echo Christ's incarnation.

Furthermore, St. Maximus the Confessor tells us that the revelation

of the incarnation will always be manifest, first in Christ and then in each of us. "The Word of God, born once in the flesh (such is his kindness and his goodness), is always willing to be born spiritually in those who desire him. In them, he is born as an infant as he fashions himself in them by means of their virtues. He reveals himself to the extent that he knows someone is capable of receiving him. He diminishes the revelation of his glory not out of selfishness but because he recognizes the capacity and resources of those who desire to see him. Yet, in the transcendence of mystery, he always remains invisible to all."

How is the Word of God, born spiritually in us, revealed to us in fiction? How is Christ's incarnation echoed through the sacrificial love of a

hero? Or in the renunciation of worldly power or things? Or maybe the incarnation is revealed in more abstract terms. Does the catharsis experienced through a tragic hero produce a redemptive element for the reader? Or is there some other way that fiction has captured the way Christ's becoming man has reinterpreted human history and transformed the world from the banality of the familiar? Or maybe a fictional character's exploration reveals Christ's incarnation to us another way?

We invite submissions exploring these and related topics in science fiction, fantasy, horror, and other speculative fiction genres in literature, television, games, or film. ✕

(Fellowship Hour, cont'd)

3. **Realm Communication.** Our parish uses a program called Realm to manage our church directory and intra-church communications. Our clergy add members and regular attenders to the Realm database, and thereafter, each individual should:

- b. download the Realm Connect app on your phone
- c. upload a photo
- d. ensure that your contact info is accurate (address, email, phone)
- e. join groups on topics that interest you, but know that...
- f. ...you will automatically be added to your appropriate Fellowship Hour alphabet group
- g. fix your settings so that you actually get notifications of church communication via email.

If you don't do these things, you will miss out on vital church information and communication.

4. **Alpha Team Leaders.** We recently had several people step up to take on the added responsibility of attempting to organize each week's Fellowship Hour potluck. I say "attempting to organize" because what we have is volunteers leading volunteers...and that only happens effectively when **EVERYONE COMMUNICATES** with each other. These Team Leads are sending out Realm Inbox messages a week or 2 prior to their duty Sunday asking everyone to commit to help in some way. This is why point No. 3 is critical!

These brave souls helping the rest of us be organized and thus making the task a little easier for all, and who deserve our gratitude, are seen in the list in No. 1, above. ✕



The Story of Salvation

STEPHANIE T. | CHURCH SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Have you ever held a young child during fellowship hour so that the child's parents could enjoy a few bites of food? In those few moments, you were part of the village it takes to help that child develop and grow. Now imagine that the same child is seven years old and full of questions about the Church: "Why do we use blue candles and at other times purple candles?" or "Why do we kiss icons?" Taking the time to answer those questions will allow that child to understand another piece of the story of salvation we have been given as Orthodox Christians.

Fr. David reminded us in an October sermon about the importance of sharing the gospel with the youth of our parish: "A lot of our young people, if

they're not being educated about what the gospel really is, are at great danger of being led away because there (are) a lot of voices out there telling them that "Oh yeah, Christianity is x or y or z." It's none of those things ... So getting the story right is crucial, not only for really our participation in the story of salvation but really for the salvation of our children and our community and our world. So we have a responsibility to make sure the truth is out there, the true version of the story."

We currently have five Sunday School classes at St. Mary's: Preschool and Kindergarten (CGS), 1st - 3rd grade, 4th - 5th grade, 6th - 8th grade (middle school), and 9th - 12th grade (high school). With one teacher retiring and

a few other positions potentially opening up, we may need to switch to having only three classes next year: K - 2 (elementary), 3 - 5 (intermediate), and 6 - 12 (secondary). While the number of students in each class would be approximately the same, this alternative arrangement with up to seven grade levels per class is not ideal for our children. However, it may be necessary for this to become our Sunday School's reality if we do not have enough teachers.

"Children are not a distraction from more important work. They are the most important work." (Dr. John Trainor). It is undoubtedly a commitment of self-sacrifice to teach Sunday School. Classes meet during fellowship hour, meaning that our *(cont'd on back)*

Join the Weeding Group!

Sign up to care for an area of our parish yard and keep it weed-free and looking beautiful! **Tools are provided.** We have a bucket of tools and a bucket to collect the weeds in. Once you have removed the weeds, you can dispose of those unwanted weeds in one of the large trash cans that says "**Yard Waste Only**". You may want to bring your own gardening gloves. If you are not sure what is a weed and what is a plant, please ask for help.

Questions? Ask Nick M. or Andrew B.

There will be a list of areas to be weeded posted in the Fellowship Hall.



Tips and Tricks for Using Realm

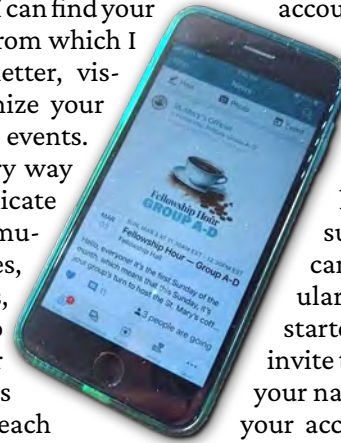
Understanding How to Stay in Touch with St. Mary's

FR. DAVID | PARISH PRIEST

Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly Realms in Christ—Eph. 1:3

We have been very blessed with a number of new members and new families. One of the challenges that the parish leadership recognizes that we face is how to enable connection for members with the many activities going on. To this end, our parish employs what is called a Church Management System software. The program we use is produced by ACS Technologies and is called Realm, though in mobile app form you will find it under "ACS Connect." This program provides for us a number of very important and useful services to the parish. First, it has become our main platform for on-line giving representing the bulk of how parishioners now give. We are transition-

ing to Realm accounting as well which will directly interface with our giving software and make providing reports quicker and easier for our leadership team. Secondly, it serves as our database and that is where I can find your contact information, from which I send you your newsletter, visit your homes, recognize your birthdays and other events. Lastly, it is the primary way in which we communicate internally to the community through updates, bulletins, emails, chats, photos, etc. It is also an important way for small group ministries to communicate with each other such as the Parish Council, the Church School, the Choir, book studies, prayer ministries, fellowship hour groups, etc. So it is really import-



ant for members to be familiar with this program in order to maximize their engagement with the life of the parish. To that end I am hoping to include some helpful hints on how to use your realm account effectively each month.

This month, make sure you have access to your account by trying to sign in on a computer (for full functionality). If you don't have an account or are not sure please let me know (you can reach me through our regular website contact page for starters.) I'll make sure you get an invite to your realm account if I have your name and email. Once you open your account, go up to the top right corner and please make sure to fill out your Realm Profile as fully as you can. Include your interests so group leaders will be better able (*cont'd on back*)

Sunday School Valentine's Day Fundraiser

ELAINE P.

On Sunday February 11, Church School students held a fundraiser in support of the Capital Campaign in honor of St. Valentine.

The students put considerable effort into preparing for the fundraiser, making packs of hot chocolate mix (with marshmallows) in lovely valentine bags at Church School, as well as fresh hot chocolate that they served during fellowship hour. They also spent time at home making a variety of items to sell, including soaps, bird feeders, bracelets, hair clips, earrings, pictures to hang, finger puppets, dishcloths, and many other items. Everyone who purchased an item also received a copy of *The Life of Saint Valentine*.

Instead of placing prices on the items, the children asked for donations to the building fund. On that day alone,

they raised over \$900 in cash and checks, with many people saying they would donate on Realm. We have not yet learned the total amount of money raised for the capital fund, but more hot chocolate packets and items were purchased the following Sunday, raising another \$125.

The children enjoyed the project and were very proud of their work. Several proved to be terrific in promoting the sales by taking items around to people in the fellowship hall and giving a great sales pitch! One boy told me, in his enthusiasm for the fundraiser, that "we need to do this again!"

Several items are still available in the fellowship hall with a donation basket if you have not had a chance to peruse the wares. Thanks to the 3-5th grade and the 6-8th grade students for all your hard work and wonderful co-

operation, and to Stephanie Trbovich, Nathan Lui, Amy Dill, Maria Mitron and all of you who were so supportive of this effort. ✕

A new book introducing Orthodoxy is now available through Ancient Faith Publishing

This text, written by former parishioner Zachary P., aims to identify and unteach a secular worldview to assist us in becoming participants in a sacramental worldview.

"A clear, hopeful framework for the core of thinking and behaving as Christians. Both catechists and new (or renewed) Christians will want this accessible book to help guide their way." — Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick

Available at store.ancientfaith.com



Upcoming Events

Join us in worship, service, learning, spiritual enrichment, and fellowship!

SPECIAL CHURCH SERVICES

Memorial Liturgy

Sat, Nov. 18 @ 11am-2pm

Great Vespers with Group Confession

Sat, Nov. 16 @ 5pm-6:30pm (last Saturday before Lent begins)

Presanctified Liturgy

First Presanctified Liturgy of Lent

Wed, Mar 20 @ 10:30am-12pm

The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

First four evenings of Lent

Mon Mar 18–Thur Mar 21 @ 7pm-8:30pm

Akathist to the Theotokos

Friday evenings of Lent

Mar 22–April 19 @ 7pm-8pm

Presanctified Liturgy

Wednesday evenings of Lent Mar 27–April 24

Friday mornings of Lent Mar 22–April 26

Vespertal Liturgy for Annunciation

Mon, Mar 25 @ 7pm-8:30pm

Akathist, Holy Unction, Visitation of Sitka Icon of the Mother of God

Fri, Mar 29, starting at 7pm

Memorial Liturgy

Sat, Mar 30 @ 10am-11:30am



St. Mary Tea

SATURDAY, MARCH 9 @ 12PM-3PM AT ST. MARY'S

You're invited to join fellow parishioners at the St. Mary tea! The St. Mary Tea is a potluck that welcomes everyone men, women, families and friends! Please bring a sweet or savory dish to share. If you have a favorite tea - loose leaf or tea bag style that you'd like us to try - bring it. Feel free to also bring a your own favorite mug. Fancy hats encouraged.



CURRENT CLASS: Adult Catechism: The Holy Mysteries

SATURDAYS @ 3PM-4:30PM FEBRUARY 10 – APRIL 13

This course will help catechumen articulate the history, purpose, value, and meaning of the Eastern Orthodox Church's sacramental and worship life. After completing this course, catechumens will be well prepared for reception into the Orthodox Church.

Register on Realm



CURRENT CLASS: Lord of Spirits Study Group

WEDNESDAYS FOLLOWING VESPERS (ABOUT 7:45PM-9PM) SEPTEMBER 27 – MARCH 13

The popular Lord of Spirits Podcast on Ancient Faith Radio has been a really turning point for many in their understanding of the Bible and how it relates to our times and our Orthodox faith. This class aims to come along side the good work of Frs. Stephen De Young and Andrew Damick with a review of and deep dives into recent podcast episodes. Our Fall course will focus on their recent series on eschatology.

Register on Realm



St. Mary's Nats Game Outing: Nats vs. Atlanta Braves

SUNDAY, JUNE 9 FOLLOWING LITURGY RSVPS DUE BY PASCHA, MAY 5

Mark your calendars! Join us at National Park on June 9th to watch the Nats host the Atlanta Braves! Those under two years old are free assuming they don't need their own seat. Reserve tickets by Pascha (May 5th) with Christina Z. at c.zrake1701@hotmail.com. Payment can be taken via Realm or check to St. Mary Orthodox Church with "Nationals Game" in the memo line.

General Lenten Services

WEDNESDAY PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY

Wednesday Evenings, 7pm-8:30pm

FRIDAY PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY

Friday Mornings, 10:30am-12pm

AKATHIST TO THE THEOTOKOS

Friday Evenings, 7pm-8:30pm



(Realm, cont'd) to connect with you. Include a photo so other people can connect your name to your face. Let us know about birthdays, name days, and anniversaries. Lastly, if you are concerned about privacy, make sure your privacy settings are where you want them to be. And, just to test out some features, send me a chat by searching up my profile and clicking the chat button to let me know you made it online okay.

Your first steps of exploration can be in the “groups” section. When you join Realm you are automatically in the main official church group by which we communicate to you things like the bulletin, event updates, weather cancellations, etc. But there are many other groups to find. I’ll talk more about those next month... until then, explore and let me know what you think. ✕

(Church School, cont'd) teachers spend fellowship hour enriching the spiritual lives of our children instead of socializing for almost half the Sundays of the year in addition to preparing for class ahead of time. As you read the questions above that a curious seven-year-old asked, did you know the answers? If so, you already have it in you to teach part of the story of salvation to the youngest members of the church.

For future years, we are considering keeping the current five classes, extending the CGS program to the 1st - 3rd grade class, and splitting the year into four different terms. Imagine teaching fourth graders in the fall about God’s love or sharing lives of the saints with middle schoolers in the weeks leading up to Lent. As a

community, we have a responsibility to make sure our youth learn the “true version of the story” of salvation. If we each participate in a part of this work, it would open the door for our St. Mary’s village to aid in raising our youth without missing out on our own necessary spiritual enrichment. ✕

Join a Group or Ministry

Come join us in our ministry efforts, develop relationships, and enrich your life and the lives of others. Learn more about this year’s groups, ministries, and activities on the website or the 2022 Parish Groups brochure!



Send your writeups about parish events, offer your reflections and encouragement, or educate us on your special interest area in the faith. Keep journalism alive in our community!

To get involved, email the editor **Sophia** at sophia@stmaryorthodox.org



THE Veil

The Official Newsletter of the Protection of the Holy Mother of God Orthodox Church
Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, Orthodox Church in America (OCA)

Hierarchy: Archbishop NATHANIEL of Detroit | Parish Priest: V. Rev. Dr. Fr. David G. Subu
Deacons: Protodn. Peter Danilchick, Dn. Nicholas Dujmovic | Choir Director & Head Chanter: Sdn. Nicholas Jones
Subdeacons: Eugene Huang, Nicholas Jones, Bogdan Maxim, Anthony Freude, Kenneth Liu | Parish Council President: David Dill
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