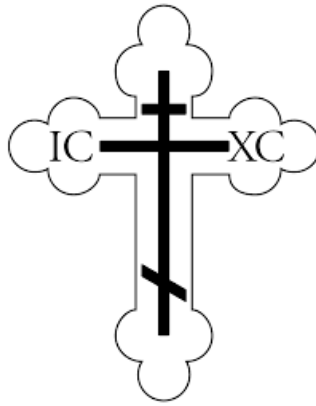


2020 General Parish Assembly Report
Youth and Pastoral Outreach and General Ministries
Antiochian Orthodox Basilica of St. Mary





2020 General Parish Assembly Report
Youth and Pastoral Outreach and General Ministries
TABLE OF CONTENTS

3.....	Ministry Letter
4.....	Altar Servers Ministry
5.....	Arabic School
6.....	Catechesis of the Good Shepherd
7.....	Camp St. Mary
8.....	St. Mary's Choir
9.....	St. Mary Children's Choir
10.....	Church School Ministry
11-12.....	The Daughters of St. Mary
13.....	Ladies Society
14.....	Media and Communications Ministry
15-16.....	Basilica of St. Mary Montessori Academy
17.....	Mother-Toddler Ministry
18.....	Senior Heritage Ministry
19-20.....	Teen SOYO
21.....	Vacation Church School
22.....	Village Up North

Altar Servers

The Altar boy ministry works weekly with boys age 9 and up. We are looking for boys ages 9 and up to join and help. We will hold several trainings this year to build fellowship among the Altar boys.



Arabic School

This Report was prepared by Lina Nunu.

I've been directing and teaching at St. Mary Arabic School with the help of the dedication of hardworking volunteers teachers and assistants, since 2007. We reached 100 students this year, ages 4 and up. We meet every Sunday after Church School, from 12:30-1:30, for 20 sessions October-March. We were able to provide our students with updated 3 books this year that helped us teach them how to read and write the Arabic language along with a better understanding of the grammar.

We also try teaching our students good morals and attitudes used in our daily life. In addition we teach English as a second language (ESL class) for adults.

Thank you so much for all who supported us:

Father George, Father Jim, Deacon Suhail, Deacon Samer, Stacey Badeen and Olive Awad. Thank you for donations that support St. Mary Arabic School.

God bless our church!

**Our classes are taught
be these wonderful,
dedicated teachers:**

Elaina Azar
Manuela Bcharah
Nahla Chalhoub
Kathreen Esaid
Niveen Farah
Lamis Fares
Lina Ghawi Nunu
Lina Haddad
Rana Imseeh
Dalia Kahill
Mervat Kashou
Layal Katrib
Lynn Katrib
Mariam Katrib
Nicole Katrib
Talal Katrib
Melanie Makool
Mary Matta
Freda Nader
May Nunu Kort
Lina Nunu Matta
Rania Nunu
Abeer Samaan
Lina Wakil
Marlin Warra
Lillian Youssef
Rania Ziadeh



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)

This report was prepared by Catechist, Angela Kadado
cgsstmary@yahoo.com
Level 1 Catechists: Kim Freij, Angela Kadado,
Kh.Audrey King, Abeer Samaan, and Sonya Kassiss

Linda Daoud-Catechist in Training
Level 2 Catechist: Vicki Tarazi

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a



Montessori-based Orthodox religious education program. Each of our “teachers” (called catechists) has completed 90+ hours of formal training to become certified in a Level 1 classroom (called atrium). Level 1 CGS is now in its seventh year at the Basilica and is offered to children ages 3 to 5 years old. Level I is currently offered on Tuesday evenings from 4:45 pm to 6:00 pm for our church community and we plan to offer the same time and day for next school year, starting in September 2020. Level I is also offered as part of the curriculum at The Basilica of St. Mary Montessori Academy (BOSMMA). Every Tuesday morning, 23 preschool students at BOSMMA attend a one-hour class in the atrium.

In an effort to grow CGS and reach more children of our parish, Vicki Tarazi completed Level II training this past summer. The Level II atrium serves children ages 6-9 years old in our parish and is a continuation of learning from the Level I atrium. We are happy to report that the Level II atrium is held on Saturdays from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm.

CGS is part of the Church School Ministry and follows the Church School calendar. The atrium consists of practical life works, the Altar, Liturgical items, geography of Palestine, Infancy Narratives, Biblical parables, The Good Shepherd works, The Paschal Mystery, Baptism, Eucharist, and the feasts, fasts, and celebrations of the church. Our material and style of learning is hands-on and through the nature of the work, fosters meditation and prayer and a better understanding of the Divine Liturgy.

CGS is actively seeking people who have an interest in working with young children and who want to learn more about their faith and the Bible. Parishioners and community members are welcome to tour our atrium at any time by contacting us at cgsstmary@yahoo.com. We invite you to join us to learn more about CGS and how you can become part of this growing ministry.



Camp St. Mary

This report was prepared by 2019 CSM Co-Director, Fadi Baza

Camp St. Mary 2019 was so much fun! We had eight sessions throughout the summer, and each week was special. Our campers enjoyed regular Christian education, church services and outings at the following places: CJ Adventure Park, Air Time, Color Wars (at church), Zap Zone, Kalahari, Monastery, and Kensington Lake. One challenge we had this year was a lack of counselors. Most weeks we did have enough, but others we could have used a bit more. Our biggest day was Kalahari. We had about 64 campers and 15 counselors. Kids seemed to like Kalahari, we had many new people attend. For every session we had approximately 20-25 campers and a range of 6-9 counselors per week. Thank you to Yazen Fakhouri and Sonya Kassis for helping the summer to go so smoothly!



Thanks to our generous sponsors:

Father George Shalhoub

The Ansaras

Red Robin

Tabouli

MJ Diamonds

Basilica SOYO

The Bentley Banquet & Conference Center



Choir

This report was prepared by St. Mary Choir Director, Linda Lawson.

The Basilica of St. Mary Choir is a dedicated group of singers who enjoy worshipping together with the Clergy, Chanters, and Congregation.

We have singers of all ages in the choir, and are looking for more singers, especially men.

We are also looking forward to singing at the beautiful, prayerful, Pre-Sanctified Liturgies of our Orthodox Church beginning in March.

If you love singing hymns of the Orthodox Church and are willing to continually work to improve, please consider joining us in the choir.



Children's Choir

This report was prepared by Children's Choir Director, Melanie Makool

St. Mary's Children Choir is always open to new children of our church. Children are taught traditional Orthodox Byzantine hymns in both Arabic and English, though they don't have to know Arabic in order to sing with the choir. Rehearsal days were changed from Thursday to Sunday, and the duration from one hour to 30 minutes to allow or students more time to do homework.

We purchased sound equipment last year, which is doing its job perfectly. We even use it for other musical events and speeches in the church. Since we raised funds for the equipment, we no longer charge a fee for the program. There are always new kids joining the choir, while others may leave for various reasons, but the children we do have always perform beautifully! To see some of their performances, see the Basilica of St. Mary Facebook page and YouTube channel.



Church School

This report was prepared by Parish Ministries Coordinator, Sonya Kassis

We have over 200 children registered for Church School in six classes and an average weekly attendance of approximately 100 children. The weekly parent email is sent to nearly 100 people, in addition to the use of the Remind 101 text app.

Our Teachers are:

Preschool and Kindergarten: Rana Saad and Victoria Tarazi

First and Second Grades: Hiba Kakish, Rachel Ansara and Maria Ashkar

Third and Fourth Grade: Nancy Hosari, Rania Nunu, and Abeer Samaan

Fifth and Sixth Grade: Nick and Sabrina Saras and Robert Chalhoub

Middle School: Kh. Audrey King and Dr. Ossama Nunu

High School: Michael Ansara and Joseph Nicolas

The church school is the foundation of all our youth programs at the Basilica. Our annual programs include Lazarus Saturday commemoration, Trunk-N-Treat, the Nativity Celebration, which this year included a traditional pageant where our dedicated children learned their lines through several weeks of practice; and the commemoration of many feast days. It is only through the support of dedicated volunteers that we are able to teach your children some of the most valuable things they will ever learn. A foundation built on our Holy Orthodox Faith, grounded in Jesus Christ will never crumble. Thank you to all the parents who bring their children every week, no matter the weather or circumstance. Thanks to Father George and Father Jim for their constant guidance and love. Glory to God for all things!



The Daughters of St. Mary

This information was prepared by Nahla Chahin.

The purpose of this ministry is to grow and strengthen our orthodox faith as mothers and daughters, and to live as our role model Holy Mother Mary lived in her family and her society, by teaching our kids the faith by example.

We had many significant events last year.

We started a wonderful program called, "Journey to a Better You", an eight-week educational series focusing on strengthening our Christian faith and our physical health. It was a welcome warmth during January and February of 2019. We have brought the program back for 2020. An average of 70 people attended these sessions.

In April we hosted an "Alzheimer Event" with the University of Michigan research center, MCFFAD to help reduce and prevent Alzheimer's in our community.

In August, we celebrated the Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God at the Monastery in Jackson, joining many other Orthodox churches in the area from different nationalities, but all are one in Christ.

In December, we held a Christmas Cookie Bake Sale for the benefit of needy families. We were able to help many families this Christmas. We also had a pot luck Christmas party with more than 50 families who enjoyed fellowship together, chanting Christmas hymns and celebrating the new born Lord together.

Nearly every Thursday we host an Arabic Bible Study in the activity center at 7:00 pm. These meetings are nourishing to our souls. Many families come together in fellowship to drink from the rivers of the living water. Everyone is welcome, please join us.

"But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life." (John 4:14)



Appreciation and respect are due to the many speakers from our community who were happy to of their time, knowledge and experience to benefit others during our Journey to a Better You series.

The Daughters of St. Mary , continued

This report was prepared by Daughters of St. Mary President, Nahla Chahin



Week one of the Journey Series



Alzheimer's Prevention Seminar



Pentecost at Holy Trinity Greek Monastery in Smith Creek



Celebrating the Feast of St. Barbara



Attending a women's lenten retreat at the monastery



Some Arabic Bible Study sessions are led by Dr. Osama Nunu

Ladies Society

This report was prepared by Ladies Society President, Joanne Kharsa.

- During our Christmas Potluck, the ladies generously donated nearly \$1,500 in grocery store gift cards to be distributed to the needy in our community.
- We would like to thank all those who supported our events including, the Mother's Day Brunch, the Fashion Show, and the Lenten Lunch. Our total donation for 2019 is \$15,774.

I would like to thank our 2019 officers for all their hard work and support:

Vice President, Michelle Toma

Treasurer, Nancy Ghannam

Secretary, Maria Ashkar

We'd also like to welcome our new officers for 2020: Vice President, Isabelle Sultani; Treasurer, Sahar Kakish and returning as Secretary, Maria Ashkar.

I also want to thank everyone who has donated, sponsored and volunteered their time. Looking forward to a successful 2020!



Media and Communications

This report was prepared by Haitham Fakhouri.

Website

The website is updated several times a week with the latest events and news. In the past year, we have had 15,199 visits to the website by 11,018 users. This is slightly down (2.5% down) over the previous year but the diversity in users increased by 3.64% which means that we are reaching more people.

E-Newsletter

The e-newsletter currently has 1,162 subscribers. We currently send out the newsletter 3-5 times a week.

Facebook

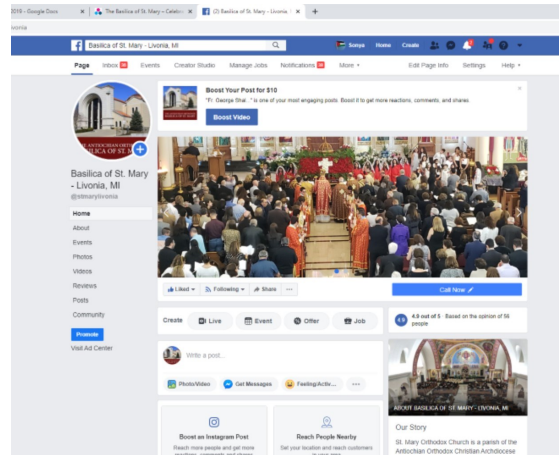
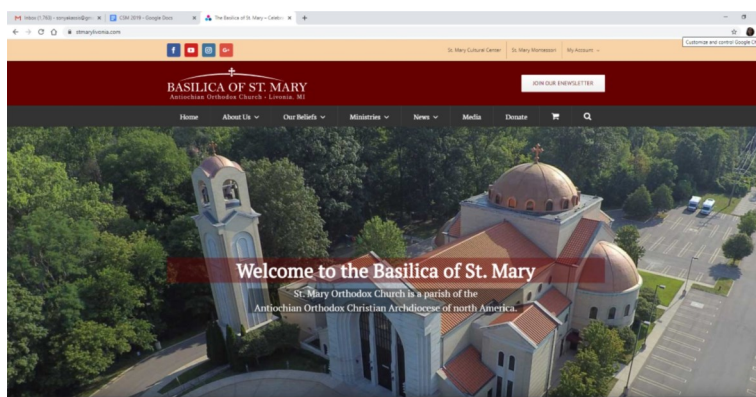
Our Facebook page currently has 3,928 followers. Live streaming has been a huge success with a viewer-rate of 700-1200 views per video. This is keeping people engaged throughout the world. Also the published videos have created shareable media items that promote the parish in a great way.

Instagram

Our Instagram page currently has 924 followers. We have been posting to the posts section and to the story section. We encourage everyone to follow and like the page.

YouTube

In 2019, we received 23.6K views on our YouTube videos. We have over 70 subscribers and we are looking to increase that amount.



Website: www.stmarylivonia.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stmarylivonia/>

Instagram: [basilicaofstmary](https://www.instagram.com/basilicaofstmary)

Basilica of St. Mary Montessori Academy (BOSMMA)

This report was prepared by Abeer Samaan, BOSMAA Director



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Abeer Samaan, Director

Father James King, Suhail Abueita, George Chalhoub, George Darraj, Kim Freij, Michael Khalil, Salem Samaan, Suzan Samaan, Fab Snage

Thank you to all of our board members for their continued support for our school. Please contact the school office if you are interested in being part of the school board as we are always inviting new members and new ideas.

We just embarked on our fourth year! We are so thrilled to be able to share the news and growth of BOSMMA. We started in 2016 with 25 students and have steadily grown to 40 then 50 this year. We currently have 54 students that occupy three classrooms! We have 25 students in the preschool program and 29 toddlers distributed between two classrooms, all of whom are overseen by our 11 caring and dedicated staff members. Next year we will be planning a celebration to commemorate our 5 year anniversary!

We have formed volunteer committees that coordinate our school functions. They are currently planning our first Valentine's party on February 21st.

Last year we added a new playground area for the toddler children as well as improved the security by installing door monitors, electronic access and improved lights in the parking lot.

Reasons to enroll in The Basilica of Saint Mary Montessori Academy:

- An opportunity to grow in a culturally diverse, faith-based program
- Orthodox religion infused education:
- Catechesis of the Good Shepard offered weekly on Tuesday for the preschool children
- Wednesdays with Father Jim for the toddler children
- Developed a great reputation that has fueled our organic growth
- Community engagement (food drives, blanket drive)
- Flexibility in childcare
- Competitive pricing

We would also like to invite you to attend the open house for the school on Sunday, March 1st from 2-4pm.



Basilica of St. Mary Montessori Academy (BOSMMA), continued

I would like to thank you all again for this opportunity to share our success at the Academy. This is an exciting time in our community, and it is important that we all work together to support BOSMMA. We look forward to breaking ground on the new building that will house the school. I encourage you to enroll your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews into the program to support the continued growth. This is an excellent way to get our kids involved in our community and grow within the faith.

Words cannot express the amount of gratitude we feel for all those who have helped us from the heart. It is because you all believed in us that we are growing and are able to offer such an outstanding program. I feel fortunate to be part of such a great program that is loved and supported by our community.

Thank you,

Abeer Samaan, Director

Everyone can support the Academy if you shop at any of the retailers below! It only takes a few minutes and it doesn't cost you anything!

Office depot/max www.officedepot.com/givebts (School ID number 70238663)

Kroger - krogercommunityrewards.com (Organization number JI688)

Busch's - buschs.com (go to my way tab and sign up for myway)

Amazon: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7440581>

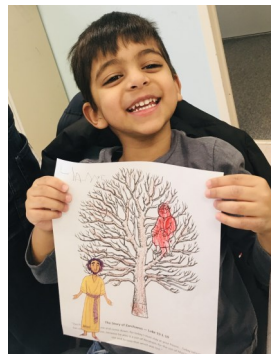
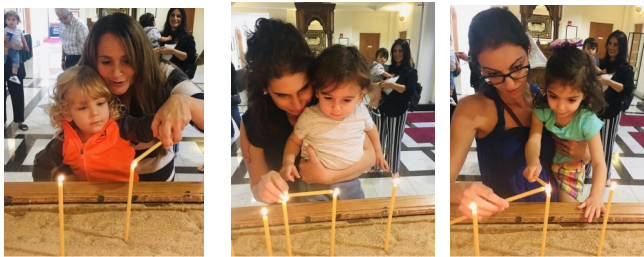
Box tops - clip, collect and submit to Basilica



Mother Toddler Ministry

This report was prepared by Mother Toddler Director, Angela Kadado

- This ministry meets on a weekly basis on Wednesday mornings at 10:30am for prayer and songs with Father Jim, and a lesson and crafts by Sonya Kassis.
- The children learn how to light candles in church, venerate icons and the cross, and to make the sign of the cross.
- Caregivers and toddlers also enjoy a snack together, hosted by a different family each week.
- Our group is going strong and we are always welcoming new caregivers and toddlers, even those from outside our church and faith.
- We have field trips to the park in the summer, apple orchard in the fall, and special potluck celebrations for holidays.
- To receive our weekly emails, send a message to stmarymtg@gmail.com. Pictures are posted after each session on our Facebook page, StMary MotherToddler.



Senior Heritage Fellowship

This report was prepared by Senior Heritage Member, Aida Kakish

We are happy to report that our organization is still alive and well and are encouraged that our attendance has surged from around 30 seniors to about 50 men and women over the age of 55.

Our organization is coordinated by a small group in place of officers. We are financially self-sufficient. Our \$5 charge for lunch and proceeds from our raffle pay for supplies and the very small amount we give to the Cultural Center to partially cover the cost of the food. We are truly grateful to the Church and the Cultural Center for their generosity to us.

We work with Keith to plan our events on the last Thursday of the month, when it is available. We had several lunch events throughout the year in February, April, and August. In September we took a trip to Windsor and in October hosted attorney Angela Ghannam who spoke about estate planning. In December we hosted our annual Christmas Luncheon for over 50 people where we raffled off gifts and enjoyed fellowship during the holidays.

In addition, many of our members helped prepare food for the Festival this summer and help to prepare the bulletin for mailing every Wednesday.

We had an excellent year and are looking forward to 2020. We encourage more members to join as our group is open to all men and women over 55!



Teen SOYO

This report was prepared by SOYO Intern Joseph Nicolas and Parish Ministries Coordinator, Sonya Kassis

Priests: Father George Shalhoub and Father Jim King

Parish Ministries Coordinator: Sonya Kassis

Youth Intern: Joseph Nicolas

Advisors: Issa Hosari and Alexis Mashni

Officers: George Nunu, Nick Samaan, Anthony Akel, Naim Mashni, and Brianna Mashni

Food Coordinator: Anthony Bayyouk

Media/Marketing Coordinator: Michael Nunu

Videographer: Anthony Matta



The SOYO program has become a beacon of light for kids, teens and even college students, by giving them hope and guidance to get through the temptations of the fallen world. Our theme this year is "Fight the Good Fight." (1 Timothy 6:12)

Twice a month, or sometime more, 40-100 youth of all ages come together as a team to grow closer with one another through fellowship, service, and worship. Our group has participated in a great amount of service to the community. From making 40 blankets to 700 sandwiches to give to families in Detroit to feeding over 400 people for Thanksgiving, the youth group of St. Mary's never fails to disappoint. This service and our activities were recognized at the Parish Life Conference where our SOYO received the Chapter of the Year Award 2019.

In October, many youth throughout the Church participated in Orthodox Teen Youth Month. Whether it be with the collection baskets, with ushering, or with reading the Epistle in English and Arabic, many of our teens were eager and willing to help out throughout the Sunday Liturgy service, and continue to serve as ushers throughout the year. We thank all the community members for the support and generosity throughout the year. Glory to God! Glory Forever!



Teen SOYO, continued



Vacation Church School

This report was prepared by Parish Ministries Coordinator, Sonya Kassis



The 2019 Vacation Church School program was a great success with so many wonderful children and volunteers involved. We were grateful this year to have Rev. Deacon Ioann Feloniuk teaching one of the sessions, along with all our dedicated parent volunteers. The theme was “Life is Wild, God is Good!” celebrated by 70 children and dozens of volunteers over the course of the week. A special thanks to all the amazing parents and teens who helped make the week such a wonderful success. The 2020 VCS session will be held June 22-26. Volunteers are welcome!



“Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever.” (Psalm 135:1)

Village Up North



This report was prepared by Village Up North Camp Directors, Tom and Lillian Saba

This year marked our third successful Village Up North camping program. We had 42 campers, 16 counselors, 9 program staff, and 12 volunteers. Campers and staff came from St. Mary's and several other churches throughout the Archdiocese. Counselors and staff had multiple training sessions including CPR and First Aid. Father Jim King and Deacon Samer Hanna led us in prayer, song and spiritual growth for the entire week. Father Jim even wrote a song for us called "Village Up North Will Always Be My Home". This year's highlights included an overnight campout, fishing every morning and evening, sunrise hikes, sports, lake kayaking, creative and fun arts and crafts, and many other activities to promote personal and spiritual growth of campers and staff. Campers were served fresh, filtered water and healthy and delicious meals prepared by volunteers. The budget of \$20,018 was met even with a relatively low registration payment of \$325 per camper and additional fundraising and sponsorship. It was incredible to see the spark in the eyes of the campers and staff after a week of fellowship and spiritual and personal growth. This program is growing into one of the most important ministries of our church. We are fully licensed by the State of Michigan. Our long term goal is to purchase land to have a campsite of our own. But most importantly, our most important goal is to continue to ignite fires in hearts, minds and under the starry sky. Please visit our website (www.villageupnorth.com) to register for the best week of the entire year: August 10-15, 2020.

