

St. Mary Ministry Guide



St. Mary Orthodox Christian Church
344 S. Martinson Wichita, KS 67213 316-264-1576 office@stmarywichita.org

Exploring our Opportunities

St. Mary Orthodox Church Statement

St. Mary welcomes those seeking holiness and salvation through a loving and nurturing spiritual family that manifests the presence of Christ on earth.

Mission Statement

The Mission of St. Mary Orthodox Christian Church is to worship and honor God by living and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ through prayer, unconditional love, mercy and service to others.

Vision Statement

The Vision of St. Mary Orthodox Christian Church is to reflect the light of Christ as a welcoming community focused on:

- worship
- education
- outreach
- stewardship and
- fellowship



Be doers of the word, and not hearers only... (James 1:22)

The direction of our ministries -- Worship, Witness, Fellowship and Service -- is set by our Lord Jesus Christ. Each of us must find how to share our God-given gifts to support Christ's work through the ministry that best calls us to service. We are called to become "doers of the word", striving to seek God's glory, not personal glory. Jesus Christ's abundant grace knows no limits, and our ministries have the same unlimited potential. Please review the opportunities in this guide to offer your time and your talents in His service. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Mark 5:16).

Get Involved

In this Guide, you will find descriptions of ministries for all different ages, talents, and time commitments. At the end of the Guide, you will find the contact information listed for each ministry. Of course, if you have any questions, you may call the church at 316-264-1576 or email office@stmarywichita.org.

Leading our Community

St. Mary strives to truly be a ministry-centered church, which is bound to the non-negotiable mission established by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ to “Go therefore and make disciples of ALL nations”. The leadership opportunities within the parish not only include serving as a member of Parish Council, but leadership positions within the ministry structure of our parish, and other committees established in the course of the life of the church. We look to our leaders to reflect on where we have been, where we are today, and where we need to go as a vibrant parish. Our road map is our Mission and Vision Statements and our Defined Strategic Directions. Strong leadership skills are necessary to direct the parish into the future. Parish Members are encouraged to become active in the life of the church as volunteers at any level of responsibility.

The Parish Council is comprised of 9 individuals seeking to serve God through being servant-leaders to our Priests, our ministries, and our community. While Parish Council members are diverse in age, length of membership, skills, level of financial giving, and interests, all members share a joy of working together in furthering the ministries and building a Christ-centered parish of faith and love. As servant leaders, they are key participants in setting the future direction of the community and maintaining the principles of our Mission and Vision. Duties and responsibilities of Council members range from ensuring the good governance of the community, discussing long range plans, reviewing monthly financials, interacting with staff, helping with church-wide events to promoting strong ministry programs and activities. They strive to connect with our parishioners, greeting and ushering during worship services, and building our church family relationships.

Through our ministry structure, our various Ministry Department Directors and their

team leaders have ownership to accomplish their goals and objectives that are in keeping with our Mission. They develop ways to serve others within and beyond St. Mary. We see our clergy as a resource and spiritual father to the ministries with the Parish Council providing material support and leadership, equipping our ministries. Our ministries flourish giving birth to sub-ministries and new ministries. With each new ministry or sub-ministry, a new leadership position is created. This allows even more people to become intimately involved in the direction of parish life and feel ownership in the community, which in turn creates an excitement and a desire to continue our Lord’s ministry through St. Mary.



Parish Council Members

Sharing our gifts in Worship



“Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.” Psalm 95:6-7



As Orthodox Christians, we believe that God reveals Himself through Holy Tradition and Scripture. Worship is the living expression of these. It is important to be active participants in the sacramental and prayer life of the church.



Altar Servers

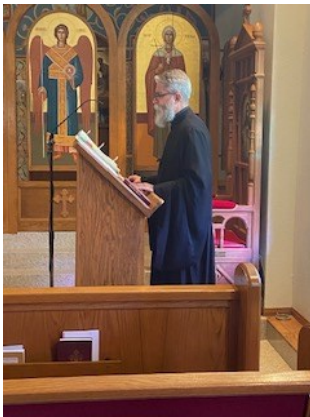
Boy's ages 7-8 and older have the opportunity to serve in the Altar during the various services of the Church. The boys learn their roles and responsibilities from the more experienced altar servers.



Sharing our gifts in Worship

Chanters

Through the style of Byzantine chant, our church chanters lead the congregation in the liturgical dialogue of our worship services.



The parish choir guides the faithful in the musical aspect of Orthodox worship, and helps us to glorify and praise our God at Divine Liturgies and other services of the Orthodox Faith. The ministry of the parish choir, along with the work of our readers and chanters, guides us all into deeper worship and communion with God and each other. We welcome anyone who enjoys singing and would like to participate in the church choir. Rehearsals are usually scheduled for Sunday morning at 9:00a.m.; however, there are times when special rehearsals are scheduled to prepare the choir for a special feast day. During rehearsals the choir may be learning new music, or spending time working on the fundamentals of good choral singing. If you are interested in singing in the choir contact Michael Shaheen, director.

The Matthew 5:4 Funeral Ministry



The Matthew 5:4 Funeral Ministry Team is inspired by our Lord's Beatitude: "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted." This ministry team's primary responsibility is to contact the grieving family after the death of a parishioner. We also offer assistance with some of the funeral arrangements, helping the family navigate during this difficult time the selections for the Meal of Mercy, and helping them to understand some of the decisions they can make related to the funeral services. We hope to lighten the burden on the grieving family. Anyone interested in helping with this ministry is welcome to join our team.



Sharing our gifts in Worship

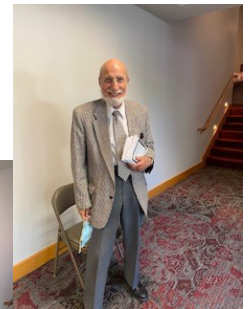
Education/Church School

The purpose of Orthodox Christian Education is to build up the Church, the Body of Christ, by nurturing children and teens ages 3-18. Our Education program aims to communicate the content of Christian truth in the context of concrete Christian living: believing, praying, worshipping, learning, applying, growing, sharing, serving, and witnessing. We accomplish these goals by providing age-appropriate curriculum and faithful and enthusiastic individuals to teach our students. This ministry team also spearheads a Children's Choir that sings during Liturgy on select Sundays. The Church School also generally puts on the Fall Festival, a Christmas program, and helps with Lazarus Saturday at the Chancery.



Greeters

The primary purpose of the Greeter Ministry Team is to make all of our visitors to St. Mary feel welcome in our parish home. To welcome the stranger is not just a nice or courteous thing to do, but is in fact one of the things mentioned by our Lord by which we will be judged: "For I was a stranger and you invited me in." To welcome the stranger is a great blessing to them and to us. One responsibility of greeters is to greet visitors before liturgy. This includes giving them a bulletin and visitor packet, asking them to sign the visitor book, and invite them to coffee hour. After liturgy, greeters will seek out the visitors and introduce them to at least one other person in church, introduce them to Fr. Aaron and Deacon James, offer to give a tour of the facility, and show them the rack of educational pamphlets in the foyer. During the following week the greeter will complete a New Visitor Note Card that will be mailed to the visitor.



Growing in Faith

Catechism Class

Deacon James leads a monthly catechism class for individuals interested in the Orthodox faith and those seeking baptism or chrismation. Some individuals who have already entered the Orthodox faith also attend to learn more. The classes cover Orthodox history, faith, services, architecture, and practices. For many, it is a time to address their specific questions.



Those attending Catechism class by Zoom

Prison Ministry

The Prison Ministry team communicates with inmates visited by the Parish Priest. Some of these inmates are Orthodox Christians who have been incarcerated, while others are catechumens or converts to the faith. In addition to Fr Aaron's visits, weekly bulletins, and The Scroll, inmates love to correspond with parishioners. If you are interested in corresponding with our Orthodox inmates, or if you wish to accompany Fr Aaron on a visit, please let Fr Aaron know and he will help make arrangements.

Stewardship

The Stewardship ministry's primary aim is geared towards our annual pledge campaign. The pledge campaign and work of this ministry team extends well beyond ensuring solid financial stewardship, also focusing on connecting our parishioners with the ministry teams of their interest. We seek to help parishioners commit their "time, talent, and treasure" to the well-being of our parish.

Family Promise

Family Promise of Greater Wichita unites hearts and hands to provide compassionate hospitality and empower homeless families with children to achieve sustainable independence. St. Mary Parish participates by hosting families in the program four times a year in our church building. Parishioners volunteer their time by driving families to and from the day house, setting up the rooms, and sleeping overnight at the church. Evening meals, food for breakfast and snacks are also provided by St. Mary parishioners. By the end of 2021, St. Mary Parish will have hosted families for three weeks and provided significant support to another church for one week. Both the families and parishioners are encouraged and blessed by the interactions throughout the week. Although approximately fifty parishioners will have participated in 2021, there is still a need for more to participate in this significant ministry by providing hospitality and shelter, as instructed to do in Matthew 25:35: "For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was in prison and you came to Me."



Growing in Faith

Website

This ministry team creates and maintains a website at stmarywichita.org. The purpose of this website is twofold. First, the goal is to provide current members as well as inquirers information about services and events at St. Mary. Second, the ministry team seeks to make the website a light for Orthodoxy in Wichita and beyond, sharing information, and guiding others to the Church. This ministry team also takes care of sending parish-wide emails and posting on social media.

The Belles of St. Mary



The Belles of St. Mary was established in 1961. The idea was to bring together the women of the church for fellowship, various events, projects, and spiritual growth; such as church dinners and humanitarian work throughout the community. We continue with those same ideals today. The Belles help maintain the altar server robes and provide humanitarian assistance within our parish. We make the Holy Bread throughout the year and offer it to our parishioners who wish to offer Holy Bread at a reasonable cost. We have been holding a Bazaar/Craft show or Holiday Bake Sale that has not only helped us raise funds but has become a form of outreach. All women of the parish are welcome to join.

Visitation Ministry

This small group exists to help the Parish Priest and Deacon with visitations. We generally call on parishioners at the request of the clergy or close family members. We seek to help St. Mary fulfill her mission and vision by keeping parishioners in contact with the spiritual family they know and love during the difficult times of their lives. That mission extends to those among us who are sick, home-bound, isolated, lonely, or imprisoned. Our team also sends greeting cards to our home-bound, elderly, and inmates on birthdays and other special occasions. We do not always notice who has not been to liturgy lately. If you know someone has been absent for awhile please let us know and we will confer with the clergy. Rick Husselman, Director.

The Kitchen Ministry

The Kitchen Ministry Team was established after our St. Mary 2000 Project. This team maintains and oversees the equipment and operation of the parish's kitchen. If anyone needs assistance with the kitchen, the Ministry Team is able to help.

Small Groups

The small group ministry team exists to bring the substance of the Church into our daily lives. We meet once monthly at a parishioner's home for a light meal, fellowship, spiritual discussion, and prayer. This ministry is open to newcomers at any time. There is no preparation required. Come join us as we seek to strengthen our relationships and deepen our Orthodox faith.

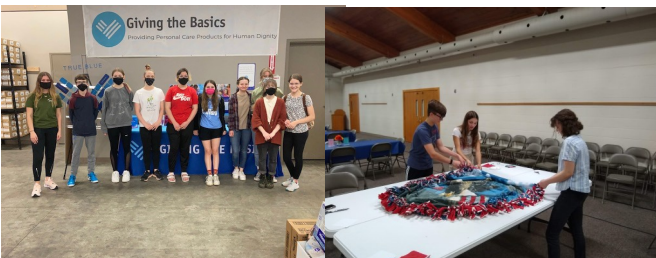
Growing in Faith

Humanitarian Ministry Team

The Humanitarian Ministry Team serves those in need in our neighborhood, our parish, and our larger community. The Ministry Team maintains a small food pantry. On a regular basis, the team packages food items that provide one day of nourishment for those in need. These are then distributed by our staff at the church during weekdays. We receive donations of food items from parishioners and purchase the rest from parishioners' monetary donations. The Humanitarian Ministry Team also sponsors various projects during the year that allows parishioners to donate specific items needed by local charities.

St. Mary's Teen SOYO

St. Mary's Teen SOYO (Society of Orthodox Youth Organizations) is a small group with a big heart. Teen SOYO is open to all parishioners ages 13-19. We grow together not only through worship, but also in serving our Lord and our Church in different ways. Through our fellowship, we are growing in our faith and participating in the life of St. Mary parish. We often hold fundraisers within the parish to help us make trips to Parish Life Conferences and other church-sponsored activities.



St. Mary Teens

Major Fundraisers Ministry Team

The Major Fundraisers Ministry Team is the Executive Committee for the annual Mediterranean Festival fundraiser. The Mediterranean Festival is a public outreach event which allows us to share our faith and our founding heritage with the community. This event offers many opportunities for fellowship for the entire parish as we work together toward a common goal. As our primary fundraiser, it helps us meet the financial needs of our vibrant parish ministries while also allowing us to serve others by donating to local charities (we give 10% of our profits each year to a designated local charity). This team plans and organizes all aspects of this fundraiser, including: format, marketing/PR, purchasing, and workdays.

St. Mary Interiors Ministry Team

The purpose of this ministry team is to advise the Parish Council on all matters regarding the interior of our facility. This includes paint colors, flooring, furnishings, and any other interior needs of the facility.

The Treehouse

The Treehouse is a nonprofit organization that was established 20 years ago with strong ties to the St. Mary and St. George parishes in Wichita, and members of those parishes make up a majority of the Board of Directors. Our mission is to offer mothers and babies a brighter future through sharing God's love, basic necessities, education and genuine personal care. Our hope is to guide and empower new mothers so their babies can bloom. As well as providing our clients with basic care necessities, we connect them with female role models, parenting education classes, and spiritual support groups. The success of The Treehouse is not possible without dedicated support from volunteers.

The Scroll

The Scroll is the news magazine for the parish. It was first published in 1974. It includes news about our faith and documents the life and activities of our parish community. It is published 6 times a year.



Orthodox Christian Fellowship

In cooperation with the national ministry of Orthodox Christian Fellowship, under the direction of the Assembly of Bishops, we connect young adults from our parish with their college or university's OCF chapter. In addition, the local Wichita group of Orthodox Christian Fellowship (St. George/St. Mary/St. Michael) meets weekly at St. George.



St. Mary Bookstore

Dillon's Rewards



The Dillons Community Rewards program is a passive income benefitting our parish. Participants contribute by signing up for the program. Every Dillons purchase contributes to our share of the monthly Community Reward amount.

Properties

The Properties ministry is responsible for the maintenance and upgrading of existing property and facilities.

The Meal Train

The Meal Train serves the Parish by providing meals after the birth of a child. We also serve families in our Parish during significant life events.

Missions

St. Mary Missionary Fund was established in 2005 to assist those in our parish who desire to participate in Orthodox missionary projects that have received approval of our Bishop throughout the world.

St. Mary Bookstore

The St. Mary Bookstore began many years ago as a small cart that had new and used books on the faith for parishioners to purchase during coffee hour. It grew into a single showcase, that had books and gift items. Since then, the Bookstore has become a wonderful tool for not only parishioners to purchase books, icons, and gifts, but is an excellent outreach tool for guests who come to the church to visit, or who come to our Festival. Over the years, the abundance of books on Orthodoxy, the Saints, and spiritual growth has grown and the Bookstore is well stocked with those books. It also has a good supply of items for children. The Bookstore is an important piece of our parish life and allows us opportunities to educate ourselves and our guests on our Faith.

Fr. Aaron: Stewardship, Chanters, Prison Ministry
fraaron@stmarywichita.org

Deacon James: Catechism Class, Altar Servers
kkallail@att.net

Justine Nightingale: Website, Social Media,
Church School
jnightingale@cox.net

Eric Namee: Bookstore
enamee@hinklaw.com

Cathy Fairbanks: Matthew 5:4 Funeral
newfocus@mindspring.com

Dennis Fairbanks: Dillon's Rewards
newfocus@mindspring.com

Rick Husselman: Visitations
rickhusselman@gmail.com

Nick Steinbrink: Properties
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Joan Ferris: Humanitarian
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Tracy Namee: Missions, Interiors
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Robbie Namee: Kitchen, Belles
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Ro Kallail: The Scroll
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Laura Stanley: Teen SOYO
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Michael Shaheen: Choir
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Darren Minks: Treehouse
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Vicki Jones: Family Promise, Greeters
vawj55@gmail.com

Jessica Lessman: Meal Train
Miriam121406@live.com

Cliff Bragg: Small Groups
cliffbragg@me.com

Mike Zarich: Major Fundraisers
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