

# THE MESSENGER

## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

*"Behold I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.  
The voice of one crying in the wilderness; Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight." Mark 1:2-3*

## February 2018

### VISION:

Love God, Love your neighbor and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ as an Orthodox Christian community.

### MISSION:

The mission of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is to welcome and serve people with love, truth, joy and peace, and to create an environment that encourages all to seek salvation through Orthodox Christianity.

### CORE VALUES:

Love, Worship, Community, Learning, Service

### Father Stavros' Message

## Engaged, Discipleship, Prayer and Great Lent

**D**uring the first week of 2018, each member of our community was challenged to come up with a "one word resolution" for the New Year. Over 225 of you responded. And of the 225, there were over 120 unique words. This was very powerful and very reflective of the diversity of our community. You'll find in this issue of "The Messenger" a "wordle" on the next page that shows all of the words that you sent, so even though you won't know each person's resolution, you'll know the words that represent the resolutions of your fellow parishioners.

I encouraged (and still encourage you) to pick a one word resolution for your marriage, for your children, for your home, for your business and for your spiritual life. In our parish, I encourage each ministry to do the same, to choose a one word resolution for your ministry. The Parish Council, for example, has chosen the word "**focus**" and you can read all about it in a special article that is going to be part of the Messenger each month this year.

The word for our entire community this year, our one word resolution is the word **ENGAGED**. What does "engaged" mean? Most often, we associate that word with the period of time before one gets married. It means that they are committed and invested in the idea of a life-long commitment to their fiancé. Engaged means that we are not only committed and invested in the life of the church, but in the life of Christ. In regards to the church, engaged means that not only we are here, in body, but we are committed and invested in the life of the church, in the work of the church.

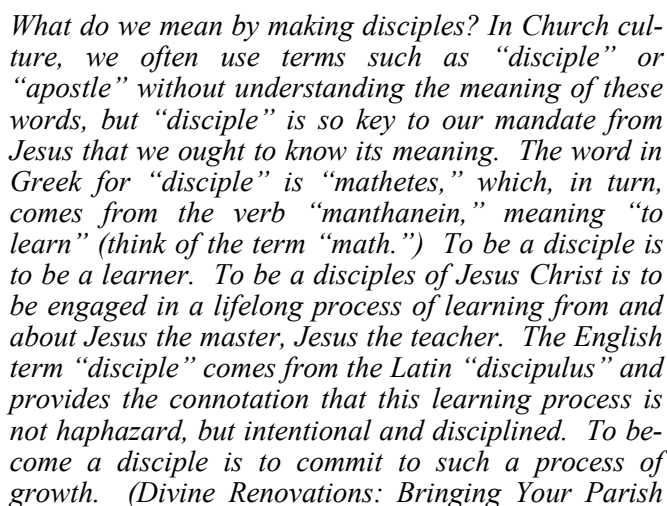
There are many people who are baptized Orthodox who are "inactive," meaning they do not participate in the life of the church, save for maybe a few times a year. There are many people who are "active," meaning that they come to church, even frequently, but that are still not "engaged" in the life of the church and in the life of faith.

To be engaged is to be invested and committed, first to a life of faith, to living and embracing the joys of Christianity. To be engaged in the life of the church is to be immersed in the mission of the church. And what is the mission of the church?

### To make disciples of all nations!

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus tells His Disciples "*Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching to do all that I have commanded you.*" This verse is known as the "Great Commission." In fact, this Gospel passage is read at every baptism, over the person who has just been baptized, to let them know that THIS one thing is what Jesus expects from every Christian. He has commissioned every Christian, as He commissioned His disciples, to go out and share the Good News of the Kingdom of God. THIS is why we have a church—to proclaim the Good News.

One of the best explanations of what it means to be a "disciple" comes from the book "Divine Renovations" by Fr. James Malton. He writes:



Christ told His Disciples (and that includes us) to make Disciples. On Stewardship Sunday, we talked about a shoe factory. The goal of the shoe factory is to make shoes. If you have a beautiful shoe factory, with the nicest amenities, the best materials and the friendliest workers, but the factory doesn't produce shoes, then it is a failure. Similarly, the church is supposed to make disciples. We can have the prettiest church, the nicest icons, and the friendliest people, but if the church is not making disciples, then the church is a failure.

We know that on a national level, Christianity, including the Orthodox Church, is at an all-time low in terms of membership, attendance, baptisms and weddings, and at an all-time high in terms of funerals. This is because as we build large and beauti-

ful churches, we've forgotten the work of discipleship that is needed to fill them. Thankfully, at St. John, our church is filled with people every Sunday—we're at an all-time high with attendance.

**It's time to take a next step**—And that next step is going from active to engaged. We have lots of people who are active in terms of church attendance, but are we all “engaged” in the life of a disciple? The disciple is both student and recruiter.

Most of us have a life-long desire to learn. We need this desire. Otherwise, we will not make it in life. We have to keep up with changes in technology and changes in the law, among other things. We have to continually learn in order to stay current in life.

As disciples, we are supposed to be continual learners about Christ. We learn through prayer, we learn through Scripture, we learn through reading, we learn through life's circumstances, and we learn from one another's experiences. Yes, each of us has not only something we can learn, but something we can teach one another about Christ.

A disciple is a student, and as part of the learning, wants others to come along for the ride and learn as well. If the job of every disciple is to “baptize all nations,” then it is incumbent on each disciple to spread the word.

**The Twelve Disciples were very ordinary people**—Christ chose twelve men to be His disciples. They weren't chosen because they were extraordinary scholars. Several were illiterate fishermen who were not even very good fishermen. Matthew was a tax collector, a town pariah. Once recruited by Jesus, they weren't always exemplary in their faith. At some point they all “questioned.” Thomas doubted Jesus. Peter denied Jesus. All but John fled at the Crucifixion. The Lord called St. Paul to be the greatest of Apostles—St. Paul was persecuting Christians. Whoever they were, they were engaged. They were active. They followed.

To be **engaged** is to be immersed in the life of Christ. Christ doesn't just fit into a compartment on Sunday mornings but He is the center of each day. Each day starts with prayer, and is centered around love—love for God, and love for those we encounter, our neighbors. It continues with purposeful and intentional good works towards others. The engaged Christian seeks opportunities to help others, and takes all actions under the umbrella of Christianity.

The engaged Christian thirsts for God. We can't get through a day without getting thirsty. We quench our thirst often. We may forget to do many things, but quenching our thirst isn't one of them. Similarly, the engaged Christian thirsts for God and quenches this thirst throughout each day.

We are about to enter the period of the church year known as Great Lent. This is a time of increased services and rituals done only during this special time of the year. However, we can get so caught up in the rituals and the fasting, we can be so busy jumping through hoops that we forget to work on our hearts.

**Many Christians feel like a hamster running on a wheel.** They run and run but feel like they are getting nowhere. Dur-

ing Lent, they run faster and faster, only to find at the end of Lent they haven't gotten anywhere and instead are just more tired. However, Lent is supposed to reinvigorate us, not exhaust us. And Lent is supposed to serve as a springboard for renewal that continues throughout the year, not a journey that ends with Pascha.

However we strong we may feel in our faith or in our Christian journey, at every celebration of the Divine Liturgy, we are invited to offer the Lord's Prayer with these words: “**And make us worthy Master, with confidence and without the fear of condemnation, to dare to call upon You, our heavenly God, Father, and to say.**” Despite the fact we hear it so often, perhaps we have not taken the time to internalize the words.

*Make us worthy*—Christ has called us to be His disciples, His friends. He has called each of us to be with Him. It is up to us to live a life worthy of this calling.

*Master*—Is Christ the Master of our lives, or just a consultant? Are we His followers? Do we center our lives around Him, or try to fit Him into our lives?

*With confidence*—Knowledge brings confidence, and so does action. To be a disciple is to be a person of both knowledge and action. A disciple is both student and sharer. Living out our calling to be disciples will give us a boost of confidence.

*And without fear of condemnation*—For the person who doesn't know Christ, or who is unengaged in the life of Christ, the journey through life may be filled with trepidation and sadness, as the sand drains from the hourglass of our lives. For the engaged Christian, for the committed Disciple, life is all about Him, each day draws us closer to Him, and the end of life is joyful because each day brings us closer to being with Him.

*Our heavenly God, Father*—Christ saw His disciples not as His servants but as His children, and as His friends. He wanted an “intimacy” with them. He opened up to them, He confided in them. The feeling of “intimacy” with God can be so real when we pray, especially when we are able to block out other thoughts and just be with Him. This “intimacy” is magnified when we share Him with others, in prayer, in conversation, in worship, in Holy Communion. Again, do we see God as Father, as friend, or as consultant?

**Wherever you are in your journey, whether you are inactive, active, engaged, or feel like the hamster on the wheel, I invite you to participate in a six week series entitled “Called to Be Disciples—With Confidence and Without Fear of Condemnation.”** This series will be held each Wednesday evening of Lent after Pre-Sanctified Liturgy. The schedule for each Wednesday will be as follows:

6:00 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy  
7:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner hosted by one of our ministries  
7:45 p.m. Presentation by Fr. Stavros  
8:15 p.m. Small Group Discussion  
8:45 p.m. Concluding Remarks and Closing Prayer

**This series is designed to DIG DEEP.** That's why every lecture will be followed by a small group discussion. There are some real costs to being a disciple—like surrendering your life to Christ. And there are some real benefits—like intimacy with



God and confidence without fear of condemnation. This year's Lenten program will be this discipleship series, which I encourage as many of you as possible to participate in.

Other than a couple of hours on six Wednesday nights, there is no cost for this program.

The benefit is a more purposeful and more confident Christian walk.

It is my prayer this Lent for our entire church community to be challenged, dig deeper, and put the hamster wheel on the ground and run towards Christ. This series is for YOU.

The topics will be as follows:

Wednesday, February 21 **Called to be Disciples and the Awe of the Lord**

Wednesday, February 28 **The Cost of Discipleship—The Distorted Image and Total Surrender**

Wednesday, March 7 **The Rewards of Discipleship—Ten Rewards You Can Reap Today**

Wednesday, March 14 **Prayer: Abiding in God's Love**

Wednesday, March 21 **Living Out Our Calling: Giving to God What Belongs to God**

Wednesday, March 28 **With Confidence and Without Fear** +Fr. Stavros

#### of Condemnation

***\*\*Childcare will be provided at no cost. We do, however, need to know the name and age of each child by February 15 if you are going to do this series.***

**Concluding Thoughts**—I'm 45 years old, so this will be my 46<sup>th</sup> Lenten journey. It will be my 20<sup>th</sup> as a priest. It will be my 14<sup>th</sup> at St. John. Yet, I feel like I have much to learn about Christ, about faith, about prayer, about a lot of things. I hope that as we make this Lenten journey together, we will put our wheels on the ground and seek to move forward. We should all endeavor to come to the Resurrection feeling renewed and refreshed, not exhausted. We should all leave from Pascha feeling purposeful and recommitted.

Being **ENGAGED** is the key to our future, as Christians and as a Christian community. To grow in Christ and to grow the Body of Christ takes each of us making the decision to be **ENGAGED**. To be the disciples, and ultimately the church that Christ called us to be, sharing the good news and making disciples, calls us to be engaged Christians—committed, invested, growing, understanding and sharing—this is what Christ calls us to be. This is what it is to be a disciple. This is what it is to be a church.

I look forward to this year's Lenten journey. Kali Sarakosti! Have a blessed Lent!

With love in the Lord,

## The Prayer Team will celebrate its 3rd Anniversary on February 20!

For three years, Fr. Stavros has been writing a daily reflection. It comes out every morning at 12:30 a.m. via Constant Contact. From Monday-Friday, Father will be writing on the subject of Engagement and Discipleship and on Saturday - Sunday, Father is writing on the Scriptures of each Sunday of Triodion and Lent. Over 1100 have joined the Prayer Team. Over half our parish receives it daily, as well as many people outside of our parish. Each day, a scripture verse, reflection written by Father, and a prayer are emailed to the Prayer Team via constant contact. If you would like to join the Prayer Team please email Charlie at [charlie.hambos@gmail.com](mailto:charlie.hambos@gmail.com) and ask him to add you.

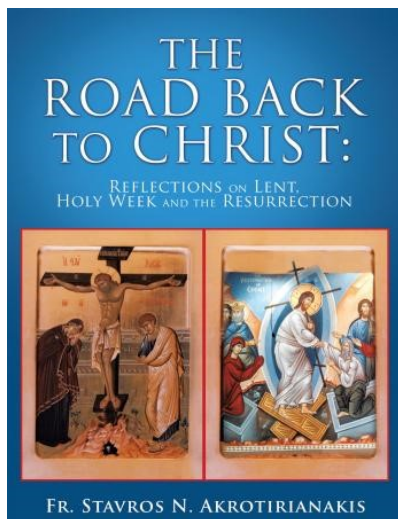
## The Road Back to Christ: Reflections on Lent, Holy Week and the Resurrection

is now on sale and available in our bookstore!

It is a series of daily reflections to be read from the beginning of Triodion (this year that is February 5) through All Saints Day (this year that is June 11). Pick up your copy today so you can begin reading it on February 5. This book costs \$18.99 and all monies taken in at the bookstore go to the church.

## Interested in Joining the Prayer Team?

Over 1100 people have! The Prayer Team is a daily message that Father Stavros has been writing for more than 2 years! Over half of our parish receives it daily, as well as many people outside of our parish. Each day, a scripture verse, a reflection written by Father, and a prayer are emailed to the Prayer Team via Constant Contact. If you would like to join the Prayer Team, please email Charlie at [charlie.hambos@gmail.com](mailto:charlie.hambos@gmail.com) and ask to add you





# Called to be Disciples:

## With Confidence and without Fear of Condemnation

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### A SIX-WEEK LENTEN STUDY TO HELP US ANSWER THE CALL TO BE DISCIPLES

*Join us to better understand the call to be disciples and walk as Christians  
with more engagement, confidence, and conviction.*

#### Weekly Topics:

**Wednesday, February 21**  
**Wednesday, February 28**

Called to be Disciples and the Awe of the Lord  
The Cost of Discipleship - The Distorted Image and Total  
Surrender

**Wednesday, March 7**

The Rewards of Discipleship - Ten Rewards You Can Reap  
Today

**Wednesday, March 14**  
**Wednesday, March 21**  
**Wednesday, March 28**

Prayer: Abiding in God's Love  
Living Out Our Calling: Giving to God What Belongs to God  
With Confidence and Without Fear of Condemnation

#### Each Wednesday evening schedule:

6:00 p.m.	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy
7:15 p.m.	Lenten Dinner (provided by one of our ministries)
7:45 p.m.	Presentation by Fr. Stavros
8:15 p.m.	Small group discussion
8:45 p.m.	Concluding Remarks and Closing Prayer

*\*Childcare will be provided at no cost. Please contact the church office with the name and age of each child by February 15 so we can properly plan.*

# Liturgical Schedule for February 2018



Friday, February 2

**Presentation of Christ in the Temple**

Orthros: 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

**We Live-Stream every service!**

[www.greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com](http://www.greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com)

**Sunday, February 4**

**Second Sunday of the Triodion-The Prodigal Son**

Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

**Altar Boys:** Captains and St. John

**Ushers:** Nick Kavouklis, George Trimikliniotis, Peter Theophanous

**Welcome Ministry:** Greeters: Elaine Halkias, Donna Hambos; Ambassador: Skip Higdon;

Caller: Betty Katsamakias; Getting Acquainted: Mike Xenick, Marie Xenick

**Coffee Hour:** OCMC Luncheon - Philoptochos

**Monday, February 5**

**Evening Divine Liturgy for Feast of St. Photios**

6:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, February 6**

**Ecumenical Prayer Service with Christ the King Roman Catholic Church**

6:30 p.m.

**Saturday, February 10**

**1st. Saturday of the Souls-St. Haralambos**

Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

*Memorial Service at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy*

**Sunday, February 11**

**3rd Sunday of the Triodion-The Last Judgment**

Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

**Altar Boys:** Captains and St. Matthew

**Ushers:** Ron Myer, Jim Armstrong, John Alexander

**Welcome Ministry:** Greeters: Debbie Kavouklis, Edie Kavouklis; Ambassador: Bessie Palios;

Caller: Despina Sibley

**Coffee Hour:** Sunday School

**Saturday, February 17**

**2nd Saturday of the Souls**

Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

*Memorial Service at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy*

**Sunday, February 18**

**4th Sunday of the Triodion-Forgiveness Sunday**

Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

**Forgiveness Vespers 6:00 p.m.**

**Altar Boys:** Captains and St. Mark

**Ushers:** Brett Mourer, Jim Armstrong, John Alexander

**Welcome Ministry:** Greeters: Tanya Robinson, Merenca Patrascioiu; Ambassador: Katherine Sakkis;

Caller: Christine Worley

**Coffee Hour:** Greek Dancers

**Monday, February 19**

**Clean Monday-Kathara Deftera-Beginning of Great Lent**

**Canons of St. Andrew 10:00 a.m.**

**Sacrament of Holy Unction 6:00 p.m.**

**Wednesday, February 21**

**Reading of the 9th Hour 5:30 p.m.**

**Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 p.m.**

*Followed by Lenten Supper sponsored by the Choir*

**Friday, February 23**

**Salutations to the Virgin Mary-1st. Stanza 6:30 p.m.**

**Saturday, February 24**

**3rd Saturday of the Souls**

Orthros: 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

*Memorial Service at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy*

**Sunday, February 25**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent—Sunday of Orthodoxy**

Orthros 8:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:45 a.m.

*Procession of Icons at the End of the Liturgy*

**Altar Boys:** Captains and St. Luke

**Ushers:** David Voykin, Ed Gerecke, Pete Trakas

**Welcome Ministry:** Greeters: Maria Koutroumanis, Lisa Alsina; Ambassador: Genie Carter;

Caller: Julie Palios

**Coffee Hour:** Choir Brunch

**Monday, February 26**

**Great Compline 5:30 p.m.**

**Wednesday, February 28**

**Reading of the 9<sup>th</sup> Hour 5:30 p.m.**

**Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 p.m.**

*Followed by Lenten Supper sponsored by Philoptochos*

**Friday, March 2**

**Salutations to the Virgin Mary—2<sup>nd</sup> Stanza 6:30 p.m.**

**Sunday, March 4**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent—St. Gregory Palamas**

Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

**Altar Boys:** Captains ONLY

**Ushers:** John Christ, Byron Nenos, Chris Kavouklis

**Welcome Ministry:** Greeters: Helen Cauthorn, Kalliope Chagaris; Ambassador: Carol Fotopoulos;

Caller: Vickie Peckham; Getting Acquainted: Dwight Forde, Ewana Forde

**Coffee Hour:** Community Outreach/Food Pantry

**Monday, March 5**

**Great Compline  
5:30 p.m.**

Christ the King Catholic Church and St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church  
will pray together in an

## **Ecumenical Prayer Service for**

## **Peace in the United States**

**Tuesday, February 6, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.**

**at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church**

**A reception will follow in the Kourmolis Center.**

Let us join our Catholic brothers and sisters for an evening prayer service as we come to  
together to pray for those afflicted by sorrow, disaster and turmoil.



# Liturgical Notes for February 2018

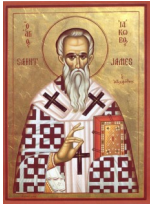
## Friday, February 2 - The Presentation of Our Lord into the Temple

The Presentation of Christ is a major feastday of the church and commemorates the day, 40 days after the Nativity, when Christ was brought to the temple when He was 40 days old. According to the Law of Moses, every male child was brought to the temple on its 40th day, together with a sacrifice of pigeons or turtle doves by the parents, and the child was “consecrated Holy to the Lord.” Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to the temple on His 40th day, because it was the law to do so. In the temple was a priest named Simeon, who was an older man, who had been promised by God that he would not die until he saw the Christ. When Simeon saw the baby Jesus, he knew in his heart that this was the Lord’s Messiah. He took the child in his arms and prayed “Lord, now let your servant depart in peace according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light to enlighten the Gentiles and for glory to Your people Israel.” (Luke 2:29-32) This prayer is recited over every child in the Orthodox Church when they are brought to church for the first time when they are 40 days old. That’s where this beautiful tradition comes from. February 2 is indeed a special day for all parents and all young children.



## Monday, February 5 – Evening Liturgy for St Photios

St. Photios lived in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. He was one of the greatest Patriarchs of Constantinople, vigorously defending the church against heresies in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. His feastday is celebrated on February 6, and we will celebrate Divine Liturgy the evening before as part of the Orthodoxy 101 class, a teaching Liturgy.



## Saturday, February 10 - St. Haralambos

St. Haralambos was a Saint of the first century and lived in Greece. He was a priest who was martyred. Our parish has a special connection to St. Haralambos since his relics were interred in our altar table when the church was consecrated in 1986.

# What We Celebrate on the Sundays of Triodion and Lent

## Sunday, January 28 - Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee

The focus this Sunday is on the Gospel of Luke 18:10-14, in which two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, an externally decent and righteous man of religion, and the other was a publican, a sinful tax-collector who was cheating the people. Though the Pharisee was genuinely righteous under the Law, he boasted before God and was condemned. The publican, although he was truly sinful, begged for mercy, received it, and was justified by God. There is **NO** fasting this week, in preparation for our great journey.)

## Sunday, February 4 - Sunday of the Prodigal Son

On this Sunday in the preparation for Great Lent, Orthodox Christians are to read Christ’s parable about God’s loving forgiveness (Luke 15:11-24). They are to see themselves as being in a foreign country far from the Father’s house and to make the movement of return to God, where we truly belong. The parable gives assurance that the Father will receive them with joy and gladness in their journey through Great Lent, their journey home.



## Saturday of the Souls – Saturdays, February 10, February 17, February 24

It is a Tradition in the Orthodox Church to offer prayers for the souls of all of our loved ones who have departed this life, in the hope of the Resurrection to Eternal Life. There are four Saturdays of the year that are dedicated specifically to this purpose. There are three Saturdays at the beginning of Lent and the Saturday before Pentecost. Everyone is encouraged to submit the names of their loved ones to be commemorated at the services. Everyone is encouraged to attend one of these services (and bring Kolyva) if you are able, as a way of honoring the people in your family who have passed away in church once a year.

**Saturday, February 24**, we will hold the Divine Liturgy at the Garden of Memories Cemetery at 4207 E. Lake Avenue in East Tampa. We will have Orthros at 9:00 a.m., Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m., with a memorial service at the end of the Liturgy. After Liturgy is concluded, Father Stavros will visit the graves of the relatives of all attendees of the Liturgy. This is the sixth year that we will be doing this liturgy at the Garden of Memories. Please come and join us praying for the souls of our loved ones, as we also pray for strengthening and inspiration for ourselves.

### **Sunday, February 11 – Judgment Sunday (Meatfare)**

Judgment Sunday is also called - Meatfare Sunday because it is the last Sunday, according to the fasting canons, that the faithful eat meat before Easter. During the following week, we do **not** fast on Wednesday and Friday (except for meat, of course). On this Sunday, we call to mind something that has not even happened yet: the Second Coming of Christ. Our Lord has promised us that He will come again, “to judge the living and the dead, and His Kingdom will have no end” (*from the Nicene Creed*). We call to mind the “criteria” of our entrance into Paradise, as our Lord said in today’s Gospel: “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.”

### **Sunday, February 18 - Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare)**

Cheese-Fare Sunday is the last day in which dairy products are allowed. The Monday after Cheese-Fare Sunday is the official beginning of the Great Lent; this Monday is also called *Clean Monday (Kathara Deftera)*. On Cheese-Fare Sunday the Church commemorates the sending away of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Paradise. Adam and Eve were in complete harmony with God, nature and themselves. They were tempted by the devil and they agreed to eat from the tree of knowledge, in order that they themselves might become gods. The result was fatal; they were cast out of Paradise and sin came into the world. The Holy Fathers selected this event to remind us of our obligations to God and about the laws of fasting and Christian behavior (Matthew 6:14-21).

### **Sunday, February 18 - Forgiveness Vespers**

Great and Holy Lent begins on Monday, February 19, a day called Clean Monday, or “Kathara Deftera” in Greek. Vespers is the service that ends one day and begins another, so we will celebrate the Vespers of Forgiveness and beginning of Great Lent on Sunday evening, February 18, at 6:00 p.m. This service lasts about an hour and marks the beginning of Great Lent, which is announced during one of the hymns mid-way through the service. During this hymn, the priest changes vestments from white to purple, the lights in the church are dimmed and the mood of the service becomes somber. In fact, it is the opposite of the Resurrection Service on Easter, where everything begins dark and goes to light. The service concludes with a prayer of forgiveness being read over the congregation and the exchange of mutual forgiveness among the members of the congregation. This service is an especially appropriate way to begin the Lenten season, and for those who attended last season, is one of the most moving services of the church year.

## **Guidelines for Great and Holy Lent The Lenten Services**

### **Monday, February 19 - Canon of St. Andrew**

The Penitential Canon of St. Andrew will be read from 10:00-11:00 a.m. on Monday, February 19 as we begin Great Lent. The Canon, in its entirety, takes hours to read. We will read and chant an abridged version of this Canon on Clean Monday. Service books for this service will be available in the narthex.

### **Monday, February 19 - Holy Unction on Clean Monday**

The Sacrament of Holy Unction is always offered during Holy Week on Holy Wednesday. But the sacrament can be done at any time of the year. The emphasis of this sacrament involves, spiritual healing, spiritual cleansing and repentance. What better way to begin Great Lent than the sacrament of Holy Unction. Please bring your Holy Week book to follow along. The service will be held on Monday, February 19, from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

## **Sunday, February 25 - Sunday of Orthodoxy Icon Procession**

If anyone has new icons that have not been blessed, please bring them to church on Sunday, February 25, the Sunday of Orthodoxy, and place them in the windows of the church. They will be blessed with Holy Water during the service.

## **Mondays of Lent - Great Compline**

The service of Great Compline will be read on the following Mondays of Lent—February 26, March 5, March 12, March 19 and March 26. This service lasts about an hour and consists of Psalms and hymns of repentance. Service Books for this service will be available in the Narthex.

## **Wednesdays of Lent - 9<sup>th</sup> Hour and Pre-Sanctified Liturgy**

The Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts (also called Pre-Sanctified Liturgy) will be held on the Wednesdays during Great Lent. This service consists of Vespers with Holy Communion that was “Pre-Sanctified” the previous Sunday. It is an opportunity to receive Holy Communion frequently during the season of fasting. The Pre-Sanctified Liturgy is preceded by the reading of the 9<sup>th</sup> Hour, a short service with penitential prayers as well as the recitation of the Creed, a pre-requisite for the reception of Holy Communion. Service books for this service will be available in the Narthex.

## **Following the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy each week, one of our ministries will host a Lenten Dinner**

<b>Wednesday, February 21</b>	Choir
<b>Wednesday, February 28</b>	Philoptochos
<b>Wednesday, March 7</b>	Small Group Bible Studies
<b>Wednesday, March 14</b>	AHEPA
<b>Wednesday, March 21</b>	Sunday School
<b>Wednesday, March 28</b>	OCF/YAL

So, spend the hour you would spend cooking dinner worshipping in church and then stay for a complementary dinner. This is being offered in the hopes that more people will attend this service, and that each member of each ministry will attend at least one of these moving services.

## **Fridays of Lent - The Salutations to the Virgin Mary (Heretismoi)**

This service also lasts about an hour and is a series of prayers and devotions that invoke the intercessions of the Virgin Mary for our salvation. It will be held on February 23, March 2, March 9, March 16 and March 23. Service Books for this service will be available in the Narthex.

# **Great Opportunities This Lent**

## **Lenten Covenant**

As we have done in years past, we will offer the Lenten Covenant, a “covenant” made between you and God about your plan for spiritual growth this Lent. The Covenant will be available on our website, and as an insert in the weekly bulletin on Sunday, February 19. Please fill out one and put it in the special box in front of the church.

## **Sacrament of Confession**

Many people have already made appointments for their confessions to be heard, many for the first time in their lives. It is confidential. It helps you re-connect with God and unburden yourself of guilt. It helps you to make a new start in your spiritual journey and is an integral part of any successful Lenten journey. If you have questions about confession, please ask. There is no better way to prepare for Pascha than to receive this sacrament. Confessions will be heard up to March 30, and then again after Pascha. Please make your appointment as soon as possible, because Fr. Stavros likes to give people whatever time they need. As it gets closer to Holy Week and more and more people are coming, He is forced to go quicker, and it is very important not to be rushed in this Sacrament.

## **Interested in Reading during Lenten Services?**

In years past, we’ve offered the opportunity to parishioners to read during the Lenten services on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. If you are interested, you can sign up by calling the office and Father will tell you the times and dates that are available or email Father at [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com) or Charlie at [Charlie.hambos@gmail.com](mailto:Charlie.hambos@gmail.com).



# Community News

## Parish Registry

**Adult Baptism**—Wade (Thomas) Hampton was baptized on Sunday, December 31. Dimitri Artzibushev was the Godfather. Na Sas Zisi!

**Baptism**—Stavros Michael Zoumberos, son of George and Melissa Zoumberos, was baptized on Saturday, January 13. Christina Silva was the Godmother. Na Sas Zisi!

**Wedding**—Stephen Michael Dimitrijevič-Jones and Alina Morros were married on Sunday, December 31. Alexandra Grayson was the Koumbara. Congratulations!

**Wedding**—Dean Makris and Ashley Goodman were married on Saturday, January 13. Christina Makris was the Koumbara. Congratulations!



## Young at Heart Apokreatiko Dinner Dance - Saturday, February 3

The Young at Heart will have their annual Mardi Gras Ball (Apokreatiko) on Saturday, February 3 at 6:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. We hope that all will join us for a fun dinner dance. We promise lots of laughs and fun for everyone! It is all about family, friends dancing and did we mention COSTUMES?

Great prizes for the best costumes.



## Sunday, February 4 is Super Bowl Sunday of course, but it is also “Souper Bowl of

Caring” Sunday as well. This is a nationwide, youth-led initiative to tackle hunger across our country. Over 3000 Churches, youth groups, and other organizations will be collecting non-perishable items and monetary donations for local food banks. On Feb. 4, our children will be near the side doors holding pots to collect your donations. Pick your favorite team and help support HOPE CHILDREN’S HOME - a Christian home that takes abused, unwanted, discarded or orphaned children and is entirely supported by churches, private individuals and organizations.

**OCMC Mission Sunday** Philoptochos is going to sponsor its 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Missions Sunday to support the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. Philoptochos will be serving a Super Bowl Chili dog luncheon to benefit the OCMC. Our guest will be Fr. Chris Rowe.



## Get Acquainted Sunday, February 4

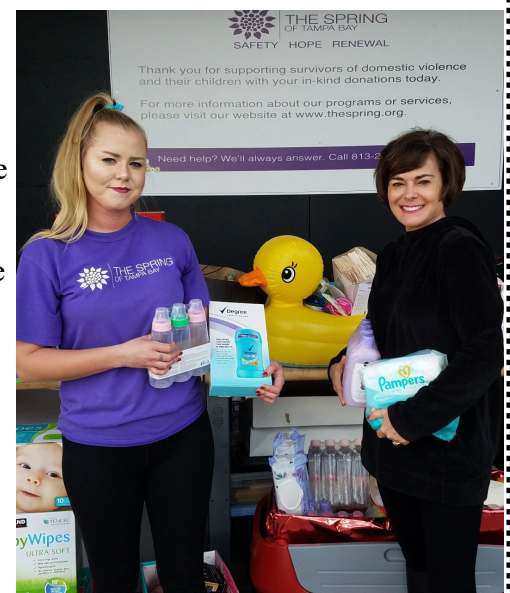


In an effort to get to know one another better, we are going to continue our “Get Acquainted Sundays” one Sunday of each month. We will have nametags and markers in the entry way of the Kourmolis Center and will ask that each person put one on during coffee hour and introduce yourself to at least one person that you do not know. This will serve to help us increase our fellowship and sense of community.

## Philoptochos Fills the Need

This December, the Philoptochos held its first “Season of Necessities Luncheon” to benefit the Spring Of Tampa Bay. With the help of our parishioners, we were able to donate nearly \$1,000 in gift cards and personal care items for moms and their children. Since 1977, The Spring has provided sanctuary and services to more than 30,000 abused adults and their children. The Spring is the largest of Florida’s 41 certified domestic violence shelters and the first in the United States to have an accredited school on site. Philoptochos would like to thank the St John’s Community for supporting this event. Together we can make a difference!

**SAVE THE DATE: March 3 Philoptochos’ “Membership and Mimosas” Brunch at the home of Edith Mitchell.**



Bridget Bulger (The Spring) and Lisa Alsina (Philoptochos) stand with donations from the “Season Of Necessities Luncheon.”

# Counting the Wins for our Community!

We've got lots of interesting people doing lots of interesting things in our community. If something notable happens in your life, please submit a short blurb to the office. We'd love to start "counting the wins" of our parishioners.

**Tom Georgas** has officially retired from Hillsborough County on January 2. After working in the Real Estate Department for over 28 years, Tom has decided to step down and enter a new chapter in his life. Congratulations to Tom for a successful career, and many good wishes for a fulfilling and productive retirement!

## MOVIE NIGHT FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9!

**Dinner: 6:30 P.M. Movie: 7:00 p.m.**

**Join us for dinner, a movie and discussion in the Kourmolis Center**  
(There is no charge for this event)

### "SAME KIND OF DIFFERENT AS ME"

Successful businessman Ron Hall and his wife, Deborah, discover a renewed sense of purpose when they begin to volunteer at a local mission in Fort Worth, Texas. Their lives change forever when they develop an unlikely friendship with Denver Moore, a homeless man who inspires them to save their struggling marriage.

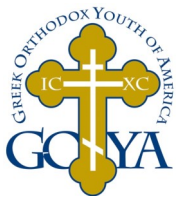


## GO RED SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

February is healthy heart month. We celebrate Valentine's Day. We get our hearts ready for Great Lent. And we recognize the need to live healthier lives. As a show of support for our hearts and an opportunity to do something together, everyone is asked to wear RED on Sunday, February 11. We did this last year and it was great. See you in red on February 11.



**GOYA Lock-in** on Saturday, February 10, beginning at 6:00 p.m.



### February 25 Father/Son "Retreat," Guest Speaker for Girls

There will be a GOYA meeting on Sunday, February 25. For this meeting, all fathers and sons will have a special session with Fr. Stavros. We invite all dads to come with their sons. The girls will meet in the Kourmolis Center. Dr. Katherine Kyrus will be speaking about issues related to teen girls.

## Small Group Bible Study

**Our Bible Studies are going in full swing. New people are welcome at any time!**

### Monday Night Bible Study (for everyone)

We are studying the Book of Acts

**Location:** St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in the Administration Building meeting room

**Group Leader:** Charlie Hambos

Charlie.hambos@gmail.com, 813-843-8471

**Meeting time:** Monday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

**Meeting Dates:** February 12 and 26

### Women's Group (for adult women of any age)

**Location:** Meets at the home of Debbie Kavouklis, 3315 Jean Circle, Tampa, FL 33629

**Group Leader:** Debbie Kavouklis

dkavouklis1@verizon.net, 813-690-0155.

**Meeting time:** Tuesday mornings from 10:00-

11:30 a.m.(9:30 a.m. for coffee and refreshments)

**Meeting Dates:** February 6, 13, 20 and 27 (at the church)

### South Tampa Mixed Group (for any adults)

Anyone can attend this group but obviously this will be most convenient for those who live in South Tampa

**Location:** At the Church in the Library

**Group Leader:** Bessie Palios & Ellen Karaku

bmp1126@yahoo.com 813-523-0347

ekaraku@verizon.net 813-835-0691

**Meeting time:** Tuesday evenings from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

**Meeting Dates:** February 13, 20 and 27

## A Rare Opportunity - A "Teaching" Divine Liturgy - February 5

For the first time ever in the history of St. John the Baptist, Father Stavros will offer a Divine Liturgy, where he will explain the mechanics and the mystery of this service which is central to our faith, worship and salvation. The service will start at 6:30 p.m.

## Two Orthodoxy 101 Classes left in February

Fr. Stavros offers this class two times per year, in the spring and in the fall. This is a Four-week course of study on Monday nights to make people aware of the basics of being an Orthodox Christian. The classes will be part lecture, part discussion, with lots of time for questions and answers.

### Who should attend the Orthodoxy 101 class?

- **Interfaith couples.** This will help the non-Orthodox person understand more about what is going on in our church.
- **Anyone who is considering joining our church.** Going forward, this class will be a requirement for those who wish to join our Orthodox faith.
- **New converts to Orthodoxy.** For those who recently joined our church and who want to know a little bit more.
- **Anyone who wants to know more about the basics of our faith,** or who wants a refresher course in the basics of Orthodoxy is encouraged to attend.

### The two sessions remaining will be done as follows:

**Monday, February 5** The Divine Liturgy—This will actually be a "teaching" Liturgy on the solea of the church. *If you have taken the class, or if you wish to only attend THIS session, please feel free to do so.*

**Monday, February 12** Orthodox Traditions—fasting, icons, prayer and separating Theology from "yiayialogy"

Classes will be held on these two Mondays from 6:30-8:30 p.m. and will be held in the CHURCH Sanctuary.

Please sign up with Fr. Stavros at [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com), so he has enough materials for everyone. There is no charge for this class.

## Young Adult Ministry

The YAL fellowship dinner will be on Sunday, February 11, from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Please RSVP to Charlie if you are going to attend. Bring \$10 for dinner.



## Community Outreach - Saturday, February 17

St. John the Baptist's Community Outreach will be serving breakfast to the Homeless at the First Presbyterian Church in Downtown Tampa from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The church is located at 412 Zack Street. The entrance is on Polk Street. Grab a cup of coffee and come help us! **We love to see new and old faces!**



## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Hellenic Arts Festival - Metropolis of Atlanta

with a special performance by Harry Antoniou,  
X-Factor Winner

**Saturday, February 17,**

Palm Harbor University Theater (1900 Omaha St., Palm Harbor, 34683) at 6:00 p.m.

For tickets please call 727-741-4125 or email [hellenicartsfestival@yahoo.com](mailto:hellenicartsfestival@yahoo.com). Adults are \$15, children under 12 are \$5. Proceeds to benefit the Panagia Chapel at the Diakonia Retreat Center, Salem SC.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Hellenic Arts Festival

Metropolis of Atlanta

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE  
BY

Harry Antoniou

X-Factor Winner



**Saturday, February 17, 2018**

**Palm Harbor University Theater**

1900 Omaha St, Palm Harbor, Florida 34683

**6:00 pm**



# Feasts of Epiphany and St. John the Baptist

January 6-7 was a memorable weekend for our church community. On January 6, many of our parishioners along with Fr. Stavros, went to St. Nicholas Cathedral in Tarpon Springs to celebrate Liturgy and for the annual diving for the cross. Dean Mitseas, Savvas Ferekides, Harry Koutroumanis, Joseph Hambos and Frankie Giallourakis represented our community in the cross dive this year. On Saturday evening, His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios presided over Great Vespers for the Feast of St. John here in our parish. He was assisted by Fr. James Rousakis (Vicar of Tampa Bay), Fr. Stavros, Fr. Jim Paris (Holy Trinity, Clearwater), Fr. Andrew Pavlakos (Clearwater), Fr. Gregory Edwards (St. George, New Port Richey), Fr. John Bociu (St. Barbara, Sarasota), Fr. Soteri Rousakis (St. Stefanos, St. Pete), Fr. Panteleimon Maillis (Sts. Nicholas, Raphael and Irene, Palm Harbor) and Deacon John

Pantelis (St. Pete). During the service, His Eminence tonsured the following boys as readers/altar boys: Demetri Karounos, James Kavouklis, Antonio Bavaro, Grayson Borgeas-Beech, Yanni Trimikliniotis, Jonah Blankenbaker, Gregory Thomas, Dominic Garcia, and Andreas Thompson. Mary Nenos offered the artoklasia and decorated our icons of St. John. The Philoptochos sponsored a reception following Vespers. On Sunday, January 7, His Eminence officiated at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, assisted by Fr. Stavros, Fr. Vasileios Tsourlis (Holy Trinity, Charlotte, NC), Fr. Athanasios Haros (St. Nicholas Cathedral, Tarpon Springs), Fr. Andrew Pavlakos and Deacon John Pantelis. During the Liturgy, His Eminence ordained Theophanis Katsiklis to the Diaconate. Following the Liturgy, the Parish Council hosted a feastday luncheon. Thank you to all who helped make our feastday a success!









# AXIOS! Deacon Theofanis Katsiklis





# Vasilopita Sunday 2018



## Photography Ministry

We thank Olya Clifton for taking all of these beautiful photos. We are starting a new photography ministry, to document the activities of our parish. Olya Clifton is going to head this ministry. If you are interested in participating in this ministry, there will be an informational meeting on Sunday, February 11, following the Divine Liturgy. Members will sign up on a rotating basis to take pictures of our various community events. For more information call Olya at 661-243-9352 or email her at [olyacliftonphotography@gmail.com](mailto:olyacliftonphotography@gmail.com).



# SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

January was a very busy month for the Sunday School. Our topics for January were the Epiphany/ St. John the Baptist, the Vasilopita/St. Basil, and Making Moral Choices. Charlie Hambos was also very busy by working with our 5th graders and 2nd graders.

Congratulations to the five young men; Harry Koutroumanis, Savvas Ferekides, Frankie Giallourakis, Joseph Hambos and Dean Mitseas who dove for the cross at the Epiphany Service in Tarpon Springs. They represented our church and our faith in a beautiful way!

On Saturday January 13, the Sunday School Teachers participated in a retreat with Fr. Stavros. The Sunday School teachers are truly blessed to have Fr. Stavros and Charlie as our spiritual leaders of our Sunday School. Our Sunday School program would not be what it is today without them. THANK YOU Fr. Stavros and Charlie for dedicating so much of your busy schedule to our Sunday School. On Sunday, January 14, the Sunday School had their own Vasilopita Celebration. Each student received a piece of this sweet bread and one lucky student found the coin in their piece. We would truly like to thank Melissa Krinos for making this Vasilopita for our Sunday School Children year after year. It was delicious and appreciated by all of our children. We also had our YOUTH SUNDAY on Jan. 21. The children sang beautifully, our Epistle Reader did a fine job and the Prosphora, made by our students, was delicious as usual. Our children are truly great stewards of St. John's.

The next few months will be busy as usual for the Sunday School. Our older students are preparing for the Oratorical Festival and everyone is getting ready for Pascha. Each Sunday School class will have the opportunity to participate in the important Sacrament of Confession. During the last 2 Sunday's in January, Fr. Stavros already heard the Confessions of our 5th and 6th Graders. Of course, we will also have a Pre-Lenten Retreat and a Retreat on Good Friday.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR

### Sunday, February 4

Topic: Prodigal Son  
Charlie: Pre-K

### Saturday, February 10

GOYA Lock-in

### Sunday, February 11

Youth Sunday  
Topic: Last Judgment  
Charlie: High School  
Prosphora – 1st Grade  
Confession: 3rd & 4th Grade

### Sunday, February 18

Pre-Lenten Retreat  
Charlie: Kindergarten

### Sunday, February 25

Topic: Icons/Sunday of Orthodoxy  
GOYA mtg.-Prosphora-Part 2

### Wednesday, February 28

Pre-Sanctified Liturgy-Sunday  
School sponsored Dinner

## Our Food Pantry is very active helping people near and far in the Tampa Community.

### Here are some special requests we have:

- Pasta
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Tomato sauce/chopped tomatoes etc.
- All kinds of white flour
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Gluten Free Foods and Flours
- Cereal
- Whole wheat rice and pasta
- Men's and Women's razors and shaving cream (travel size)
- Toothbrushes
- Gift cards in any amount for Publix, Walmart or Save-a-lot



For all who have supported the food pantry throughout the year a BIG THANK YOU! Thank you for your prayers, your wide variety of food donations including hygiene products, grocery store cards and all the monetary donations. It has helped to keep our food pantry going. All your contributions for the food pantry are supporting the homeless who come in off the street with easy to eat food and bus passes, and families inside and outside our community as well as supporting Metropolitan Ministries. Know that what you have given is received with warm gratitude and heartfelt tears by people you may never meet. May God Bless You. We look forward to your continued support in 2018.

All food items offered are accepted. Thank you for supporting those who need it the most. For more info and questions about our Food Pantry please contact Anetta Alexander at 813-758-2689 or [exchange2861@yahoo.com](mailto:exchange2861@yahoo.com)

Sincerely, Charlie, John and Anetta.

# ~ Stewardship Update ~

*'Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God' Hebrews 13:16*

## Please give back your Time, Talents and Treasure in 2018

We are very blessed at St. John with a vibrant and thriving community. Visible not only by our church pews filled on Sundays, the children ...many children or our bustling coffee hour but by the generosity of our loyal stewards. We come to worship but also understand the work of Christ that is done throughout the year and see the spiritual growth amongst our many parishioners. Fr. Stavros is a very good teacher and we are blessed to learn if our ears and hearts remain open.

Our 2018 Stewardship Year is off to a good start with \$344,737 pledged from 198 Stewards. This represents 53% of our stewards from last year so we can do better! Give Back the gifts God has bestowed upon us. Our Vision is very clear at St. John and captures beautifully the essence of what 'this' is all about. ***Your gifts enable us to do just that and we are very grateful for the sacrifice of our Stewards.*** On Vasilopita Sunday we heard and saw the many individuals 'engaged' in our active ministries. It indeed takes many to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our own way.

It's often simple acts of listening, giving or just being there when needed. Living life with Christ in our hearts and leading by example. Our Christian Stewardship is one of those examples.

May we continue to connect, love one another, be kind to one another and keep our eyes turned to God and the reasons we give of our Time, Talents and Treasure!

## ~ Good to Know - Stewardship Housekeeping ~

Please complete your outstanding pledges for 2017 and use the memo field to note Stewardship Year for ongoing 2018 Pledges.

'Do I need to complete a Pledge Form each year?' – YES! Please!! – per our Bylaws to participate & vote at Parish Assemblies. Additionally, our office retains key information including address, ministry interests and your talents that are needed throughout the year. And putting our pledge in writing helps us think about the sacrifice and commitment.

Look for year-end letters to summarize stewardship and/or general donations received in the 2017 calendar year.

Pledge forms are available in the Church Narthex, Office, Bookstore and Online. We make it easy! Don't hesitate to call our office or email our office – [officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com](mailto:officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com) or speak directly with Fr. Stavros, Sandra Pappas or Pete Trakas – your Stewardship Co-Chairs with any questions. We are here for YOU!

*YTD as of 1/12/2018	
2017 Year End Summary*	2017*
Pledged Year to Date	<b>\$444,224</b>
Received Year to Date	<b>\$468,529</b>
Average Pledge	<b>\$1,258</b>
Median Pledge	<b>\$600</b>
# of Individual/Families Giving	371

## OFFER YOUR TALENTS!

**Our church and members of our community are always looking for people who can offer their talents. Please fill out the talents portion of your Stewardship Pledge Form or call the office to update your talents today.**

# Archpastoral Lenten Reflection by Metropolitan Methodios of Boston (Written in 2013)

**T**omorrow, known in Greek as Kathara Deftera or Clean Monday, Orthodox Christians begin a spiritual journey called the Great Lent. It is a time of promise, of expectancy and of renewal. Tomorrow, we begin fasting, we attend colorful worship services and keep customs honored for many centuries by Orthodox Christian families. All these aim at the renewal of our spiritual life, our catharsis, our repentance and return to God.

The Great Lent is a unique opportunity for serious recollection. It is a time for the reordering of our minds and hearts. Humanity more than ever before in history needs such a spiritual and moral reorientation. There are three major topics in the gospel text read this morning on Forgiveness Sunday.

The world today is separated by many walls. One still separates races in America. Yet another wall exists in human relationships between husband and wife, between parent and child, between friends, between God and man. Only forgiveness breaks down these walls of conceit, egotism, and sin which keep us estranged from one another and from God. "If you forgive others their trespasses your Father in Heaven will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses neither will your Father in Heaven will not forgive your trespasses. (Mat. 6:14 &15). The second topic in the gospel text deals with fasting. The prophet Isaiah wrote centuries ago: "Is not this the fast I choose....Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house...when you see

the naked to clothe them? (58, 6-7). Fasting helps us to gain control over ourselves; to enable Christian ethics to prevail over the habits of the flesh. More than abstinence from certain foods, fasting is deliverance from evil, the renunciation of anger and falsehood. A good taste of hunger would remind all of us well-fed Americans of the many bounties with which we have been blessed and remind us of the desperate plight of brethren in Greece and throughout the world, even in our own neighborhoods in America.

The third and final message condemns our treasures. All earthly treasures wind up in the junkyard called the grave. They are stolen from us by death. The greatest human treasure is love and the ability to share the richness of love with our fellow human beings. There is a treasure in forgiving; in strengthening our relationships with our neighbor and with our God. Our greatest treasure is spelled GOD not GOLD.

With these three spiritual messages from the Gospel text we begin a journey of search into our souls. We begin our 40 day journey conscientiously in humility and repentance. We ask strength from God to renew ourselves in prayer and meditation. We strain to hear the voice of our conscience which whispers to us the need to repent, to restore our spiritual bond with God. We set our eyes upon the crucifixion of our Savior and His Holy Resurrection to find direction, dignity and beauty in our life.

Kali Tessarakoste!

## St. John the Baptist is on Social Media!

### Sermons on Youtube Channel Each Sunday

Father's sermons each Sunday are available on our YouTube channel. Just go to YouTube and type in "St John GOC Tampa" and you'll find them. If you miss a sermon or wish to hear a sermon again, you'll find it there!

### Do you Like our Facebook page?

Like our page and suggest it to your friends. Announcements are posted frequently so you are up to date with everything going on at St. John the Baptist. You can find our page at StJohnGOCTampa.

### Live Streaming

All of our services are being video recorded and are available on our Livestream page. To access this page

1. Go to our Church's website: [greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com](http://greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com),
2. Scroll the mouse over the "Multimedia" tab on the menu bar,
3. Click "View Liturgy,"
4. Then click on the link where it says, "Check out our live stream of the Divine Liturgy here <http://new.livestream.com/accounts/2454446>.

**All of the services are available to watch at anytime.**

### Pictures

Go to Flickr.com and search "St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church" or go to [www.flickr.com/photos/stjohngoc Tampa](http://www.flickr.com/photos/stjohngoc Tampa)



# Parish Council - FOCUS CORNER

At the beginning of each year, Father Stavros leads a Parish Council Retreat. Usually that happens before the first board meeting so that we can welcome new members, and set the tone for our team. In this year's retreat, Father asked the board to come up with a ONE WORD Resolution for our Parish Council. This one word would become our central theme for 2018. After discussing and deliberating on a dozen words we brainstormed, we unanimously chose the word FOCUS.

FOCUS means *to concentrate on something and pay particular attention to it*. We also chose that word from the perspective of DOING LESS... BETTER. We committed to spend the first 30 minutes of each board meeting on a spiritual journey on the topic of FOCUS so we can gain understandings to guide our actions. And, we also agreed to take turns writing a paragraph/reflection/insight in the Messenger about FOCUS. I volunteered to go first...

Those who know me, know that I love acronyms. Just ask anyone at EVOS, or the Festival Committee ... remember what OPA stands for again? :) As soon as I got in the car to drive home from the retreat, my mind started racing with words to fit the letters F.O.C.U.S.:

Fun, Fundamental ...

Fun Orthodox Christians ... Under Spirit

United in Spirit??

Fellow ... (that's better than Fun)

Fellow Orthodox Christians ... (hmmm, we are on to something)

Fellow Orthodox Christians United ... (I like that, I'm all about uniting teams)

United in what?

United for Salvation...

United to Serve!

That's it! That's what the PC is all about ... serving the people of our community.

## ~FOCUS: Fellow Orthodox Christians United to Serve~

I'm excited to see where this journey on FOCUS will lead us, what we'll learn along the way and how we'll use the insights to better serve Christ and our community. Stay tuned for more...

AC

(aka Alkis Crassas)

*Philippians 4:13* - *I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me.*

## ...Other Parish Council News...

### **\$50,000 Principal Payment Made Towards Mortgage**

The Parish Council is proud to announce that the Church made a single \$50,000 payment towards our mortgage in January. This will be the second year in a row that we've applied such a large sum towards the mortgage and these efforts are paying back quickly. As of the application of this payment, the Church mortgage will sit below \$1 million with an anticipated payoff range of five to eight years.

### **New Document/Ministry Material Storage Policy**

- The Parish Council and Administrative Office would like to ask parishioners and ministry heads to bring unwanted material generated by their volunteer efforts to the front office, rather than storing it on campus without our knowledge. Any documentation that needs to be filed or stored must go through the office. This new policy will allow our office spaces to remain clear of clutter and ensure that important documents are not stored incorrectly. If you find your ministry needs ongoing, regular storage on campus, please let us know and we will arrange to assign you the appropriate space. Thank you very much for your cooperation.



# Donations Needed for Great Lent and Holy Week

Great Lent begins February 19. We have many special celebrations during these weeks. We know that many of you would like to contribute to the decorating of our church and icons during this period. For your convenience, below is a list of items needed for the celebration of the Sacred Services of Lent and Holy Week. Please contact the church office to reserve your desired offering for the health of your loved ones or in memory of a deceased loved one.

Payment may be sent to the church office. Checks should be made payable to “St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church” with “Lenten Flower Donation” on the memo line.

<b>Lent</b>	Wireless Microphones in the Church	Duracell or Energizer AA Batteries	Many
<b>February 23</b>	Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 1 <sup>st</sup> Stanza	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$75
<b>March 2</b>	Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Stanza	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$75
<b>March 9</b>	Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Stanza	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$75
<b>March 11</b>	Veneration of the Holy Cross	Flowers for Tray for Procession	\$350
<b>March 16</b>	Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 4 <sup>th</sup> Stanza	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$75
<b>March 23</b>	Akathist Hymn	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$75
<b>April 1</b>	<b>Palm Sunday</b>	Flowers for Icon of Palm Sunday	\$75
		Palms Strips & Branches	\$250 total
<b>Holy Week</b>		Pillar Candles for Windows (20)	\$15 each
<b>April 2</b>	<b>Holy Monday</b>	Flowers for Icon of Bridegroom in Narthex	\$75
	Bridegroom Service	Flowers for Icon of Bridegroom on Solea (2)	\$75 each
<b>April 4</b>	<b>Holy Wednesday</b>	Flowers for Icon of Last Supper	\$75
	Holy Unction	Olive Oil, Flour, Prosfhora (2)	See Fr. Stavros
<b>April 5</b>	<b>Holy Thursday</b>	Flowers for Icon of Crucifixion	\$75
		Wreath for Top of Cross	\$250
		Wreaths for Bottom of Cross (2)	\$150 each
		Scattered flowers at base of cross	\$50
		Candles for Top of Cross (3)	\$15 each
<b>April 6</b>	<b>Good Friday</b>	8 Bags of Rose Petals for Myrrh-bearers	\$50
		Flowers for Epitaphios	Several
		Candles for Top of Cross (3)-Apokathelosis	\$15 each
		Candles for Top of Cross (3)-Lamentations	\$15 each
		Icon of Extreme Humility	\$75
<b>April 8</b>	<b>Pascha</b>	Flowers for Icon of Resurrection	\$75
		Flowers for Icon of Empty Tomb	\$75
		Silk Flower for Royal Doors	\$100
		Easter Lilies	\$25 per Lily

# We Must Be the Church

By Fr. John Bakas

**I**t seems clear-cut and simple. It is clearly stated in the Uniform parish Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of our church is to:

“Proclaim and teach the Gospel according to the Orthodox Christian Faith.”

“Sanctify and enhance the spiritual life of the faithful through Orthodox Christian worship.”

“Receive persons into the Church through instruction, baptism and/or chrismation.”

Do we pay serious attention to this mission? How are we working to make it happen? It has been said by many who have left the church that many churches are “ethnic social clubs” that “play” at church and others are “churches that also have social activities”. We must ask ourselves the all-important question: into which category do our parishes fit in?

I hope you will work and pray that our congregations are first churches that have dynamic Christ-filled parishioners who also enjoy a variety of social and cultural activities. But the mission is clear. As I stand before God as a priest, especially when I hold the Holy of the Holies in the form of Holy Communion, I must first be the Pastor of the church, leading people to salvation (Theosis) and a personal, living relationship with Jesus Christ. Anything less tramples upon my priesthood and all that is sacred in our Holy Orthodox Church.

This is why I am so committed to getting people involved in singing the Divine Liturgy, participating in the Sacramental life of the church and encouraging all to consciously understand what is going on in all of our life enhancing and life giving services. Nothing is more dreadful than a dead church with robotic people going through the automatic motions of religiosity. In our multi-religious society, people have choices as far as church is concerned; they register their choices with their feet. Parishioners either come and connect to the church dynamically or many seek other paths.

The church cannot be just a nostalgic guardian of the past. The Divine Liturgy cannot and must not be a historical re-enactment of some past Byzantine glory. It must shine its light also upon the present and future as well. Whether we like it or not, the growth of our church in America will no longer be made up of newly arrived immigrants. It will be made up mostly of gener-



ations born in America and will include more converts and more inter-faith marriages. That is a reality. Just look at pioneer families in our parishes and ask, “Where are their adult children and grandchildren? Are they connected to church and faith? If not, why not? This is my concern.

When it comes to those who left us, the church simply must find their spiritual need and fill it. Find their spiritual hurt and heal it. Find their spiritual thirst and quench it. All must play a role in ministry and outreach, not just the professional ordained clergy. We must train and engage adult religious catechists to support the priests in offering educational programs. We must offer Bible Studies and classes that meet the needs of different age groups and demographics. We must make our parishes Christ-centered faith community.

Looking to the future, our churches must become sanctuaries which embrace all people who wish to embrace Jesus Christ and His Holy Orthodox Church. “*The harvest is truly plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest*”. Matthew 9:37 – 38.

*Fr. John Bakas is the Dean of St. Sophia Cathedral in Los Angeles, CA.*



## AHEPA FAMILY NEWS – FEBRUARY 2018

### AHEPA FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP DINNER AND CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

On December 15, 2017 the AHEPA FAMILY hosted the annual **SCHOLARSHIP AND CHRISTMAS SOCIAL DINNER** at the Floridan Hotel, once again awarding scholarships to the young members of our community. The AHEPA Family Scholarship Program began in 2010 and we have awarded scholarships to worthy students of our community every year since then. To date the Ahepa Family has awarded over 35 scholarships worth nearly \$40,000.

The event was held at the Floridan Hotel as the AHEPA Family of Tampa awarded five Ahepa Family Scholarships to outstanding students who are members of the Ahepa Family and the St. John's Greek Orthodox Church Community. The scholarship winners included **Stephanie Owens, Nicholas George Alsina, Karter Fitzgerald Lenardos, Corinna Maria Robinson and Savvas Christou Ferekides.**

**Also in attendance were Greek Consul General Dimitrios Sparos and his wife Aekaterini, who were both made honorary members of AHEPA and the DOP.** (see the photo below)



A wonderful meal was served and entertainment was provided by the LadyBug Quartet, who sang Christmas Carols and made the evening even that much more enjoyable.

Shown in the above picture from left to right: **Aekaterini Sparou**; Consul General **Dimitrios Sparos**; **Ourania Stephanides**, Daughters of Penelope Citrus District 2 Governor; **Maria Zabetakis**, President Daughters of Penelope Chapter 167 Tampa; **Nedi Christou Ferekides**, past scholarship winner receiving for her brother; **Gus Pantelides**, Ahepa Citrus District 2 Governor; **Scholarship winners**: Stephanie Owens, Karter Fitzgerald Lenardos, Nicholas George Alsina: **Gus Paras**, Past Ahepa Supreme Governor and Chapter President Lycurgus Chapter 12; **Thomas Sakaris**, Chapter Secretary Lycurgus Chapter 12; **Michael Trimis**, Ahepa Citrus District 2, Lt. Governor; **Marina Paras**, Daughters of Penelope Citrus District 2 Past Governor

**Become a member of AHEPA or the Daughters of Penelope today**

**PLEASE COMMEMORATE THE NAMES OF MY DEPARTED FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE SATURDAY OF THE SOULS MEMORIAL SERVICES - February 10, February 17, February 24**

**In Memory of**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**\*\*You only need to write the first name of each person. Please mail to the church office by February 8.**

# A Tax-Saving Way to Help St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

*If you are 70½ years old or older...See Your Generosity in Action*

## Join the St. John Legacy Society

If you are 70½ years old or older, you can take advantage of a simple way to benefit St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church and receive tax benefits in return. You can give up to \$100,000 from your IRA directly to St. John without having to pay income taxes on the money. This law no longer has an expiration date so you are free to pay your annual stewardship gifts to St. John this year and well into the future by making a gift through your IRA.

## Why Consider This Gift?

- Your gift will be put to use today, allowing you to see the difference your donation is making.
- You pay no income taxes on the gift. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your deductions.
- If you have not yet taken your required minimum distribution for the year, your IRA charitable rollover gift can satisfy all or part of that requirement.

If you include St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in your plans, please use our legal name and Federal Tax ID # 59-1170684. Additionally, please contact Fr. Stavros at 813-876-8830 ext. 103, (email [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com)) or call Debbie Gavalas at 813-505-8901 so that we may properly thank you and include you as a founding member of the St. John Legacy Society.

## Thank You to all of Our Friends!

Barbara Akrotirianakis - Whittier, CA  
William J Camarinos - Alexandria, VA  
Richard & Mickie Bass - Asheville, NC  
Jason & Kelly Bangos - Clearwater, FL  
Nicholas & Anna Karnavas - New Port Richey, FL  
Michael Kapetan - Ann Arbor, MI  
Perry & Fay Stamatiades - Asheville, NC  
Melvin & Violet Tamashiro - Kaneohe, HI  
Wesley & Melissa Thompson - Clearwater, FL  
Demitrius & Katherine Klimis - Boardman, OH

Mary Spanos - St. Augustine, FL  
Bessie Bliziotis - Palm Cost, FL  
Suzanne Alvarez - Tampa, FL  
Lazarus & Maria Kavouklis - Tarpon Springs, FL  
William & Kane Chapman - Palmetto, FL  
Lillian Thomas - Highland, IN  
Kathleen Mendez - Ponte Vedra, FL  
Theodora Poletis - Baltimore, MD  
Basil & Dorothy Nosal - Fredericksburg, VA

**Friends of St. John the Baptist** - Some of you who receive *The Messenger* do not live in the Tampa Bay area or are members of other Greek Orthodox parishes. We would like to ask for your support of our parish by being a "Friend of St. John the Baptist." Your contribution as a "Friend" will help offset the cost of mailing *The Messenger*, among other things. Being a "friend" does not make one a steward of St. John the Baptist or afford membership rights and responsibilities, but gives one who is a member elsewhere, an opportunity to make a gesture of financial support to our parish.

## Thank you for your consideration of our parish.

**Friend of St. John the Baptist:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*I wish to become a Friend of St. John the Baptist. I am enclosing a contribution in the amount of:*

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Please mail this form and check to: St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church 2418 W. Swann Ave Tampa, FL 33609.



# Family Calendar for Great Lent 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
February 18 <b>Cheesefare</b> <b>Sunday of forgiveness</b> Come to church and ask forgiveness <b>Sunday School Retreat</b>	19 <b>Clean Monday</b> <b>Great Lent Begins</b> <b>Canon of St. Andrew</b> <b>Holy Unction Service</b> No TV today	20 Call and wish your Godparents a "Blessed Lent/Kali Sarakosti"	21 <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for sick children	22 Make a prosfora bread with your family to bring to church	23 <b>Salutations to the Virgin Mary</b> Make a list of 5 things you are thankful for	24 <b>Saturday of the Souls</b> Make a prayer list of those who have died and bring to church
25 <b>Sunday of Orthodoxy</b> Bring an icon from home for procession Sing Kyrie eleisons	26 <b>Great Compline</b> Help make your bed, clean up and dust your room	27 Do something helpful for your mother	28 <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for your priest	March 1 Collect some clothing or shoes to donate to a charity special to you	2 <b>Salutations to the Virgin Mary</b> Read a favorite Bible story with your family <b>GOYA Lenten Retreat</b> <i>*Confession for kids attending retreat</i>	3 Help your parents in the yard/garden
4 <b>St. Gregory of Palamas</b> <b>Youth Sunday</b> Say a special prayer for your grandparents <i>*Confession for Grade 1 &amp; 2</i>	5 <b>Great Compline</b> Help set the table and clean up after dinner	6 Do something helpful for your father	7 <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for your neighbors	8 Collect some coins to bring to church on Sunday	9 <b>Salutations to the Virgin Mary</b> Pray the Lenten prayer of St. Ephraim together with your family	10 Read about the life of a Saint with your family
11 <b>Holy Cross</b> Take home a flower from the cross	12 <b>Great Compline</b> Forgive someone who hurt you	13 Do something helpful for your teacher	14 <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for your Sunday School teachers	15 Buy and donate a food item for our St. John food pantry	16 <b>Salutations to the Virgin Mary</b> Come Bless the icon of Panagia	17 <b>Community Outreach</b> Say a prayer for Metropolitan Alexios for his Name Day
18 <b>St John of the Ladder</b> Take 5 minutes of silence to pray about how much God loves you <b>Youth Sunday</b>	19 <b>Great Compline</b> Play with someone who feels left out	20 Draw a picture of your saint or feast day by looking at an icon	21 <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Receive Holy Communion /Sunday School Family dinner	22 Choose a toy you don't play with and donate it	23 <b>Akathist Hymn/Divine Liturgy</b> Sing Victorious Lady in your prayers one last time	24 Ask for God to protect your house Tell someone you hurt that you are sorry
25 <b>Annunciation</b> <b>St Mary of Egypt</b> Sing Agios O Theos in Church today	26 <b>Great Compline</b> Be kind to someone who needs your kindness	27 Mail a card to your Godparents wishing them a Blessed Holy Week and Kalo Pascha	28 <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for your friends	29 Make and bake some Lenten cookies with your family	30 Make a list of all living and dead loved ones and bring it to church for the Proskomide	31 <b>Saturday of Lazarus</b> <b>Divine Liturgy</b> Receive Holy Communion Make palm crosses
1 <b>Palm Sunday</b> <b>Service of Bridgroom</b> Replace your old crosses and have parents burn any old crosses	2 <b>Holy Monday</b> <b>Bridgroom Service</b> Read the story about the prophet Joseph	3 <b>Holy Tuesday</b> <b>Bridgroom Service</b> Read the story of Kassiani the Hymnographer	4 <b>Holy Wednesday</b> Come and receive Holy Unction	5 <b>Holy Thursday</b> • <b>Divine Liturgy</b> • <b>12 Gospels Service</b> Color eggs red for Pascha, think about Jesus on the cross	6 <b>Holy Friday</b> • <b>Royal Hours</b> • <b>Unailing from the Cross</b> • <b>Lamentations</b> Attend Sunday School retreat	7 <b>Holy Saturday</b> • <b>Liturgy of St. Basil</b> • <b>Resurrection Service</b> Come to the early Liturgy to see scattering of bay leaves
April 8 <b>PASCHA!!</b> <b>Christ is Risen!</b> You have completed Great Lent! Attend Agape vespers to light your candle					<i>*All students are encouraged to participate in the sacrament of Confession. If they have missed their scheduled class day, please schedule an appointment or join another class day.</i>	

# ~ February 2018 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
<b>Daughters of Penelope-Valentine Baskets 2/4, 2/11</b>							
<b>4</b> Orthros 8:30 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Souper Bowl of Caring Missions Sunday-- Luncheon	<b>5</b> Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Orthodoxy 101 Teaching Divine Liturgy as part of Orthodoxy 101 6:30 p.m.	<b>6</b> WBS SBS Ecumenical Prayer Service with Christ the King (at St. John) NO BASKETBALL	<b>7</b> **	<b>8</b> Adult Greek School	<b>9</b> ** Movie night "Same Kind of Different As Me" 6:30 dinner 7:00 movie gym	<b>10</b> St. Haralambos/ 1 <sup>st</sup> <b>Saturday of Souls</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. GOYA Lock In 6:00 p.m.	
<b>11</b> Orthros 8:30 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Youth Sunday Confession 3-4 <sup>th</sup> grade YAL Photo ministry mtg	<b>12</b> ** Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Orthodoxy 101 6:30 p.m.	<b>13</b> ** WBS SBS Basketball	<b>14</b> **	<b>15</b> ** Adult Greek School	<b>16</b> ** Fr. Stavros out of town	<b>17</b> ** Community Outreach <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of Souls</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Fr. Andrew Pavlakos Guest Celebrant  Talent Show-Palm Harbor	
<b>18</b> **Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Sunday School Pre-Lent Retreat <b>Forgiveness Vespers</b> 6:00 p.m. AHEPA/Daughters	<b>19</b> ** <b>CLEAN MONDAY</b> <b>Canon of St. Andrew</b> 10:00 a.m. <b>Holy Unction</b> 6:00 p.m.	<b>20</b> ** WBS SBS Basketball	<b>21</b> ** <b>9<sup>th</sup> Hour</b> 5:30 p.m. <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> 6:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner-Choir Discipleship Series	<b>22</b> ** Adult Greek School Choir Practice	<b>23</b> ** <b>Salutations to the Virgin Mary</b> 6:30 p.m.	<b>24</b> ** <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of Souls</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. (at Garden of Memories)	
<b>25</b> **Orthros 8:15 am Liturgy 9:45 a.m. GOYA 5:00 p.m. Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers Tarpon 5:00 p.m.	<b>26</b> ** <b>Compline</b> 5:30 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	<b>27</b> ** WBS SBS Basketball	<b>28</b> ** <b>9<sup>th</sup> Hour</b> 5:30 p.m. <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> 6:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner-Philoptochos Discipleship series				

## St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

2418 W. Swann Avenue

Tampa, FL 33609-4712

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www.greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com

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## St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

### Timetable of Services

**Sundays:** Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

**Weekdays:** Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

#### **Parish Priest** Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis

813-876-8830 (Office) 813-394-1038 (Cell)  
frstav@gmail.com

#### **Pastoral Assistant** Charlie Hambos

813-876-8830 (Office) 813-843-8471 (Cell)  
Charlie.hambos@gmail.com

#### **Parish Council**

Alkis Crassas, President	813-690-3867
Mike Xenick, VP	813-340-8737
Gary Ward, Treasurer	813-846-3898
Sandra Pappas, Secretary	813-785-3747
George Chagaris	727-420-1920
Amin Hanhan	813-846-2957
Jimmy Konstas	813-220-7352
Catherine Mitseas	813-571-0658
Ryan Rindone	704-564-2046
Aris Rogers, II	813-309-5525
Dante Skourellos	813-765-9534

#### **Office Staff**

Mary Kay Hughes,	813-876-8830
Administrative Assistant	
officestjohngoctampa@gmail.com	
Debbie Bowe, Bookkeeper	
debstjohntpa@gmail.com	fax:813-443-4899

#### **Adult Greek School**

Magda Myer	813-909-2327
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#### **AHEPA**

Gus Paras, President	813-254-6980
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#### **Altar Angels**

Engie Halkias	813-932-5859
Sia Blankenship	813-968-8855

#### **Basketball**

Perry Katsamakias	516-403-3118
Jimmy Konstas	813-220-7352

#### **Bible Study**

Charlie Hambos	813-843-8471
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#### **Chanter**

Nick Andreadakis	813-516-6081
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#### **Choir**

Artie Palios, Director	813-831-1294
Ruth Losovitz , Organist	727-688-2782

#### **Community Outreach**

Betty Katherine Katsamakias	813-468-1596
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#### **Dance Group**

H XAPA MAE,	Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668
	Bessie Palios,	813-523-0347
	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
Parea,	Marina Choundas	813-877-6136
	Anna Maria Bavaro	732-239-9085
Panigyri,	Vanessa Aviles	813-221-2194

#### **Daughters of Penelope**

Maria Zabetakis, President	813-748-7709
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#### **Finance Committee**

Gary Ward	813-846-3898
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#### **Food Pantry**

Anetta Alexander	813-758-2689
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#### **Gasparilla Parking**

John Kokkas	727-992-4615
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#### **GOYA**

Maria Koutroumanis	813-245-3854
Kara Katzaras	863-669-6739

#### **Hope/Joy**

Debbie Nicklow	813-690-0671
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#### **Junior Olympics**

Dwight Forde	727-685-9028
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#### **MOMS**

Mary Ann Konstas	813-215-9862
Lindsey Skourellos	813-503-7845

#### **OCF**

Charlie Hambos	813-843-8471
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#### **Oratorical Festival**

Peggy Bradshaw	727-244-1374
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#### **Photography Ministry**

Olya Clifton	661-243-9352
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#### **Philoptochos**

Lisa Alsina	813-728-1094
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#### **Small Group Bible Study**

Men, Mike Palios	813-523-0346
South, Bessie Palios	813-523-0347
Women, Debbie Kavouklis	813-258-5571

#### **Strategic Planning**

Marc Edquid	813-422-8940
Gary Ward	813-846-3898

#### **Stewardship**

Sandra Pappas	813-785-3747
Pete Trakas	813-505-2193

#### **Sunday School**

Vickie Peckham	813-406-5626
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#### **Usher**

Tom Georgas	813-985-0236
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#### **Visitation Committee**

Charlie Hambos	813-843-8471
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#### **Welcome Ministry**

Maria Xenick	813-765-3587
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#### **Young Adult**

Charlie Hambos	813-843-8471
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#### **Young at Heart**

Carole Fotopoulos	813-982-0947
Mary Nenos	813-935-2096

*The Messenger of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is published on a monthly basis. Publication is the first of each month. Deadline for notices and announcements for The Messenger is the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. You may send announcements to the church office through email.*

“May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.” From the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.