

Parish Priest:	Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-876-8830
Retired Priest in Residence:	Rev. Fr. Stratton Dorozenski	813-876-8830
Retired Priest in Residence:	Rev. Fr. John Stefero	813-876-8830
Pastoral Assistant:	Vasili Panagopoulos	414-254-5134
Bookkeeper:	Debbie Bowe	813-876-8830
Administrative Assistant:	Kim Rojas	813-876-8830

Parish Council:		
John Zelatis, President		813-727-2271
Euripides Panos, Vice President		813-352-3972
Marilyn Sandborn, Secretary		813-855-8678
Gary Ward, Treasurer		813-846-3898
Jim Armstrong		954-295-6665
Joanne Dalaklis		813-385-8205
Amin Hanhan		813-846-2957
Nick Katzaras		863-581-2430
Suzanne Pileggi		813-244-5855
Marcelle Triantafilou		612-396-5026
Mike Xenick		813-340-8737

12 Disciples	Mathew Balasis	727-421-7376
AHEPA:	Thomas Sakaris, President	201-819-2319
Altar Angels:	Kalliope Chagaris	813-789-4134
Bookstore:	Pres. Denise Stefero	678-464-4833
Choir:	Tara Swartzbaugh, Director	813-313-0439
	Ruth Losovitz, Organist	727-688-2782

College Ministry:	Vasili Panagopoulos	414-254-5134
Community Outreach:	Greg Melton	813-967-2074
Dance Groups:	H XAPA ΜΑΣ, Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668

	Bessie Palios,	813-523-0347
	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
	ΠΑΡΕΑ, Marina Choundas	813-877-6136
	ΠΑΝΗΓΥΡΙ, Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668

Daughters of Penelope:	Elena Ketchum	813-229-0144
Finance Committee:	Gary Ward	813-846-3898
Food Pantry	Sheila Vukmer	412-719-1005
GriefShare:	Donna Hambos	813-843-8412

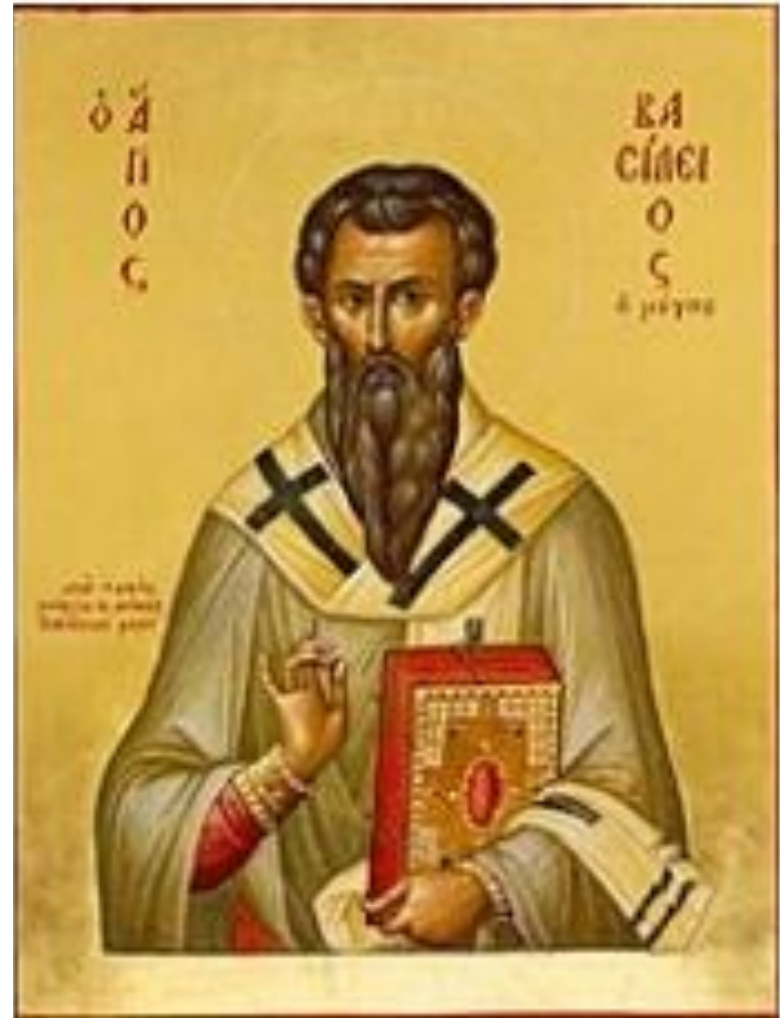
GOYA:	Michael & Bessie Palios	813-523-0346
Hope/Joy:	George & Zackie Ameres	813-245-3813
Joy Tweens	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
Men's Fellowship:	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-876-8830

MOMS:	Mary Ann Konstas	813-215-9862
Nursing Ministry:	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
Oratorical Festival:	Peggy Bradshaw	727-244-1374
Photography Ministry:	Karina Findlay	813-476-9632

Philoptochos:	Melissa Krinos	813-716-9975
Stewardship:	Chris Kyrus	757-672-1920
	George Mitseas	813-748-1220
Sunday School:	Vickie Peckham	813-758-3102

Ushers	Pete Trakas	813-505-2193
Veterans/1st Responders	Fr. John Stefero	813-876-8830
Welcoming Ministry:	Maria Xenick	813-765-3587
Young Adults	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-876-8830

Young at Heart:	Bill Manikas	813-716-8185
	Dora Morgan	813-613-3738
Youth Protection:	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855



St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

January 1, 2023

Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (Proistamenos)
Fr. Stratton Dorozenski (Retired Priest In Residence)
Fr. John Stefero (Retired Priest In Residence)

(Icon of Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesaria in Cappadocia
January 1)

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

SYNAXARION:
Circumcision of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ; Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia ; Emmelia, Mother of Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Makrina, and Peter of Sebaste

Resurrectional Apolytikion (Mode 4)
When the tidings of the Resurrection from the angel was proclaimed unto the women disciples, and our ancestral sentence also had been abolished, to the apostles, with boasting did they proclaim: that death is vanquished evermore and Christ our God is risen from the dead, granting to the world His great mercy.

Apolytikion of the Circumcision of Christ:
You took on human form without change in You, being God in essence, O Lord most compassionate. And You accepted circumcision in the flesh, in total fulfillment of the law, to put an end to the acts of darkness, and roll away the veil of our sufferings. Glory to Your goodness, O Lord, glory to Your tenderness, glory to Your inexpressible condescension O Word.

Apolytikion of St. Basil:
Your voice has gone out over all the earth, which was ready to accept your word; by which in a Godly manner you dogmatized, the nature of all that exists you clarified; the manners of people you purified. As royal priesthood that you are, Righteous Father Basil, intercede with Christ our God, that our souls may be saved.

Apolytikion of St. John
The memory of the just is observed with hymns of praise; for you O Forerunner the witness of the Lord is sufficient. You have proved to be truly more venerable than the prophets. Since you were granted to baptize in the river, the One Whom they proclaimed. Therefore, you strove for truth, proclaiming with joy the Good News, even to those in Hades: that God was manifested in the flesh, and takes away the sins of the world, and grants to us His great mercy.

Kontakion:
He Who is the Lord of All, humbly endures circumcision, and as good and merciful, circumcises the faults of all mortals; and He grants salvation to the world today, while Basil, the Creator’s Hierarch and light-bearer, and Christ's divine mystic, truly rejoices in the highest.

Welcome to all of our Visitors “Welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” Romans 15:7 We pray that your worship experience with us today will be inspirational and uplifting. Please introduce yourself to an usher or a member of the Welcoming Ministry and pick-up a “welcome packet” as you exit the church. We are happy that you are with us today!

Holy Communion is offered only to Orthodox Christians who are in good canonical standing with the church and who have prepared through prayer and fasting. Everyone is invited to receive the Antidoron (Blessed Bread) at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

Order for Holy Communion—With Sunday School back in session the order for Holy Communion will be as follows:

- Choir
- Altar boys
- Sunday school teachers (who will line up in middle aisle before Communion)
- Sunday school students (who will line up in the middle aisle before Communion behind the teachers)
- Then the rest of the congregation

Upcoming Services & Events		
Sunday, January 1	St. Basil the Great Orthros 8:30 a.m. Office Closed Jan 2	Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, January 4	Royal Hours 9:30 a.m.	
Thursday, January 5	Vespers 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m. GOYA get together with GOYA of St. Clair Shores; MI, 5:00 p.m.	Blessing of the Waters 10:15 a.m.
Friday, January 6	Epiphany Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m. in Tarpon Springs Great Vespers 6:30 p.m. in Tampa	
Saturday January 7	St. John the Baptist Orthros 9:00 a.m.	Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday January 8	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Vasilopita Sunday GOYA 5:00 p.m.	Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Monday January 9	Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	
Tuesday January 10	Women’s Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Meeting of Ministry Heads 6:30 p.m.	
Thursday January 12	Young Adult Discussion 6:30 p.m.	
Saturday January 14	Sunday School Teacher’s Seminar 9:00 a.m.	
Sunday January 15	Orthros 8:45 a.m. Parea Dance Practice	Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Monday January 16	Martin Luther King Jr. Day JOY Tweens Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	

WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

If you are new to the Tampa Bay area or just visiting, we would love to get to know you better.

PLEASE TEXT THE WORD

"WELCOME" TO 813-790-5950

FOLLOW THE PROMPTS TO GIVE US
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION AND FROM THERE
YOU WILL BE DIRECTED TO OUR ONLINE CONNECTION CARD

DO NOT NEGLECT TO SHOW *hospitality* TO STRANGERS.
FOR THEREBY SOME HAVE ENTERTAINED *angels unaware.*
HEBREWS 13:2

Education at St. John

Monday Night Bible Study	Women’s Bible Study	Adult Greek School
Leader: Fr. John	Leader: Fr. Stavros	Teacher: Magda Myer
Will continue on January 9	Will continue on January 10	January 5: Thursday 6:30 p.m.

MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

St. John's Bookstore

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Thanking you for your tremendous support of our parish bookstore and praying that God bless you with every good and perfect gift at Christmas and in the New Year. -Presvytera Denise and Elaina Stefero

Please welcome Kim Rojas!

We are pleased to welcome Kim Rojas, who as of December 21 is working at St. John as our Administrative Assistant. Please introduce yourself to Kim when you call in or stop in to the office. Her email address is kim@stjohntpa.org Please include Kim and Vasili on any notices and announcements for the weekly bulletin and *The Messenger*. We wish Kim a long and successful tenure with us and we warmly welcome her.

Great Vespers of St. John the Baptist- Friday, January 6

The Vespers Service is the service that begins the liturgical day. In our church, the day begins at sundown at 6:30 p.m. We will, of course, celebrate the complete cycle of services related to our feastday of St. John, which will begin with Great Vespers.

St. John the Baptist - Saturday, January 7

The day after a major feastday often commemorates the secondary figure of the Feast. On January 6, we celebrate the Baptism/Epiphany of Christ, who is obviously the major figure. The secondary figure of that feast is St. John the Baptist, whose feastday we commemorate the next day, January 7. St. John is the LAST of the Prophets before Christ and the first of the Saints, those who believed in Christ. Righteous figures who came before Christ are called either "Righteous" or "Prophet." Holy People who came after Christ are called Saints. St. John the Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist, as both titles.

Philoptochos Vasilopita- Sunday, January 8

We will again resume our tradition of Vasilopita Sunday for 2023. We will cut the Vasilopita for our various ministries at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 8. The Philoptochos will also be offering pieces of Vasilopita as part of coffee hour. Any proceeds from this day will be going to St. Basil's Academy in New York.

Meeting of Ministry Heads- Tuesday, January 10

On Tuesday, January 10, there will be a meeting of ministry heads from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Each ministry head is requested to attend and other members of each ministry are invited to attend. If the ministry head cannot attend, please ask someone else in your ministry to attend, so that all ministries are represented.

GOYA

Meeting with GOYAns from St. Claire Shores, Michigan—On January 5, our GOYA is going to meet up with a GOYA from Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in St. Claire Shores, Michigan, who are visiting the Tampa Bay area for Epiphany. We will meet from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center.

Our January GOYA Meeting will be Sunday, January 8, from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Dinner, as always, will be provided.

The S.S. St. John Needs All Hands On Deck!

Ahoy! Tampa's Gasparilla approacheth fast, and we need the Ye Holy Crewe of the SS St. John the Baptist to reconvene! We are looking for volunteers to help out on Saturday, January 28, to assist with parking. This endeavor has been a tremendous support to our parish in the past only made possible by you, our faithful crew!

We need your help once more!

If you are available to assist on Saturday, January 28, please e-mail or text Alex Limberatos as soon as you can (262-370-0586 / chaplainalexl@gmail.com).

Thanks for all your support, mateys!



Readings for the Sunday, January 1

Prokeimenon: My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart, understanding. The reading is from Paul's Letter to the Colossians. (Col. 2:8-12)

Brethren, see to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ; and you were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Luke (Lk. 2:20-21, 40-52)

At that time, the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. And at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, He was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. And the Child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon Him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up according to custom; and when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing Him to be in the company they went a day's journey, and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; and when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. After three days, they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. And when they saw Him they were astonished; and his mother said to Him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for You anxiously." And He said to them, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying which He spoke to them. And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man.

Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: George Joseph; Anna, Stavroula, George, Pam, and Liz; Christopher Labatos; Sylvia Michos; Eva Coppalla; Christopher; Christopher; Peter Nenos; Tony Ekonomou; Patrick Carroll; Ourania Tziotis, Irina, Marina, Yuri, and Christophoros; Ashley Snyder; Evangelos & Caroline Critkas; Constantinos & Kalotina Klimis; Christine Alex, June, Lillian Thomas; Scotty; Desi Serriera; Ashley Kladakis; Dora Kallas, Kathy & Andrew Bouzinekis; Anastasia; Virginia Georgiou, Toulia Tsaros, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Tony Ekonomou, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Tina Chakonas, Ann Demas, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Evangeline Xeroteris, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Antonia Caffentzis, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, Phyllis, John Zelatidis, Reagan, Peter Zaharis, Alexandra Ferrarolis, Leon & Despina Botham, Cindy Xenick, Mary Ellen Evdemon, Marie Sofia Panagopoulos, Maria Hursey, Chris Vamvakias, John Myer, Mike Trimis, Alice Stoccardo, John Alexander, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Ekaterina & Anna Shushaalykova, Dora Koudouna, Debbie Phelps, Mary Voykin, David Voykin, Denise Badrane, Don Payne, Vasili, Moriah, Andoni, and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & UPDATE

January 1

Happy New Year! No Sunday School

January 8

Vasilopita - St. Basil - Epiphany

Liturgical Notes

Sunday, January 1 - The Circumcision of Christ/St. Basil - New Year’s Day Three things are commemorated on the first day of each year. First, the circumcision of Christ, which occurred historically 8 days after His Nativity. He was circumcised according to the rites of the Jewish law and given the name Jesus. Secondly, we commemorate the feast of St. Basil the Great, one of the Great Hierarchs of our church. St. Basil authored one of the Divine Liturgies used in our church, which is celebrated on his feast-day. He also helped found monasticism. St. Basil was a friend to the poor, often baking bread with money in it and throwing it through the windows of widows and the poor. Hence the tradition of the Vasilopita, the bread with the coin baked inside, which we cut at the New Year. Finally, we are supposed to pray every day and commemorate all of life’s milestones with prayer. So, we open a new year, 2023, with prayer and the Divine Liturgy.

Wednesday, January 4 - Royal Hours of Theophany 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. Like Nativity and Pascha, there is a service of the Royal Hours which is celebrated in anticipation of Theophany. This service consists of prayers, Psalms, hymns and Gospel readings which both foretell and recount this Great Feast of the church year.

Thursday, January 5 - The Feast of Theophany The Feast of Theophany commemorates several things: First, and most well-known, it commemorates the Baptism of Christ. Christ was baptized in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist. Second, at the moment of His descent into the River, the Jordan River re-versed its course, and all of Creation changed its course with the presence of the Christ. Third, the Holy Trinity was made manifest for the first time in human history, as the Son of God was in the water, the Holy Spirit hovered over as a dove, and the voice of God was heard. The feast of the Theophany is the manifestation of God, as well as the Baptism of Christ. The name “Epiphany” refers to the enlightenment of the world. After the Divine Liturgy, there is a service called the Blessing of Waters during which water is blessed and sprinkled over the church and over the people as a way to renew and reconsecrate ourselves on this feast day. There is a beautiful and powerful prayer that is offered only on January 5 and 6, asking God to reconsecrate the world.

Friday, January 6 - Great Vespers of St. John the Baptist - 6:30 p.m. The Vespers Service is the service that begins the liturgical day. In our church, the day begins at sundown. Thus the feast of St. John the Bap-tist, celebrated on January 7, begins with the sunset of January 6. Properly celebrated, all feast-days should begin with the celebration of Great Vespers, including every Sunday which should begin with Great Vespers on Saturday evenings. Because this is not practical in most parishes, Great Vespers is celebrated in most par-ishes on a limited basis. We will, of course, celebrate the complete cycle of services related to our feastday of St. John, which will begin with Great Vespers.

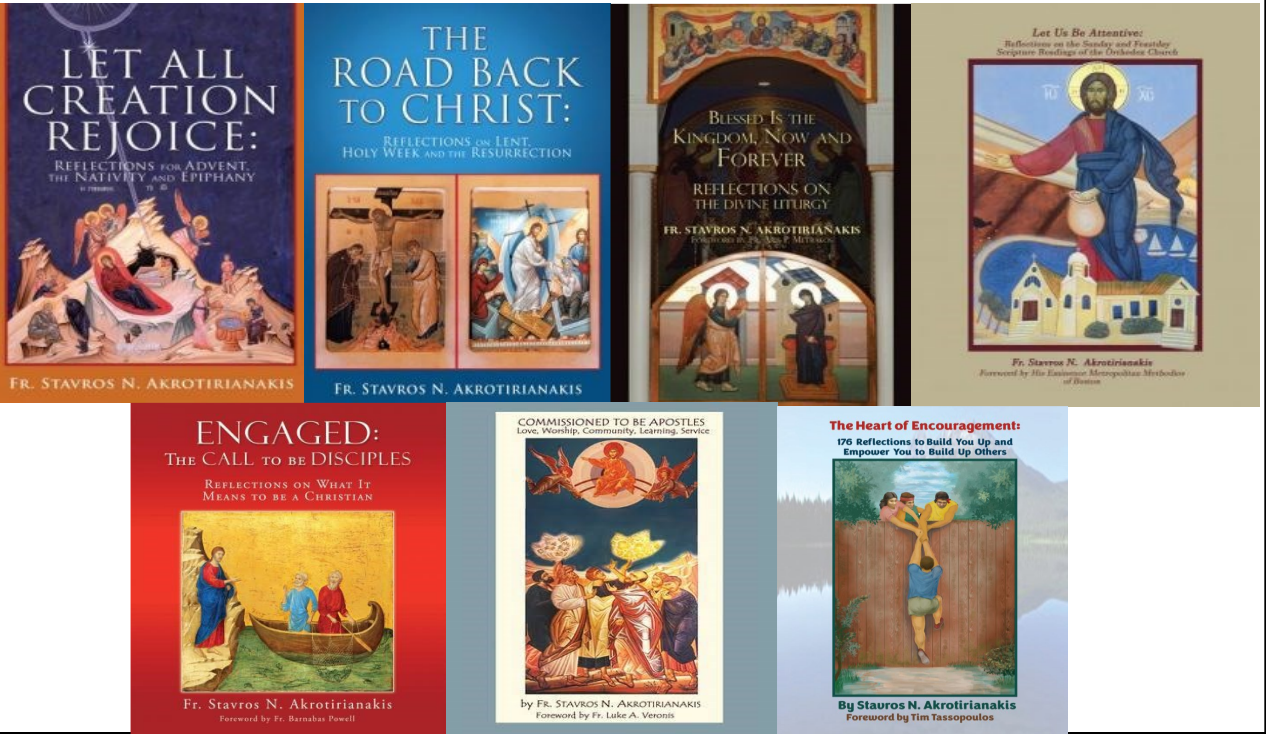
Fifty-Two Verses in Fifty-Two Weeks: The Bible Project
January 1-7

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to prof-it, who leads you in the way you should go.
Isaiah 48:17

As we begin a new year, we set goals, make resolutions and in some sense we begin anew. This verse reminds us that it is the Lord our God, who is supposed to be our guide, our life, our goal, our purpose. The only true “profit” in this life is the spiritual profit, because all other profit is temporary. We work for that which perishes. But the spiritual life is something which we can enjoy now which will not perish when life on earth ends. This week is a good time to ask yourself the question, “Who is the leader of my life?” And by extension, who is the leader of my family, my company, etc. It is the Lord, and only the Lord that leads us in the way we should go. No other leader, no other path can lead us to salvation. My spiritual father told me once that I should get in front of the altar as often as possible, to remind me who is in charge in my life. Every time we worship, we reaffirm our worship of the Lord and His placement at the head of our lives. Every time we go to confession, we recommit our lives to Him. So, start the new year off with some new habits, especially weekly worship, not only to remind you who is in charge, but to remind us of our purpose, our destiny and our roadmap to get there.

Father Stavros has authored SEVEN books that are available both in the bookstore and online. They are entitled:

- Let All Creation Rejoice: Reflections on Advent, the Nativity and Epiphany
- The Road Back to Christ: Reflections on Lent, Holy Week and the Resurrection
- Blessed is the Kingdom, Now and Forever: Reflections on the Divine Liturgy
- Let us Be Attentive: Reflections on the Sunday and Feastday Scripture Readings of the Orthodox Church
- Engaged: The Call To Be Disciples, Reflections on What it Means to be a Christian
- Commissioned to be Apostles: Love, Worship, Community, Learning, Service
- The Heart of Encouragement: 176 Reflections to Build You Up and Empower You to Build Up Others



Altar Boy Schedule

January 1

Anyone attending may serve

Captains

- John Palios
- Genaro Scarfogliero
- Nicholas Akrotirianakis
- Nicholas Carter
- James Magos
- Demetri Passalaris
- George Xenick
- Nicholas Magos
- PJ Zelatis

January 8

- Teddy Kafentaris
- Andrew Thatcher
- Kris Christopher
- Vasilios Panos
- Jonah Blankenbaker
- Lucas Elly
- Liam Elly