

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

September 05, 2021 - 11th Sunday of Matthew

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



(Above, Nativity of the Theotokos)

SYNAXARION: Holy Prophet Zacharias, Father of the Venerable Forerunner; Elizabeth, Mother of the Forerunner; Urban, Theodore, Medimnos the Hieromartyrs and the 77 Companions at Nicomeda;

Apolytikion of the Week (2 Mode): When You descended to the realm of death, You as Life immortal, rendered to Hades a mortal blow, through Your Divine Radiance. And when You, from the depths of Hades and the darkness below, did raise the dead all the powers of heaven did proclaim and cry out: O life-giving Christ and our God we give glory.

Apolytikion of St. Zacharias (4 Mode): As a priest according to the Law of God you offered up * whole-burnt offerings, and they were most acceptable to Him, * dressed in the vestments of the priesthood, O Zacharias. * And you became a light, and you beheld mysteries; * and clearly you displayed the signs and symbols of grace * within yourself. And you, were assassinated * by the sword in the Temple of God. * O all-wise Prophet of Christ the Savior,* join the Forerunner in praying that our souls 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.

Readings for 11th Sunday of Matthew

Epistle Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians 9:2-12

Brethren, you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink? Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law say the same? For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of a share in the crop. If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? If others share this rightful claim upon you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

Gospel Reading is from Matthew 18:23-35

The Lord said this parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord delivered him to the torturers, till he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Stewardship 2021 Update

As of Wednesday, September 1, we have received 352 stewardship forms, with a pledged amount of \$473,568.00 for 2021.

The Parish Assistance Program Continues (PAP)

Since May 1 2020, we have been offering a Parish Assistance Program, PAP, with BayCare Behavioral Health. The PAP program provides our parishioners access to free and confidential counseling services - offering additional support when life's challenges become overwhelming. The PAP utilizes a network of faith-based providers and are sensitive to the values and beliefs of those they serve and provide compassionate care to children, adults, parents, and seniors. Parishioners can contact BayCare to request up to three free and confidential counseling sessions from a licensed mental health professional. The BayCare helpline, 800-878-5470, is answered 24/7 by mental health professionals. Many BayCare therapists are also offering telephonic and virtual counseling sessions to help parishioners maintain their emotional wellbeing during these trying times.

Happy Birthday and Happy Nameday!

If you want to make sure we have your birthdate on file, please call the office.

Birthdays

James Harritos II
- Sep 5
Michael Halikoytakakis -
Sep 5
Larissa Krinos - Sep 6
Konstantos Orfanakis -
Sep 6
William Rindone -
Sep 6
Artemis Xenick - Sep 7
Mary Maas - Sep 8
Paulina Katsouli -
Sep 11
Nicolas Perry - Sep 11

Namedays

ZAHARIAS - SEPTEMBER 5
EVDOKIOS, VIVOS - SEPTEMBER 6
CASIANI, SOZON - SEPTEMBER 7
DESPOINA, GENETHLIOS, NERATZIA, SKIADENI, TSAMPIKA - SEPTEMBER 8
JOAHIM, KIARAN - SEPTEMBER 9
ERASTI, ERASTOS, KLIMENTINI, KLIMIS, MINODORA, MITRODORA, NYMFODORA, POULCHERIA - SEPTEMBER 10
EFROSYNOS, EVANTHIA, EVANTHIS, THEODORA, VIOLETA - SEPTEMBER 11

Upcoming Services & Events

Sunday, September 5	Zachariah & Elizabeth, Parents of St. John the Baptist Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Monday, September 6	Office Closed
Wednesday, September 8	Nativity of the Theotokos Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Paraklesis 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 11	20 Year Commemoration of 9/11 Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday, September 12	Sunday Before The Holy Cross Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m. GOYA 5:00 p.m.
Monday, September 13	Orthodoxy 101 6:30 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 5 – Sts. Zacharias and Elizabeth – These are the parents of St. John the Baptist, who received their child in old age, through a miracle of God. They were people of faith, who wished their whole lives to have a child and remained steadfast to God. They remain an important piece in the story of salvation.

Wednesday, September 8 - Nativity of the Virgin Mary Placed right after the beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year, this feastday commemorates the birth of the Virgin Mary to her parents, Joachim and Anna. It is one of the 12 Major Feast Days of the Church year.

Wednesday, September 8 – Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary We will offer the Paraklesis service once a month, to pray for all the members of our community, as well as any special prayer requests that you may have. We prayed this service every week for 15 months from March 2020-May 2021. While this service is most associated with the Dormition Fast in August, it can be done at any time of distress. And whether that distress is the pandemic or the usual stresses and anxieties of life, we will continue to offer this service once a month going forward.

Saturday, September 11 – Day of Remembrance—20 Year Anniversary of 9/11 This year marks 20 years since the terrorist attack on America on 9/11/01. Every year, we have paused to offer some service in remembrance of this day. Many years it is a Paraklesis service. This year, we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy, to call the Holy Spirit down upon not only the Holy Gifts but on all of us, in Tampa and throughout the United States. You are encouraged to pause and pray on 9/11.

Fifty-Two Verses in Fifty-Two Weeks: The Bible Project September 5 - 11

Lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are white for harvest. (John 4:35)

As we celebrate Labor Day this week, we remember an im-portant thing Jesus said about labor in John 4:35. Jesus was talking to His disciples in this passage after an encounter with a Samaritan Woman. She went out and proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, the first “evangelist.” The disciples looked at Jesus and were probably confused about what this all meant. The disciples asked Jesus if He was hungry. He told them “My food is to do the will of Him Who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.” (John 4:34) Metaphorically, He told them to look up and see that the fields were white for harvest. The prophets had sown the seeds that the Messiah was coming. People had been encouraged for generations and not lose hope. The Sa-maritan woman had been converted almost instantly. Jesus told them that there were many others who were ready to be “harvested” into following after Him. When a crop is harvest-ed successfully, both the one who sowed the crop and the one who did the reaping rejoice. Others (those who came before) had sown the crop. Not it was up to Jesus and the disciples to reap what had been sown. This cycle of sowing and reaping seeds for Christ continues to this day, and involves all of us. Someone had sown seeds in us, that is why we are reading this message. We are supposed to enter this cycle of planting seeds in others that someone else will reap after we are gone.

Do you have a heart for Service, Prayer, and Fellowship? Then you won’t want to miss this special day!

On Saturday December 4th, 2021, St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is teaming up with Christ the King Catholic Church for a day of Service, Prayer, and Fellowship.

The day will begin with **serving** at Metropolitan Ministries, assisting in preparing food and assembling food items in their warehouse. We are in need of at least 25 volunteers to serve alongside Christ The King's 25 volunteers.

Afterwards both of our communities will meet at Christ the King for **prayer** led by parish leaders and followed by **fellowship**, with a cookout sponsored by Christ the King!

This is a great opportunity to grow in communion with one another and demonstrate Christian service to those in need around our community. All are welcome!

A sign-up link for each of our parish communities will be coming in September!

**If you are interested in volunteering at this special day of Service, Prayer, and Fellowship,
please save the date and refer any questions to Greg Melton (813-967-2074 or gmelt12@gmail.com).**



Update and Announcements

St. John's Bookstore — Now available in our bookstore and recommended by Fr. Stavros. *Renewing You - A Priest, A Psychologist, And a Plan* by Rev. Dr. Nicholas G. Louh and Roxanne K. Louh. Fr. Stavros comments: *"The human body is composed of mind, body and spirit. The spirit is tied more closely to the mind because our faith is a rational faith. This book intertwines spirituality and psychology in a way that will benefit marriages and relationships in general, as well as our overall sense of ourselves, our strengths, our weakness, our triumphs and our challenges. Fr. Nick Louh is a classmate and friend, and he, along with his Presbyteria Roxanne are passionate about their faith and their marriage. In this book, they eagerly and honestly examine both in ways that are beneficial for all of us."*

Women's Bible Study will begin again on Tuesdays, September 21 @ 10:00 a.m.

Monday Night Bible Study Fr. John will lead a study focused on "The Beatitudes" (Matthew 5:1-16) beginning Monday evening, Sept 13th at 6:30 pm. The 1st session will focus on how and why Jesus gave us these beautiful verses, how they relate to the rest of the Sermon on the Mount, and why they are called the Beatitudes. A handout in a question-and-answer format will be provided to each participant as the study unfolds. Join us in person or on zoom!

Tuesday Night Book Study will resume in October. James Harritos will be leading the Tuesday Night Book Study. More information forthcoming, stay tuned!

Welcome James Harritos - We welcome James to our community as the second Pastoral Assistant here at St. John! James has served with us previously in 2019 as a counselor at St. Stephen's Camp. James has a B.A. in Communication with a focus in Advertising & Public Relations. James has recently graduated from Holy Cross with a Master of Theological Studies and is excited to be joining our community! Be sure to give James a warm welcome when you see him!

Blessing of Ministry Heads — On Sunday September 12 we will pray for all of our Ministry Heads here at St. John. We ask that all Ministry Heads make sure to attend Divine Liturgy on September 12 so Fr. Stavros may bless you on the solea during Liturgy!

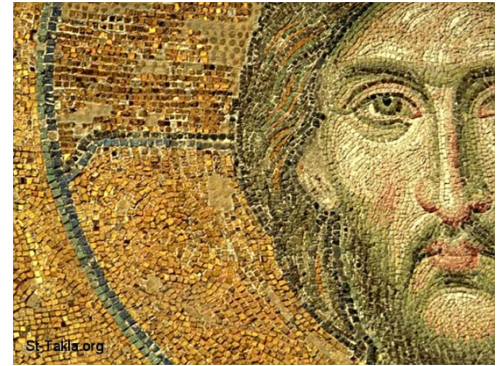
Looking For Volunteers for Welcome Ministry - We are looking for greeters and callers for the Welcome Ministry! Please contact the office if you are interested in helping out!

Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Ashley Snyder; Nick, Helen, George, & Elina; Evangelos & Caroline Critkas; Constantinos & Kalotina Klimis; Christine Alex, June, Lillian Thomas; Scotty; Desi Serriera; Ashley Kladakis; Dora Kallas, Kathy & Andrew Bouzinekis; Anastasia; Amanda, Andrew, Colton, Miranda, Charlotte Elizabeth, Nuha, Nabeel, Michael, Amal, John, Elaine, Olga, Virginia Georgiou, Ron Myer, Toula Tsaros, Fr. Pat Legato, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Tony Ekonomou, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Tina Chakonas, Ann Demas, Alex Martinez, Adriana Martinez, Aaron Martinez, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Evangeline Xeroteris, Nichole Ross, Daniel Ross, Daniella Ross, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Antonia Caffentzis, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, Matthew & Family, Phyllis, John Zelatis, Reagan, Peter Zaharis, Alexandra Ferrarolis, Leon & Despina Botham, Cindy Xenick, Mary Ellen Evdemon, Marie Sofia Panagopoulos, Maria Hursey, Chris Vamvakias, John Myer, Mike Trimis, Robert and Alice Stoccardo, John Alexander, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Anastasia Smyrnakis, Ekaterina & Anna Shushaalykova, Dora Koudouna, Ana Mourer, Debbie Phelps, Mary Voykin, David Voykin, Anne Sakellaris, Denise Badrane, Sia Blankenship, Don Payne, Zhana Temelkova, Stanislava Terzieva, James, Jude and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & UPDATE	
Sunday, September 5	Sunday, September 12
Topic: NO SUNDAY SCHOOL	Topic: The Lord's Prayer
11th Sunday of Matthew	CLASS PICTURE DAY

Orthodoxy 101 Class will Begin in September

Fr. Stavros offers this class two times per year, in the spring and in the fall. This will be 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 four sessions will be done as follows:

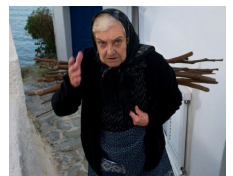
Monday, September 13 A Tour of the Orthodox Church: What we see in the Church and what it means

Monday, September 20 Orthodox Spirituality—Introduction to the Sacraments

Monday, September 27 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, October 4 Orthodox Traditions—fasting, icons, prayer, and separating Theology from “yiayialogy.” Classes will be held on these three 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, so he has enough materials for everyone. There is no charge for this class.



St. John Greek Orthodox Church Adult Greek School

Want to Learn Modern Greek?



Teacher born, raised, and educated in Greece with 22 years of experience teaching the Greek language. Adult classes for beginners taught @ St. John Greek Orthodox Church (2418 W. Swann Ave, Tampa, FL 33609). Classes are held at 6-8:30pm on Thursday evenings, starting on September 30, 2021. This will be the first of three sessions, with each session lasting three months.

- Speak Greek
- Read Greek
- Write Greek
- Basic Grammar & more.
- Some Greek History
- BOOK INCLUDED IN PRICE

Price per session is \$100 for church members and \$125 for non-members

Contact Ms. Magdalini Myer: at (813) 523-5771, aspis69@aol.com or the church office at (813) 876-8830