

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

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
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 Euripides Panos, Vice President 813-352-3972
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 Alexis Scarfogliero 813-892-1599
 Marcelle Triantafilou 612-396-5026
 Mike Xenick 813-340-8737

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Altar Angels: Kalliope Chagaris 813-789-4134
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Bookstore: Pres. Denise Stefero 678-464-4833
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College Ministry: Vasili Panagopoulos 414-254-5134
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 Maraquet Edquid 813-422-8963
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 Genie Carter 813-363-2362
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Daughters of Penelope: Elena Ketchum 813-229-0144
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Food Pantry Sheila Vukmer 412-719-1005
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
Nursing Ministry: Marcelle Triantafilou 612-396-5026
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Philoptochos: Melissa Krinos 813-716-9975
Stewardship: Chris Kyrus 757-672-1920
 George Mitseas 813-748-1220
 Vickie Peckham 813-758-3102

Sunday School: Pete Trakas 813-505-2193
Ushers Fr. John Stefero 813-876-8830
Veterans/1st Responders Maria Xenick 813-765-3587
Welcoming Ministry: Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-876-8830
Women's Bible Study: Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-876-8830
Young Adults Bill Manikas 813-716-8185
Young at Heart: Dora Morgan 813-613-3738
Youth Protection: Suzanne Pileggi 813-244-5855



April 16, 2023

Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (Proistamenos)
Fr. Stratton Dorozenski (Retired Priest In Residence)
Fr. John Stefero (Retired Priest In Residence)
GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA

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:
Great and Holy Pascha; Agape, Chionia, and Irene, the Holy Martyrs ; Righteous Amphilochios of Patmos

Entrance Hymn:
Bless God in the congregations, the Lord from the fountains of Israel. Save us o Son of God, who rose from the dead; to Thee we sing: Alleluia.

Apolytikion:
Christ is risen from the dead. By death, trampling down upon death and to those in the tombs, He has granted life .

Hypakoe Mode 4:
They, who were the Miriam came before dawn, and finding the stone rolled away from the Tomb heard from the Angel: *“Why do you seek as man among the dead, Him, Who dwells in Light Eternal? Behold the shroud of the grave; make haste and proclaim to the world, that the Lord is risen, putting to death, Death; for He is the Son of God , the Saviour of mankind.”*

Kontakion:
Even though You descended into the grave You destroyed the Power of Hades and You rose as a Victor, O Christ our God, saying to the myrrh bearing women: Rejoice! And to Your Apostles granting peace and to the fallen, You also grant Resurrection.

Trisagion Hymn:
People: All those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia.
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen. Have put on Christ. Alleluia
Priest: Dynamis.
People: All those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia.

Megalinarion:
The angel cried to her who is full of grace: Rejoice Holy Virgin and again I say rejoice, for your Son has risen from the tomb on the third day.
Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has arisen over you. Dance now for joy O Zion and exult. Rejoice and be glad O pure Theotokos at the Resurrection of your Child.

Communion Hymn: (Psalm 118:26)
Receive the Body of Christ and partake ye of Him. He is an Immortal Fountain. Alleluia.



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:

1. Choir
2. Altar boys
3. Then the rest of the congregation

Upcoming Services & Events

Sunday April 16	PASCHA The Service of the Resurrection of Christ-Midnight Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom 12:30 a.m. Following Liturgy, all are invited to a reception in the Kourmolis Center AGAPE Vespers 11:00 a.m.-noon Easter Egg Hunt for Children NOON
Monday April 17	Bible Study 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday April 18	Women’s Bible Study 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday April 19	NO Choir Practice
Thursday April 20	Adult Greek School
Friday April 21	Life-Giving Fountain of the Virgin Mary (Zodochos Peghe) Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Sunday April 23	Thomas Sunday St. George the Great Martyr Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Monday April 24	Women’s Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Parish Council Meeting 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday April 25	St. Mark the Evangelist Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, April 26	Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice

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* UNAWARES.
HEBREWS 13:2

Religious Education at St. John

<u>Monday Night Bible Study</u>	<u>Women’s Bible Study</u>
Leader: Fr. John	Leader: Fr. Stavros
April 17: Monday at 6:30 p.m.	April 18 : Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

Community Outreach

With Greek Easter falling on the third weekend of April this year, our Outreach will not serve on April 15, allowing our volunteers to worship and enjoy Easter services.

We will instead serve on the fifth Saturday of April: April 29, 2023 from 8:00AM - 10:00AM @ Tampa Hope.

Located at 3704 E. 3rd Avenue Tampa 33605

Please sign up via the Sign Up Genius barcode!

St John is responsible for 6 volunteers to serve every third Saturday of every month.



Parea Dancers

Our Parea Dance Group (GOYAns) will be having a monthly practice one Sunday each month after the Divine Liturgy. Our April practice will be on Sunday, April 30.

Men's Group



Our men's group will meet on Sunday, April 30, from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Any men of our community are welcome to join us for dinner, discussion. Please bring \$20—we will order in for dinner. Please mark down our dates for men's group for this academic year—Sunday, April 30 and Sunday, May 21.

JOY TWEENS

On April 30, after the Divine Liturgy, JOY Tweens will have their last meeting with Father Stavros for the 2022-2023 school year. We will start the meeting in the church at 12:30pm.

More details to follow in the JOY Tweens April Constant Contact.

SAVE THE DATE! On Friday, May 5, 2023, JOY Tweens will celebrate the end of the school year with dinner and a movie!



GIFT CARD DONATIONS FOR THE

FOOD PANTRY

GIFT CARDS IN ANY AMOUNT FOR PUBLIX, WALMART OR SAVE-A-LOT ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED!

FEEL FREE TO DROP THEM OFF TO OUR OFFICE ADMIN. ASSISTANT MONDAY - FRIDAY 8AM- 5PM OR MAIL THEM IN. THANK YOU!

CHURCH DONATIONS & STEWARDSHIP CHECKS

There has been an increase of missing information on checks & donations.

We kindly ask to verify the following before submitting payment.

THANK YOU

1) IS THE NAME YOU USE TO PLEDGE / DONATE BEFORE, THE SAME AS WHAT IS WRITTEN ON YOUR CHECK?
IF NOT PLEASE WRITE IT ON THE CHECK

2) ON YOUR CHECK, ON THE **FOR/MEMO LINE**, PLEASE MAKE SURE TO STATE IF THE CHECK IS FOR STEWARSHIP, CHRISTMAS, EASTER OR ANY OTHER DONATION.

3) IF POSSIBLE, PLEASE DON'T POST DATE CHECKS

4) WHEN MAKING A PAYMENT VIA **SUBSPASH**, PLEASE MAKE SURE TO SELECT THE **CORRECT YEAR** WHEN MAKING A STEWARSHIP DONATION.
IF MAKING A DIFFERENT TYPE OF PAYMENT/ DONATION, PLEASE WRITE IT IN THE MEMO BOX.

Readings for Sunday, April 16

Prokeimenon: This is the day which the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Psalm 117.24,29

The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 1:1-8

In the first book, O Theophilos, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commandment through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" He said to them, "it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

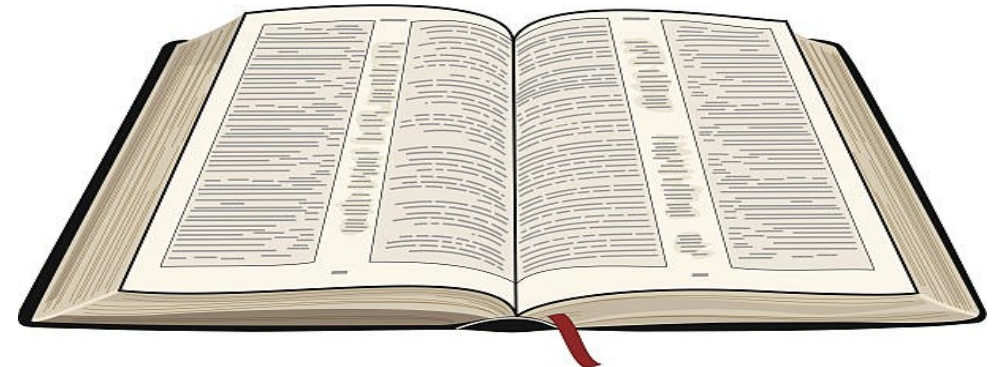
The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to John 1:1-17

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.



Liturgical Notes

A Note on Kneeling and Sitting -

It is the tradition of the church that we kneel or stand for the majority of the services. However, by dispensation, we now have pews in the church and the faithful are allowed to sit at certain points in the services. Because of the long lines for Communion and because the length of the services, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO SIT as you need to during Holy Week, especially during Holy Communion. Also, for those with bad knees, just sit with your head bowed during times we are kneeling, do not attempt to kneel. Our church never seeks our physical hurt in worship, nor do we want people passing out or becoming sick, which will only make us nervous and anxious.

Pascha versus Easter

In every language except English and German, the feast of the Resurrection is identified with a word whose root is “Pasch.” For instance, in Spanish, the word is “Pasqual.” “Pascha” comes from the Hebrew for “Passover.” The first Passover occurred in the Old Testament book of Exodus. The last of the 10 plagues on the Egyptians was the death of the first born son. The Hebrews were told to slaughter an unblemished lamb outside the city wall on a Friday, to not break any of its bones, and to spread it’s blood over their doorways. Those who had the blood of the lamb on their homes would be spared. The angel of death then came to the Egyptians and killed the first-born son in each home. Passover was a holiday celebrating the deliverance of the Hebrews from the bondage of Pharoah and his taskmasters. The Crucifixion occurred at the Passover—the Lamb of God was killed outside the city wall on a Friday, none of His bones were broken, and by His blood we are set free from the bondage of sin and death. “Easter” comes from the word “Oestre” and was actually a Pagan holiday each spring. That’s why in the Orthodox Church, and in our personal lives, we try to use the word “Pascha” to describe the feast of the Resurrection, rather than Easter.

The Pentecostarion - The 50 Days After Pascha

The period of 50 days between Pascha & Pentecost is referred to as the “Pentecostarion.” The period of forty days between Pascha Sunday and the day of the Ascension is known as the period of Pascha (or Easter). It is a period set aside by the Church for the specific celebration of Christ’s glorious resurrection. It is a celebration of “rebirth”. . . .The rebirth of God’s creation which surrounds us, and the rebirth of the spirit within each and every one of us! This period is not merely a ritualistic celebration but a celebration which can be seen, felt, heard and talked about. It is a very REAL celebration which CAN make our entire being jump with JOY. It is a celebration which offers us HOPE. It is a celebration which offers us the TRUE FREEDOM found only in Jesus Christ! During the 40 days of Pascha, we are to greet each other with the greeting “Christ is Risen” or “Χριστὸς Ανέστη!,” to which the response is “Truly He is Risen” or “Ἀληθῶς Ανέστη!”

No Kneeling until Pentecost

It is actually the Tradition in the Orthodox Church that we not kneel on Sundays in honor of the Resurrection of Christ. Because we do not worship on a daily basis in our church communities, priests have encouraged people to kneel on Sundays, the thought being that if we do not kneel on Sundays, that we’ll never kneel in church. It is a Tradition, that for 50 days after Pascha, we do not kneel in honor of the Resurrection. Continued... The next time we will kneel after April 15 is on the Feast of Pentecost (June 5) at the Vespers of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, when the priest says “Again and again on bended knees let us pray to the Lord.” Fast Free the week after Pascha - Having kept a fast for almost 8 weeks, including the week before Lent, Lent and Holy Week, the church gives us a “week off” from fasting the week after Pascha. During Bright Week, or Renewal Week, as that week is called each day is like a Sunday. Hence, there is no fasting during this celebratory week. Who, then, may receive Communion? Whoever wishes to, providing that they abstain from food the morning they are receiving. So, the Sunday after Pascha, everyone in the congregation may receive. There is no fasting on Wednesday or Friday of renewal week, or any other day of that week either.

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Friday, April 21 - Feast of the Life-Giving Fountain

Friday after Pascha Commemorates the consecration of a Chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary, which was built over a spring in Constantinople, that emits water with healing powers. Hundreds of miracles and healings have occurred at this spring. This feast day of “Zoōdōchos Peghe - Ζωοδόχος Πηγή” the Feast of the Life-Giving Fountain, is always celebrated on the Friday of Bright (Renewal) week, the week after Pascha, April 21, this year.


Sunday, April 23 - Sunday of St. Thomas

The Church brings to our mind the unbelief of Thomas followed by his belief after seeing the scars of Christ.

Sunday, April 23 – St. George

St. George the “Trophy Bearer” is one of the most famous saints of our church. He lived in the third century. He was a soldier, famously memorialized in icons as slaying a dragon. Symbolically, he “slayed” the “dragons” that opposed Christianity and was martyred for his faith. His relics were placed in the altar of our church when it was consecrated in 1986. St. George’s feast day is celebrated on the Monday after Pascha when Pascha falls on April 23 or later (when Pascha falls earlier than April 23, we celebrate his feastday on April 23). Thus, this year, we will celebrate his feastday on Sunday, April 23.

Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Jim Armstrong, Calliope Herman; Delaney & Alexis Johnson; Ron & Linda Ledet; Helen & Mike Mitchell; Marcelle T., Joanna & Yenay R., Carlos R., Elena, Ricky& Michael Gordenina, Tina Chakonas, Felix R., Ivco; ; 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; Christine Alex, June, Lillian Thomas; Scotty; Desi Serriera; Ashley Kladakis; Dora Kallas, Kathy & Andrew Bouzinekis; Anastasia; Virginia Georgiou, Toulas Tsaros, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Gar-rison, Ann Demas, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Evangeline Xeroteris, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, 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, Alice Stoccardo, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Ekaterina & Anna S. Dora K., Debbie P., Mary V., David V., Don Payne, Vasili, Moriah, Andoni, and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.



Everyone is invited to a FREE Paschal Dinner in the Kourmolis center after Divine Liturgy!

As we celebrate the wonder of Pascha may the love of Christ fill our hearts and overflow into our world!



**Fifty- Two Verses
-In-
Fifty- Two Weeks**

April 16-22

Listen to me in silence, O coastlands; let the peoples renew their strength; let them approach, then let them speak; let us together draw near for judgment. Isaiah 41:1

The week after Pascha is called Bright Week or Renewal Week. It’s call Bright Week because of the bright colors and the joyful mood that has replaced the Lenten sadness. It’s called Renewal Week because it is a time for us to re-new our joy at being followers of Christ. Having had Great Lent to focus on discipline (fasting), repentance (confession), and recommitment (the services of Holy Week), it is a good opportunity to rejoice in the progress made while renewing our commitment to keep the new habits we’ve accumulated along the way.