

**Parish Priest:**  
**Retired Priest in Residence:**  
**Retired Priest in Residence:**  
**Bookkeeper:**

Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-394-1038  
Rev. Fr. Stratton Dorozenski 813-876-8830  
Rev. Fr. John Stefero 678-637-4425  
Debbie Bowe 813-876-8830

**Parish Council:**

John Zelatis, President 813-727-2271  
Euripides Panos, Vice President 813-352-3972  
Marilyn Sandborn, Secretary 813-760-6289  
Gary Ward, Treasurer 813-846-3898  
Jim Armstrong 954-295-6665  
Amin Hanhan 813-846-2957  
Nick Katzaras 863-581-2430  
Suzanne Pileggi 813-244-5855  
Alexis Scarfogliero 813-892-1599  
Marcelle Triantafilou 612-396-5026  
Mike Xenick 813-340-8737

**12 Disciples**

**AHEPA:**

**Altar Angels:**

**Bible Study:**

**Bookstore:**

**Choir:**

Mathew Balas 727-421-7376  
Thomas Sakaris, President 201-819-2319  
Kalliope Chagaris 813-789-4134  
Fr. John Stefero 678-637-4425  
Pres. Denise Stefero 678-464-4833  
Tara Swartzbaugh, Director 813-313-0439  
Ruth Losoviz, Organist 727-688-2782  
Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-394-1038  
Greg Melton 813-967-2074

**College Ministry:**

**Community Outreach:**

**Dance Groups:**

H XAPA MΑΣ, Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668  
Maraquet Edquid 813-422-8963  
ΠΑΡΕΑ, Marina Choundas 813-877-6136  
Genie Carter 813-363-2362  
ΠΑΝΗΓΥΡΙ, Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668  
Elena Ketchum 813-229-0144  
Gary Ward 813-846-3898  
Sandra Pappas 813-785-3747  
Michael & Bessie Palios 813-523-0346  
George & Zackie Ameres 813-245-3813  
Maraquet Edquid 813-422-8963  
Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-394-1038  
Marcelle Triantafilou 612-396-5026  
Karina Findlay 813-476-9632  
Katherine Sakkis 813-309-1073  
Chris Kyrus 757-672-1920  
George Mitseas 813-748-1220  
Vickie Peckham 813-758-3102  
Pete Trakas 813-505-2193  
Fr. John Stefero 678-637-4425  
Maria Xenick 813-765-3587  
Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis 813-876-8830  
Aris Rogers 813-309-5525  
Dora Morgan 813-613-3738  
Suzanne Pileggi 813-244-5855

**Daughters of Penelope:**

**Finance Committee:**

**Food Pantry:**

**GOYA:**

**Hope/Joy:**

**Joy Tweens**

**Men's Fellowship:**

**Nursing Ministry:**

**Photography Ministry:**

**Philoptochos:**

**Stewardship:**

**Sunday School:**

**Ushers**

**Veterans/1st Responders**

**Welcoming Ministry:**

**Women's Bible Study:**

**Young Adults**

**Young at Heart:**

**Youth Protection:**



## St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church



**November 19, 2023**

**Icon of Obadiah the Prophet**

**Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (Proistamenos)**

**Fr. Stratton Dorozenski (Retired Priest In Residence)**

**Fr. John Stefero (Retired Priest In Residence)**

**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:**

9th Sunday of Luke; Obadiah the Prophet; Martyr Barlaam of Caesarea; Martyr Heliodorus

**Resurrectional Apolytikion:**

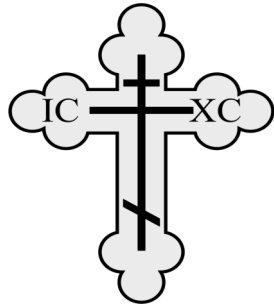
Lord by Your sacred cross You abolished death, and granted to the thief blessed paradise. The myrrh-bearers ceased lamenting and turned to joy; the apostles did preach the good news at Your command that You are risen from the dead, O Christ our God, bestowing Your mercy upon the world evermore.

**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:**

The very purest abode of the Savior, and the most priceless bridal chamber and Virgin, the most sacred treasure of the glory of God, today is led inside of the house of the Lord, bringing in the grace with her of the Holy Spirit. It is for her God's angels sing in praise: she is truly the heavenly tabernacle.



**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 in session the order for Holy Communion will be as follows:

1. Choir
2. Altar boys
3. Sunday school teachers (who will line up in middle aisle before Communion)
4. Sunday school students (who will line up in the middle aisle before Communion behind the teachers)
5. Then the rest of the congregation ( side areas then the main section)

**Memorial:**

John Myer (40 Days); Steve Oster (1 year); Kyriakos; Ioannis; Sultana

## Upcoming Services & Events

**Sunday November 19**

**Orthros 8:45 a.m.**

JOY Tweens  
Bags of Love Collection  
Philoptochos Meeting  
Men's Group 5:00 p.m.

**Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.**

**Tuesday November 21**

**Entrance of the Virgin Mary**

**Orthros 8:45 a.m.**  
Choir Practice

**Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.**

**Wednesday November 22**

**Thanksgiving Liturgy**

**Orthros 5:00 p.m.**  
**His Grace Bishop Emilianos of Meloa, Officiating**

**Divine Liturgy 6:00 p.m.**

**Thursday November 23**

**Thanksgiving Day**  
**Office Closed**

**Friday November 24**

**Office Closed**

**Saturday November 25**

**St. Katherine**  
**Orthros 9:00 a.m.**

**Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.**

**Sunday November 26**

**Orthros 8:45 a.m.**  
No Sunday School  
GOYA Christmas Card

**Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.**

**Monday November 27**

**Bible Study 6:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday November 28**

**Women's Bible Study 10:00 a.m.**

**Wednesday November 29**

**Choir Practice**

### **Religious Education at** **St. John**

**Monday Night**  
**Bible Study**

Leader:  
Fr. John

November 27 :  
**Monday at**  
6:30 p.m.

**Women's**  
**Bible Study**

Leader:  
Fr. Stavros

November 28 :  
**Tuesday at**  
10:00 a.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



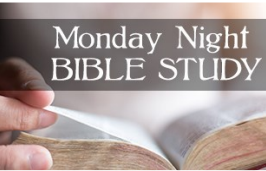
# MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

## St. John's Bookstore

"O Give thanks to the Lord for His mercy endures forever" Ps:118. Visiting family and friends this Thanksgiving? Remember them with a gift that expresses the gratitude we share in the many blessings God showers on us each day. Visit the bookstore today to see our special display.

### Monday night Bible study with Fr. John

Will continue meeting at 6:30 p.m. on most Monday evenings. Join us in person or via zoom for some very informative, lively and interactive discussions on how we apply Biblical principles in our everyday lives. See the Sunday bulletin for specific topics. For November, the dates are Monday, November 27.



## JOY Tweens

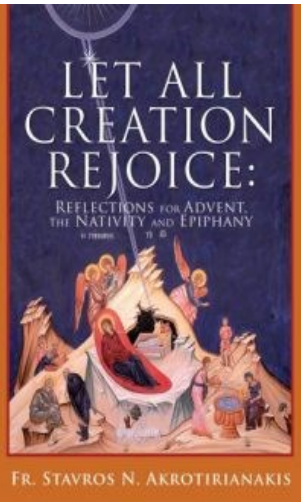


Will meet today following the Divine Liturgy at 12:30pm. All 4th-6th Graders are welcome! We will meet at the picnic tables by the playground at 12:30pm. We'll have lunch first, then we'll meet with Fr. Stavros for some fun activities and a short discussion. Parents, you're welcome, too!

### Sign-Up for Text Updates!

To get updates and other messages for JOY Tweens, text @783gc6 to 81010 on your mobile phone.

As we approach the season of Advent, I wanted to share with you a book I have written called, Let All Creation Rejoice: Reflections for Advent, the Nativity and Epiphany. The book is approximately 230 pages long. It contains a reflection to be read daily during the period of the Nativity Fast (November 15) through January 7. From November 15 through December 24, one verse of the Gospel accounts of the Nativity is examined in detail each day. It is practical inspiration written to be understood by the average Greek Orthodox Christian.  
+Fr. Stavros



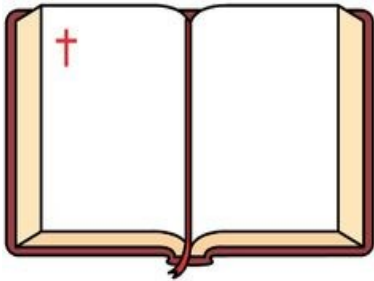
Although this book is written in an easy to read style - the concepts and application are very thought provoking! My husband and I have been reading it at meal time, as our Advent meditation. Each day's readings help me turn my mind to what's really going on and important this time of year - helping me refocus, and reflect on the events surrounding the Nativity, and what they mean for me! To-day's reading, for example, reflected on the angel telling the shepherds, "Don't be afraid," and following reflections on fear in my own life. Excellent book, and now that I am enjoying this one so much, I will be ordering the Lenten reflections, too.  
-Amazon Customer

## Readings for Sunday, November 19

**Prokeimenon: The Lord will give strength to his people. Psalm 28.11,1**

### The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:14-22

Brethren, Christ is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.



### The reading is from The Gospel According to Luke 12:16-21

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said these things, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

## COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

**NOVEMBER 19TH**  
Philoptochos (for Presbyteras)

**NOVEMBER 26TH**  
CHOIR

# Guide us to Thy Perfect Light!



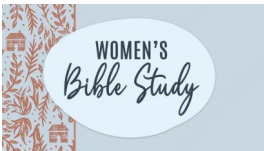
We are once again thrilled to offer a very special gift bag to you to engage, encourage, and invite you to participate this year. We have put together these bags to keep our community united and focused on Christ and the celebration of His upcoming birth. The Nativity Fast, a 40-day period of preparation for Feast of Christmas, started on November 15th. It is a time of reflection, renewal, and spiritual growth.

If you didn't already receive a bag, there will still be some available **today** after the Divine Liturgy to pick up. Please see our greeters in the breezeway to get your bag. If you are unable to get your bags today, you may come and pick one up in the office.

However, you choose to spend the Nativity Fast, whether you join us in person or online, we pray this gift will inspire you and your family to experience a path to Guide us to Thy Perfect Light!

## Women's Bible Study

Our Tuesday morning women's Bible Study began in September. We meet on most Tuesdays from 10:00-11:30 a.m. either in person or on zoom. For November, the dates are Tuesday, November 28.



## Men's Group

Our men's group will meet **TODAY**, November 19, from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Any men of our community are welcome to join us for dinner, discussion. We meet at 5:00 p.m., walk to a local restaurant and get some food, then bring it back to the hall where we eat and have a discussion. Our Topic for November will be Thankfulness & Generosity. Please mark down our dates for men's group for this academic year—Sunday, November 19; Sunday, December 17; Sunday, January 28; Sunday, March 3; and Sunday, April 14.



**Save the Date—Men's Retreat—Saturday, February 10—Men's Retreat for Orthodox Men of the Tampa Bay Area.**

## Altar Boy Schedule

**November 19th**  
Teddy Kafentaris  
Andreas Stefanou  
Kris Christopher  
Vasilios Panos  
Jonah Blankenbaker  
Theodore Edquid

**Captains**  
Demetri Passalaris  
Nicholas Akrotirianakis  
Nicholas Magos  
Nicholas Carter  
George Xenick  
PJ Zelatis

**November 26th**  
Christos Nenos  
Constantine Ameres  
Zachary George  
Louis Mantzanas  
Gianni Matassini  
Nathan Moran  
Michael Meadows

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & TOPICS

November 19th  
Charity/ Thanksgiving  
YOUTH SUNDAY

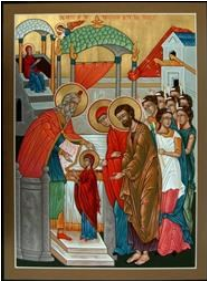


November 26th  
No Class/ Thanksgiving Break

**If you do not receive our weekly Sunday School Constant Contact every Friday afternoon, please e-mail Vickie Peckham to let her know. Her e-mail address is [vickiepeckham@gmail.com](mailto:vickiepeckham@gmail.com)**

## Liturgical Notes

**Tuesday, November 21 - Entrance of the Virgin Mary into the Temple**  
The Entrance of the Virgin Mary (Ta Eisodia) Commemorates when the Virgin Mary entered into the Temple at age two to begin a life of service to God, in preparation for the awesome role she would play in the history of humanity as the Theotokos. This is one of the 12 Major Feastdays of the Orthodox Liturgical Year.



**Wednesday, November 22 - Evening Liturgy for Thanksgiving**  
In Greek the word for Thanksgiving is "Eucharistia," so the Holy Eucharist is the "Holy Thanksgiving." As we celebrate Thanksgiving with turkey and the Dallas Cowboys on Thursday, set aside Wednesday to receive the Holy Thanksgiving. As is our custom at St. John, we will celebrate Divine Liturgy for Thanksgiving on Wednesday, November 22 at 6:00 p.m. *A special blessing this year. We will have His Grace Bishop Emilianos of Meloa, visiting for this Liturgy— His Grace serves in Australia.*

**Saturday, November 25 - St. Katherine the Great Martyr**  
St. Katherine was born in Alexandria, Egypt in the third century. She was very wise and eloquent, successfully arguing for Christianity in the face of tyrannical rulers and philosophers. She was martyred in the year 305 and her relics were taken by Angels to Mount Sinai where they were discovered many years later. St. Katherine has the title "Pansophou" the "All-Wise."



Community News

Philoptochos Meeting Today!

Join us to discuss some important upcoming events 12:30-1:30 pm in the Zaharias Room.



Bags of Love

The Ladies of Philoptochos will have Bags of Love available for distribution today. These bags are filled with items needed by the homeless. Pick up a bag today to give to the next person you see in need. All are welcome to participate!



Love to take photos? Come join our Photo Ministry!

It's a fun and creative way to serve and to show the community all the beautiful services and wonderful activities we have here at St. John.


All abilities are welcome. Please call or text Karina Findlay at (813) 476-9632.



Veterans/1st Responders Ministry: Will sponsor the following event!

Collection for the US Marines' program "Toys for Tots." Please deposit brand new toys in the original packaging in the three boxes in the church hall. These will be distributed to needy families in our local area.

Thanks, Fr. John

Young at Heart	Adult Greek School
<div></div> <p>Young at Heart is excited to be participating in a program to aid needy seniors called "Be a Santa to a Senior" sponsored through Home Instead.</p> <p>Requested gifts will be purchased and gifted to those seniors who are normally alone and without presents during the Christmas Season. Getting involved in our community is an important aspect of any ministry. Come join us!</p>	<p>Will restart on Thursdays at 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. You all will do the "Registration" for the 1st Session and pay only for the "Half of the Session", because you missed half of it (6 lessons): \$75 for the parishioners and \$87 for non Parishioners. Write the check on my name: Magdalini Myer and the memo line: for Adult Greek School. Call me at my cell phone: (813) 523-5771 or email aspis69@aol.com, if you have any questions. The classroom will be on the 2nd floor of the Bridge Prep Academy School Building, Room 205.</p>

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our Community Outreach ministry has secured dates with Metropolitan Ministries to volunteer to help with the annual Holiday Tent for the needy.

Metropolitan Ministries Holiday Tent 2023  
2609 N Rome Ave, Tampa, FL 33607



St John the Baptist GOC is requesting 12 amazing volunteers for both the Thanksgiving and the Christmas events.

Below are the dates, times and sign up website for St John the Baptist GOC. It is imperative that each St John volunteer pre-registers for this opportunity as any unfilled slots are released 2 weeks prior to our scheduled dates.

Thanksgiving Holiday: Tuesday November 21— 2:00 to 5:30 PM  
Christmas Holiday: Thursday December 21— 2:00 to 6:00 PM

Sign-up Link: <https://metromin.volunteerhub.com/vv2/lp/stjohnngreekorthodox/>

**Prayer List:** Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Melissa Romero, Sandra Reyes, Miltiadis, Larry Maas; Konstantinos Triantafyllopoulos; Kostadinos Booras; Michael I, Anna Maria & Thomas Reilly; 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; Eva Coppalla; Christopher; Christopher; Peter Nenos; 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, Toulia Tsaros, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Ann Demas, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Evangelina 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, 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, and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.





**St Johns Pageant Rehearsal and Youth**

*Christmas Party*

Saturday | **16** | Kourmolis  
December | Hall

10:30 am: Speaking Parts Rehearsal

11:15 am: All Participants Rehearsal

12pm: Lunch

12:30 pm: Boxes of Hope Service Project, Crafts & Party

RSVP to Zackie Ameres at 813.245.3813



**Hope & Joy Fall Food Drive**

**Sun, Nov 12<sup>th</sup>- Sun, Dec 16<sup>th</sup>.**

"HOPE starts with a MEAL. HOPE starts with YOU!"

Metropolitan Ministries' Holiday Tent helps 50,000+ families in need for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Let's help them meet this years goal of 1,763,000 pounds of food.

Please join St. John's Hope & Joy children's ministry in providing a meal to families in need through Metropolitan Ministries. Make this your family project and help us put together Boxes of Hope filled with the items needed for a Christmas holiday dinner. There are many ways you can help provide a Box of Hope:

- Shop for any of the items below and bring to church **Sun, Nov 12<sup>th</sup>- Sun, Dec 16<sup>th</sup>.**
- Donate \$25 or more (cash/ check/ gift card) for a Box of Hope-
- Checks payable to Metropolitan Ministries

**BOX OF HOPE contains:**

<b>Gift certificate for a turkey or ham</b>	<b>2 cans of black beans</b>
<b>1 box of cereal (hot or cold)</b>	<b>2 cans of cranberry sauce</b>
<b>2 cans of fruit</b>	<b>1 bag of dried beans</b>
<b>1 jar of peanut butter</b>	<b>1 box or bag of rice</b>
<b>2 cans of vegetables</b>	<b>1 can or packet of gravy</b>
<b>2 cans of yams</b>	<b>1 box dessert mix</b>
<b>1 bag or box of stuffing</b>	<b>1 package cookies or pastries</b>
<b>1 box of potatoes</b>	<b>1 family box of Jell-O/Pudding</b>

Only non-perishable food donations please. **Call Zackie Ameres at 813-245-3813 or email at [zackiec@yahoo.com](mailto:zackiec@yahoo.com) with any questions.** Thank you!

*"He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will reward him for what he has done." Proverbs 19:17*

