

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: Alex Limberatos 262-370-0586
Bookkeeper: Debbie Bowe 813-876-8830

Parish Council:
 Jim Armstrong, President 954-295-6665
 Euripides Panos, Vice President 813-352-3972
 John Zelatis, Secretary 813-727-2271
 Gary Ward, Treasurer 813-846-3898
 George Chagaris 727-420-1920
 Joanne Dalaklis 781-888-3329
 Amin Hanhan 813-846-2957
 Nick Kazaras 863-581-2430
 Jimmy Konstas 813-220-7352
 Marilyn Sandborn 813-855-8678
 Mike Xenick 813-340-8737

12 Disciples Mathew Balasis 727-421-7376
AHEPA: Thomas Sakaris, President 201-819-2319
Altar Angels: Engie Halkias 813-932-5859
 Kalliope Chagaris 813-789-4134
Bookstore: Pres. Denise Stefero 678-464-4833
Choir: Pauline Spencer, Director 813-390-1782
 Ruth Losovitz, Organist 727-688-2782
Community Outreach: Greg Melton 813-967-2074
Dance Groups: H XAPA MΑΣ, 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: Diane Trimis 813-220-3389
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
Men's Fellowship: Fr. Stavros N. 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
 Vickie Peckham 813-758-3102
 Pete Trakas 813-505-2193
Sunday School: Maria Xenick 813-765-3587
Ushers Alex Limberatos 262-370-0586
Welcoming Ministry: Mike Trimis, President 813-784-4872
Young Adults Mary Nenos, Vice President 813-935-2096
Young at Heart: Suzanne Pileggi 813-244-5855
Youth Protection:



St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

December 19, 2021 - Sunday Before Nativity

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

(Nativity Above)

MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

St. John's Bookstore Christmas Shop — This is the final Sunday our Bookstore will feature a special Christmas shop where you can find inspiring and unique items for your Christmas celebration. Included are Icons of the Nativity of our Lord, Christmas cards, Icon Ornaments, and many other Christmas gifts you just won't find in the shopping malls.



College Student Night - We will be having our annual College Student Night on Tuesday, December 21, beginning at 6:00 p.m. We will have dinner and discussion. All college students are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please RSVP to Fr. Stavros by December 15 if you plan to attend.



My Word, 2022 - For the past two years, we've encouraged parishioners to identify one word that will shape their year. With 2022 now a month away, it's time to start thinking of the word that will define you in 2022. It is also time to start thinking of a word that will define our parish for 2022. If you have an idea for a word for our parish for 2022, please send it to Fr. Stavros at frstav@gmail.com. Towards the end of December, he will send out a request for individual words to define you for 2022.



Orthodoxy 101 to be held in January 2022 – The next installment of Orthodoxy 101 will begin in January. More information to follow.



Hiring Helping Hands - We are looking to pay a parishioner on Saturdays & Sundays \$80 for weekend set-up and break down of tables, chairs, and sweeping. If you're interested in this opportunity, please reach out to Fr. Stavros, Alex, or the church office.



Gasparilla Parking Volunteers Needed - After 15 years, John Kokkas is retiring from chairing our Gasparilla Parking fundraiser. For those who do not know, we sell parking spaces in our parking lots for the two Saturdays of the Gasparilla parades—January 22 (children's) and January 29 (adults). John will be there to assist whoever the new chairperson is this year. If you are interested in chairing the Gasparilla Parking fundraiser, please see Fr. Stavros.



GriefShare Starting Back Up 2022 - If you are struggling with a loss in your life, GriefShare is open to you to be vulnerable with this hurt. GriefShare is a Christian-based bereavement program open to those inside and outside our community. GriefShare groups meet weekly and has three distinct elements: Video seminar with experts, support group discussion with focus and personal study and reflection. This thirteen session program will begin on January 13 and weekly will be held from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. on Thursdays. If you are interested or have any questions about GriefShare, please contact Donna Hambos at 813-843-8412 or the church office.



Readings for Sunday Before Christmas

Epistle Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40

Prokeimenon: Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers. Verse: For you are just in all you have done.

BRETHREN, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Gospel Reading is from Matthew 1:1-25

The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Mary & Peter Nenos; Tony Ekonomou; Keith Lynn & Patrick Carroll; Daniel Hoss, 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, Ron Myer, Toulia Tsaros, Fr. Pat Legato, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, 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, 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, Debbie Phelps, Mary Voykin, David Voykin, Denise Badrane, Don Payne, and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & UPDATE

December 19

Topic: Nativity

January 2

No Sunday School Classes (New Year)

December 26

No Sunday School Classes (Christmas)

January 9

Sunday School Resumes
Topic: Epiphany/St. John

Education at St. John

As a friendly reminder...

Fr. Stavros and Fr. John's Bible Studies & Adult Greek School will not meet this week.
We invite you to come to our daily services this week instead!

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.

Youth Protection Program reminder!

At this time, many of our Youth Workers' background checks are coming up for renewal, which is done every two years. On or about your two-year mark, Praesidium will automatically send an email to you from backgroundcheck@praesidiuminc.com when a new background check is needed. Please be on the lookout for these emails, as the link for a background check expires after two weeks. Also, the Youth Protection Program administrator will notify you via email when it's time to renew your online training by completing the 2-part/2-quiz Youth Safety module and the 1-part/1-quiz Youth Worker Regulations module. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Suzanne Pileggi at smpileggi@gmail.com or (813) 244-5855.

Altar Boy Schedule

December 19

(Anyone Attending May Serve)



Captains

John Palios
Genaro Scarfogliero
Nicholas Akrotirianakis
Yanni Trimikliniotis
James Magos
Demetri Passalaris

December 24

(Anyone Attending May Serve)



Happy Birthday and Happy Nameday!

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

Birthdays

December 19	George Soteriou	AGLAIA, ARIS
December 20		IGNATIOS
December 21		JULIA, THEMISTOKLIS
December 22	Kyra Frey; John Tsibris;	ANASTASIA, NATASA, ZOILOS
December 23		NIFON
December 24	Gregory Dimas; MaryEllen Evdemon;	AHMET, EVGENIA
December 25	Sophia Ladis; Lacey Richardson;	BALTASAR, BETHLEHEM, CHRISTINA , CHRISTOS, CHRYSTALLA, EMMANOUELA, EMMANUEL, GAS-PAR, HRISAVGI, HRISOULA, HRYSA, MELHIOR

Namedays



O Holy Night

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night Divine.



Philoptochos Christmas Bake Sale

Philoptochos will be hosting a bake sale after church on Sunday December 5-26th

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

48 piece appetizer tray of Spanakopita
or Tyropita \$30.00
2lb spanakopita pan \$20.00
Baklava small tray \$16.00
Vasilopita \$10.00

A Day of Prayer—Liturgy, Prayer, Candlelight Service

Last year, we opened our church for a quiet day of prayer a few days before the Nativity and this was well-received. So, we decided that we will take an entire day for quiet prayer, with two services as the bookends. On Monday, December 20, we will celebrate Divine Liturgy at 7:30 a.m. (with Orthros at 6:45 a.m.). We never offer Divine Liturgy this early in the morning, and it will be a wonderful way to begin the day, to see the sunrise in the church. After Liturgy, we will have the church open all day for quiet prayer, and if you want a prayer to be offered, Fr. Stavros and Alex will be available to offer prayers. If you haven't been to church in a while and would like to stop in during the Christmas week, or if life is moving too fast and you just want to slow down for a few hours and come sit in the church, this day is for you.