



St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

September 19, 2021 - Sunday After the Holy Cross

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:

Sunday after Holy Cross; Trophimus, Sabbatius, and Dorymedon the Martyrs; Plato the new Heiromartyr of Patmos; Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury

APOLYTIKION FOR THE HOLY CROSS

Save O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Give victory to those who battle evil and protect us all by Your Holy Cross.

KONTAKION FOR THE HOLY CROSS

You were lifted on the Cross voluntarily, on Your new community that bears Your Name, do You bestow Your mercies O Christ our God; gladden in Your mighty strength, our faithful leaders, granting to them victories, against all their enemies, and may Your help in battle be for them: a weapon of peace, and banner invincible.

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.

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 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. Sunday School teachers (lined up in the middle aisle before Communion)
4. Sunday School students (lined up in the middle aisle before Communion behind the teachers)
5. The rest of the congregation

Readings for the Day

Epistle Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Gospel Reading is from Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

Liturgical Notes

Thursday, September 23 – Conception of St. John the Baptist

This is one of several feasts related to St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of our parish. This feast commemorates the miraculous announce-ment to Zacharias and Elizabeth that they would conceive in old age and have a son who would be the Forerunner of our Lord, the last of the prophets and the first of the saints.

Prayer List: *Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Ashley Snyder; 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, Toulou 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 Eodemon, Marie Sofia Panagopoulos, Maria Hursey, Chris Vavvakias, 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 Shushalykova, 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.*

UPCOMING SERVICES & EVENTS

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Sunday, Sep. 19 | Sunday After Holy Cross Orthros: 8:45am Divine Liturgy: 10:00am <i>Altar Boy Captains & St. John - Christos Nenos, Constantine Ameres, Zachary George, Alex Findlay, Gianni Mattasini, Grayson & Gryphon Borgeas-Beech, Nathan Moran</i> Men's Group: 5:00pm | |
| Monday, Sep. 20 | Bible Study (w/ Fr. John): 6:30pm | Orthodoxy 101: 6:30pm |
| Tuesday, Sep. 21 | Women's Bible Study 10:00am | |
| Thursday, Sep. 23 | Conception of St. John the Baptist Orthros: 9:00am Divine Liturgy: 10:00am | |
| Saturday, Sep. 25 | Youth Worker Retreat 8:30am - 2:00pm | |
| Sunday, Sep. 26 | The Falling Asleep of St. John the Evangelist and Theologian Orthros: 8:45am Divine Liturgy: 10:00am <i>Altar Boy Captains & St. Matthew: George Xenick, Nicholas Magos, Michael Galin, Leo Seng-souvanna, Kenny & Philip Kane, James Betza</i> | |
| Monday, Sep. 27 | Orthodoxy 101 - Teaching Liturgy 6:30pm - 8:30pm | |
| Tuesday, Sep 28 | Women's Bible Study 10:00am | |



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & UPDATE

Sunday, September 19
 Topic: Sign of the Cross
Procession of the Cross
No Sunday School for HS students

Sunday, October 3
 Topic: The Bible

Sunday, October 17
 Topic: The Ten Commandments

Sunday, September 26
 Topic: The Creed

Sunday, October 10
 Topic: The Church Building & Sacred Vessels

Sunday, October 24
 Topic: Liturgy / Holy Communion

BIBLE STUDIES RETURNING

Men's Group - The Men's Group will meet today, Sunday, September 19 at 5pm. We will walk to a nearby restaurant and have dinner, coming back to the church afterwards for discussion, concluding by 7:30pm. All men of the community are welcome to participate.

Monday Night Bible Study: We're off to a great start! Thanks to everyone for their enthusiastic participation! This Monday we will discuss the 1st of the Beatitudes (*"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven"*) and how to apply these words in our everyday lives. We meet in person on Monday evenings - 6:30 pm in the parish hall. If you prefer to join us on Zoom please email/call the Office so you can be added to our Zoom List. See you Monday evening!

Orthodoxy 101 has begun! Fr. Stavros offers this class two times per year, in the spring and in the fall. This class is 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.

The remaining three sessions will be from 6:30 - 8:30pm and held in the CHURCH Sanctuary:

Mon., Sep. 20 Orthodox Spirituality: Introduction to the Sacraments

Mon., Sep. 27 The Divine Liturgy (A "teaching" Liturgy from the solea)

If you have already taken the class, or if you wish to only attend THIS session, please feel free to do so.

Mon., Oct. 4 Orthodox Traditions: Fasting, Icons, Prayer, and Separating Theology from "Yiayiaology"

Please sign up with Fr. Stavros at frstav@gmail.com, so he has enough materials for everyone.

There is no charge for this class.

Orthodoxy 201 (The Deep Dive) You've experienced Orthodoxy 101, now there's an opportunity to experience more treasures of our rich faith! Orthodoxy 201 will be offered by our Pastoral Assistant, Alex Limberatos, following the completion of Orthodoxy 101. All are encouraged to continue on into Orthodoxy 201, even if you've taken Orthodoxy 101 in years past, as new topics will be covered.

October 11: Iconography, the Cross, and Symbols

October 25: Prayer & Ritual

October 18: Metaphysics, Angels, Demons, and Saints

November 8: The Human Person (Mind, Body, Spirit)

If you are interested in taking this class, please email Alex Limberatos directly at alex@stjohntpa.org

Book Group: This October, our new pastoral assistant James Harritos will be leading a book group on *The Mountain of Silence: A Search for Orthodox Spirituality* by Kyriacos Markides, in which an acclaimed expert in Christian mysticism travels to a monastery high in the Mountains of Cyprus and offers a fascinating look at the Greek Orthodox approach to spirituality. Join us weekly for a guided group reading! Starting Tuesday October 26 at 6:30pm.

Men's Group

w/ Fr. Stavros
Sunday, Sep. 19 - 5pm

Monday Night Bible Study

w/ Fr. John Stefero
Mondays 6:30pm

Orthodoxy 101

w/ Fr. Stavros
Mondays 6:30pm

Women's Group

w/ Fr. Stavros
Tuesdays 10am, starting Sep 21

Book Group

w/ James Harritos II
Tuesdays 6:30pm, starting Oct 26

Orthodoxy 201

w/ Alex Limberatos
Tuesdays 6:30pm, starting Oct 11

MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

Youth Worker Training - Saturday, September 25 from 8:30am - 2:00pm

Every year, Fr. Stavros offers a youth worker training seminar for the Tampa Bay area. This is for GOYA advisors, JOY/HOPE Advisors, Sunday school teachers, older GOYAns (grades 10-12) and anyone who wants to learn how to work with you — how to lead an icebreaker or a discussion. There is no charge for this event. We need at least 12 people to make this event happen. The deadline to sign up is Tuesday, September 21. Please email Fr. Stavros at frstav@gmail.com if you are interested. Lunch will be provided.

St. John's Bookstore: Do you have questions about specific aspects of the Orthodox faith? Available in our bookstore, *The Orthodox Church: 455 Questions and Answers* by Fr. Stanley S. Harakas. In a matter of seconds you'll be able to find answers to the questions most often asked about the Orthodox Church, its faith, and its life. Simply written and indexed for easy reference. Stop in to our bookstore today.

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

On Saturday, December 4, 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!

To sign up, visit the following link: <https://metromin.volunteerhub.com/lp/stjohngreekorthodox/>

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)

The Parish Assistance Program (PAP) Continues

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 who 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.

Stewardship 2021 Update

As of Wednesday, September 18, we have received 352 stewardship forms, with a pledged amount of \$471,918 for 2021.

Happy Birthday and Happy Nameday!

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

| | Birthdays | Namedays |
|--------|--|--|
| SEP 19 | | Savatios |
| SEP 20 | George Fellios, Elizabeth Kavouklis, Aidan Tsongranis | Efstathios, Theopisti |
| SEP 21 | Robert Mason, Evelyn Patsavos | Jonas |
| SEP 22 | Sophia Stonestreet, Kelly Westmoreland | Loizos, Louise, Phokas, Zografia |
| SEP 23 | Luke Depasquale | Iris, Polixeni, Rais, Xanthipos, Xanthippi |
| SEP 24 | Janet Georgas, Deborah Papaeconomou | Kopros, Mirsini, Mirto, Persefoni, Persis, Thekla |
| SEP 25 | | Efrosini |

*Χρόνια
πολλά!*

Fifty-Two Verses in Fifty-Two Weeks: The Bible Project September 19 - September 25

For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life (soul)?

For what can a man give in return for his life (soul)?

Mark 8:36-37

The word “soul” appears in parenthesis because the use of the word “life” is a mistranslation from the original Greek. The word translated as “life” is the Greek word “psihi” which means “soul.” So, properly translated, this verse says “What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? What can a man give in return for his soul?” When we think of the worst things that can happen to us in life, we think of financial ruin, or perhaps premature death. The worst thing that can happen in life is to die with a soul that does not know God. Because it is the soul that continues on for eternal life. It either goes to God for eternal joy or it goes to Hades for ever-lasting sorrow. All the “things” we have in life, whether it is possessions or even the years of life, amount to nothing if the soul is not prepared to meet God. It doesn’t matter how long we live or how much wealth we have amassed if we have to forfeit our souls because we didn’t prepare them. As we work for the earthly things, we have to remember to work for the heavenly things as well.



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| 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 Assistants: | Alex Limberatos | 262-370-0586 |
| | James D. Harritos II | 401-527-8203 |
| Bookkeeper: | Debbie Bowe | 813-876-8830 |
| Parish Council: | Jim Armstrong, <i>President</i> | 954-295-6665 |
| | Euripides Panos, <i>Vice President</i> | 813-352-3972 |
| | John Zelatis, <i>Secretary</i> | 813-727-2271 |
| | Gary Ward, <i>Treasurer</i> | 813-846-3898 |
| | George Chagaris | 727-420-1920 |
| | Amin Hanhan | 813-846-2957 |
| | Nick Katzaras | 863-581-2430 |
| | Jimmy Konstas | 813-220-7352 |
| | Marilyn Sandborn | 813-855-8678 |
| | Mike Xenick | 813-340-8737 |
| 12 Disciples: | Matthew Balasis | 727-421-7376 |
| AHEPA: | Thomas Sakaris, <i>President</i> | 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, <i>Director</i> | 813-390-1782 |
| | Ruth Losovitz, <i>Organist</i> | 727-688-2782 |
| Community Outreach: | Greg Melton | 813-967-2074 |
| Dance Groups: | <u>H XAPA MAΣ</u> : Alexandra De Maio, | 813-340-9668 |
| | Bessie Palios, | 813-523-0347 |
| | Maraquet Edquid | 813-422-8963 |
| | <u>ΠΑΡΕΑ</u> : Marina Choundas | 813-877-6136 |
| | <u>ΠΑΝΗΓΥΡΙ</u> : 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: | Jeanie Nenos | 813-451-9116 |
| Stewardship: | Chris Kyrus | 757-672-1920 |
| | George Mitseas | 813-748-1220 |
| Sunday School: | Vickie Peckham | 813-758-3102 |
| Welcoming Ministry: | Maria Xenick | 813-765-3587 |
| Young Adults: | Alex Limberatos | 262-370-0586 |
| Young at Heart: | Mike Trimis, <i>President</i> | 813-784-4872 |
| | Mary Nenos, <i>Vice President</i> | 813-935-2096 |
| Youth Protection: | Suzanne Pileggi | 813-244-5855 |