

**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 Katzaras 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 26, 2021 - Sunday After Nativity**

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

**(Nativity Above)**

**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:**

Afterfeast of the Nativity; Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos; Euthemios the Confessor, Bishop of Sardis; Holy New Hieromartyr Constantine of Russia; Constantius the Holy Martyr; Barlaam the Righteous of Valaam;

**Second Antiphon:** Save us o Son of God, Who of a Virgin was born, to Thee we sing: Alleluia. (Three times)  
So-son i-mas I-e The-ou, o ek Par-the-nou tek-this, Psa-lon-tas Si: Alliluia. (Three times)

**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 for the Nativity (4 Mode):** Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has caused the light of knowledge to rise upon the world. For therein the worshippers of the stars were, by a star, instructed to worship You, the very Sun of Righteousness, and to know You as Orient from on high. Glory to You, O Lord.

**Apolytikion for the Ancestors of God (2 Mode):** Annunciate the miracles to David the ancestor of God, O Joseph. You saw the Virgin pregnant. You glorified with the shepherds. You worshipped with the Magi. And you were warned by an Angel. Entreat Christ God to save our souls.

**Apolytikion for 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 (3 Mode):** The Virgin gives birth today to Him Who is above all-being and the earth offers a cave to Him Whom no man can approach. Angels, with the shepherds, Glorify Him. Magi, with a star make their journey. For unto us is born today as a newborn Child, the Pre-Eternal God.

**Instead of Trisagion:** You who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ, Alleluia.

**Megalinarion (1 Mode):** Easier for us is from fear to love silence, \* free of any peril as it is, O Virgin; \* where-as to weave stirring hymns out of longing \* in earnest, is difficult. Therefore, O Mother, \* give us strength to match our volition, we pray you.

**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. 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

**Upcoming Services & Events**

<b>Sunday, December 26</b>	<b>Orthros 8:45 a.m.</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.</b>
Monday, December 27	Office Closed	
<b>Thursday, December 30</b>	<b>St. Anysia Orthros 9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Saturday, January 1</b>	<b>St. Basil Orthros 9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Sunday, January 2</b>	<b>Orthros 8:45 a.m.</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Tuesday, January 4</b>	<b>Royal Hours</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>
<b>Wednesday, January 5</b>	<b>Eve of Theophany Vesperal Liturgy</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Thursday, January 6</b>	<b>Great Vespers for St. John the Baptist (His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios will preside)</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>Friday, January 7</b>	<b>St. John the Baptist Orthros 8:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.</b> <b>(His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros will preside)</b>

**Fifty-Two Verses in Fifty-Two Weeks: The Bible Project  
December 26 - January 1**

*Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.  
Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.  
John 14:27*

The peace of Christ is a peace that can come in the midst of conflict. Jesus said these words just hours before His crucifix-ion. He was about to leave His disciples, both because of the crucifixion, and then weeks later, for the Ascension. He told them He wanted them to have peace. The world was not going to give them peace. In fact, their desire to spread the message of the Gospel would lead most of them to martyrdom. So, He was warning them that even though the world might not offer them peace, they would have His peace. And because of this, He didn’t want their hearts to be troubled and afraid, but rather assured that He would bring them peace in the midst of conflict.

**Education at St. John**

As a friendly reminder...  
**Fr. Stavros and Fr. John’s Bible Studies & Adult Greek School will not meet this week.**  
Have a Happy New Year!



## MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

**St. John's Bookstore Christmas Shop** — Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Thanking you for supporting our St. John's Bookstore ministry and praying God will guide, protect and bless you in the New Year!



**2022 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](mailto:frstav@gmail.com). Towards the end of December, he will send out a request for individual words to define you for 2022.

**Philoptochos Vasilopita Sunday January 9** — We will again resume our tradition of Vasilopita Sunday for 2022. We will cut the Vasilopita for our various ministries at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 9. The Philoptochos will also be offering pieces of Vasilopita as part of coffee hour. Any proceeds from this day will be going to St. Basil's Academy in New York.



**GOYA - GOYA Meeting** for January will be Sunday, January 9, from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Dinner, as always, will be provided.

**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 After Christmas

**Epistle Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11-19**

**Prokeimenon:** God is wonderful among his saints. Verse: Bless God in the congregations.

BRETHREN, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

**Gospel Reading is from Matthew 2:13-23**

When the wise men departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaos reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

**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 Zelatits, 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 26

No Sunday School Classes (Christmas)

January 2

No Sunday School Classes (New Year)

January 9

Sunday School Resumes  
Topic: Epiphany/St. John

Saturday, January 15th:

Sunday School Teacher Retreat 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Liturgical Notes

**Thursday, December 30 - St. Anysia** St. Anysia was martyred in Thessaloniki in the year 304. Her relics are interred in the altar table of our church.

**Saturday, January 1 - The Circumcision of Christ/St. Basil - New Year’s Day** Three things are commemorated on the first day of each year. First, the circumcision of Christ, which occurred historically 8 days after His Nativity. He was circumcised according to the rites of the Jewish law and given the name Jesus. Secondly, we commemorate the feast of St. Basil the Great, one of the Great Hierarchs of our church. St. Basil authored one of the Divine Liturgies used in our church, which is celebrated on his feastday. He also helped found monasticism. St. Basil was a friend to the poor, often baking bread with money in it and throwing it through the windows of widows and the poor. Hence the tradition of the Vasilopita, the bread with the coin baked inside, which we cut at the New Year. Finally, we are supposed to pray every day and commemorate all of life’s milestones with prayer. So, we open a new year, 2022, with prayer and the Divine Liturgy.

**Tuesday, January 4 - Royal Hours of Theophany 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.** Like Nativity and Pascha, there is a service of the Royal Hours which is celebrated in anticipation of Theophany. This service consists of prayers, Psalms, hymns and Gospel readings which both foretell and recount this Great Feast of the church year.

**Wednesday, January 5 - The Feast of Theophany** The Feast of Theophany commemorates several things: First, and most well-known, it commemorates the Baptism of Christ. Christ was baptized in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist. Second, at the moment of His descent into the River, the Jordan River reversed its course, and all of Creation changed its course with the presence of the Christ. Third, the Holy Trinity was made manifest for the first time in human history, as the Son of God was in the water, the Holy Spirit hovered over as a dove, and the voice of God was heard. The feast of the Theophany is the manifestation of God, as well as the Baptism of Christ. The name “Epiphany” refers to the enlightenment of the world. After the Divine Liturgy, there is a service called the Blessing of Waters during which water is blessed and sprinkled over the church and over the people as a way to renew and reconsecrate ourselves on this feastday. There is a beautiful and powerful prayer that is offered only on January 5 and 6, asking God to reconsecrate the world.

**Thursday, January 6 - Great Vespers of St. John the Baptist - 6:30 p.m.** The Vespers Service is the service that begins the liturgical day. In our church, the day begins at sundown. Thus the feast of St. John the Baptist, celebrated on January 7, begins with the sunset of January 6. Properly celebrated, all feastdays should begin with the celebration of Great Vespers, including every Sunday which should begin with Great Vespers on Saturday evenings. Because this is not practical in most parishes, Great Vespers is celebrated in most parishes on a limited basis. We will, of course, celebrate the complete cycle of services related to our feastday of St. John, which will begin with Great Vespers.

**Friday, January 7 - St. John the Baptist** The day after a major feastday often commemorates the secondary figure of the Feast. On January 6, we celebrate the Baptism/Epiphany of Christ, who is obviously the major figure. The secondary figure of that feast is St. John the Baptist, whose feastday we commemorate the next day, January 7. St. John is the LAST of the Prophets before Christ and the first of the Saints, those who believed in Christ. Righteous figures who came before Christ are called either “Righteous” or “Prophet.” Holy People who came after Christ are called Saints. St. John the Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist, as both titles.

Altar Boy Schedule

December 26

(Anyone Attending May Serve)



Captains

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

January 2

(Anyone Attending May Serve)



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Happy Birthday and Happy Nameday!

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

Birthdays

Namedays

December 26	Kenny Henderson	CONSTANTIOS, JOSEF, PANAGIOTIS
December 27	Charlotte Sigety	MAVRIKIOS, STEPHANOS
December 28	Melanie Axelrod, Philip Kane	DOMNA, MYGDONIOS, THEOFILI
December 29		BENJAMIN
December 30	Constantine Ameres	ANISIOS, FILETAIROS, GIDEON, JOSEF
December 31	Lucia Yohai	MELANY
January 1	John Alexander; Eugene Freeman	EMMELEIA, TELEMAHOS, VASILIKI, VASILIS

Orthodoxy 101 Class will Begin in January

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, January 17** A Tour of the Orthodox Church: What we see in the Church and what it means

**Monday, January 24** Orthodox Spirituality—Introduction to the Sacraments

**Monday, January 31** 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, February 7** 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.

Philoptochos Christmas Bake Sale

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

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



**Our Food Pantry is very active helping people near and far in the Tampa Community**

- ☐ Pasta
- ☐ Spaghetti Sauce
- ☐ Tomato sauce/chopped tomatoes etc.
- ☐ All kinds of white flour
- ☐ Canned Tuna
- ☐ Canned Chicken
- ☐ Canned fruits and vegetables
- ☐ Body Wash
- ☐ Gluten Free Foods and

- Flours
- ☐ Cereal
- ☐ Whole wheat rice and pasta
- ☐ Men's and Women's razors and shaving cream (travel size)
- ☐ Toothbrushes
- ☐ Granola & Protein Bars