

# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

# *THE MESSENGER*

“Behold I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.” Mark 1:2-3

## August 2013

### MISSION STATEMENT:

St. John Greek Orthodox Church is dedicated to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.

### VISION:

The church shall seek to fulfill its mission by:

1. Embracing the Spiritual Life of the Orthodox Church through regular prayer, worship, and frequent participation in the sacraments.
2. Supporting the Church through stewardship of time and talent and sacrificial giving.
3. Providing a welcoming, caring, loving environment.
4. Having its members exemplify Orthodox Christian character and morals.
5. Supporting ministries that facilitate the overall mission of the Church
6. Exemplifying commitment to community service and charitable outreach.
7. Creating an environment which encourages members to grow in their faith.

### EVERYONE IS CORDIALLY INVITED TO A LUNCHEON/BENEFIT HONORING CHARLIE HAMBOS

As he begins his fourth and final year at Holy Cross Seminary

Sunday, August 25-following Divine Liturgy

In the Kourmolis Center

All profits from the luncheon will go to Charlie for his Seminary Education. Lunch will be for open donation. Charlie will also offer the homily in church on August 25 at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. This luncheon is being sponsored by the Parish Council.

### An Update on the Establishment of Small Group Ministries at St. John

There has been significant interest in the establishment of small group ministries at our church. So far, we have a volunteer to host a women's group on a weekday morning in South Tampa. There is also interest in starting a men's group that would meet early in the morning for breakfast, most likely at the church to start. Another couple has volunteered their home for a weeknight meeting session—they live in Carrollwood. And the Young Adult Group will continue to meet on a weeknight beginning in September. My hope is that all of these groups will kick-off for the fall the week after Labor Day. By then, school will have started again and those of us with children will have our schedules down. During August, I will be identifying and working with the group leaders, getting in touch with those who have indicated an interest in this ministry, setting days and times and developing the curriculum. So, hopefully by September 1, we will be set. For those who haven't signed up yet, please review the material in the Messenger and send it to me as soon as you can. For those who have participated in other groups like this in other churches, please plan on joining our Orthodox group at St. John this fall. +Fr. Stavros

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# Father Stavros' Message

On my recent vacation, I had an opportunity to do a lot of people watching. While I did enjoy some private time with family, it seemed like we were constantly surrounded by other people—in airplanes, on freeways, in hotels, on beaches and in restaurants. I used to interacting with people of our parish and our town, so spending some time in Hawaii and California got me around some different people.

People watching at airports can be quite fascinating. There was the little boy, probably no older than my son, who was wearing the \$300 Dre-Beats headphones. And I had to wonder why? A 6 year old doesn't know the difference between good headphones and cheap ones. The teenage girl who was had her I-pod strapped to her arm with an ear bud in one ear while also watching a movie on her I-pad with another ear bud from that in the other ear. Multi-tasking? The man who was trying to hold a cup of coffee in one hand while texting one-handed with the other. There's talent! And the young woman who posed for several pictures that she herself was shooting with her phone. I almost wanted to go ask her if she just wanted me to take a nice picture with her phone but this was far more amusing to watch.

There was a young man who sat next to me on the plane coming back from Hawaii to Texas. He was African-American and a sailor in the U.S. Navy. He is 21, his name is Brandon and he is from Kentucky. We struck up a multi-hour conversation on the plane, and I learned why he joined the Navy, about his family back home in Kentucky, and what it's like to be the pilot of a Navy Destroyer (ship). He told me about Guam and Japan, what it's like to sleep in a "rack" with only enough room to lay down, where all of your personal belonging have to fit in a small foot locker. When I flew to Ohio for a choir conference I was invited to speak at the day after I returned from vacation, I flew over Kentucky and thought about Brandon and his family. There is a possibility that after a 45 day training in San Antonio that he might actually be sent to McDill for a little while. I gave him my contact information and told him he would be welcome at our church. He actually asked me to pray for him and his safety before we departed company in Dallas, Texas. Even though I wasn't dressed like a priest, I still had an occasion to fill that role for someone. This is confirmation that being a priest is not just what I do, it's who I am, even on "vacation." And a reminder for all of us that we are not only Christians among our friends but there is an opportunity for Christian witness at any time, even with a stranger on an airplane.

In one of the many airports I went through, I saw a beautiful young woman. I saw her from a distance, but only from the shoulders up, as there was a crowd around. I thought to myself, "She must turn heads when she walks into a room," and "guys probably line up to date someone like her." As I got closer, I saw that she had a prosthetic left leg and was missing her right arm. I will never know if she sustained those injuries in an accident or if she had them all of her life. But as I passed by, I wondered if what people perceive as beauty from a distance changes when people get closer to her. I wonder if those who turn their heads quickly turn away. I wonder if guys give her a chance.

I also saw a young man at a family gathering. The family that had gathered near mine was so close that I didn't even have to try to eavesdrop. The young man was walking with a walker, his knees looked like they were bent kind of uncomfortably. From the conversation, I understood that he suffers from cerebral palsy. Someone greeted him saying "Wow, look how well you walk." This was an older person, who probably didn't know what else to say. I thought that the remark was kind of insensitive, what was meant to be a compliment was just a reminder of the heavy cross this young man carries.

This young man and young woman are each the child of parents who probably grieve at the challenges their children face. No doubt these two young people have their moments of frustration and wonder why they can't just be like everyone else. No doubt there are challenges I can't even conceive of for these two people. But no doubt, these two people have some talent, something to offer the world, and same chance as anyone else to know God, to believe in God, to live for God and to inherit eternal life. Even though I was far away from our parish, I thought about the people I know in our church as well as outside of it who carry heavy crosses, and gave some thought about the ways in which we should be helping them. It's certainly no help to be condescending. It's also a reminder that EVERYONE, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, has at least one deficiency—whether that is a physical one, a mental one, an emotional one, a spiritual one, a financial one, or something else or a combination of more than one. And if everyone has a deficiency, then part of what we are supposed to do in life is to help each other overcome our challenges, and at the same time, celebrating the talents and the goodness that is found in each person.

While on vacation in Hawaii, I witnessed ten people get baptized. No, it didn't occur at the Greek Orthodox Church. And no, I was not the celebrant. I was actually at the beach with Lisa and Nicholas and some of her Hawaii family when I saw a group of people dressed in white shirts enter into the water. They got in a line. And one person at a time turned with his/her back to the ocean and two other people, supporting them from behind, lowered them fully into the water and then raised them up again. I wasn't close enough to hear anything of what was said. I just casually looked up at the scene from my playing with Nicholas. After their baptism, these young people, who were probably between 10 and 14 years old, were casually playing and splashing each other in the water, still in their baptismal shirts. I wondered if what they had just done registered with them. I wondered if any of them thought that their sins were just drowned in the Pacific Ocean and that they were emerging from the water as new people. I wonder how long that "newness of life" will last for them. Of course, I started thinking about the way we do a baptism and the way they did the baptism. It would have been very easy to be critical of what I witnessed—it was informal, casual and didn't take place in a church. But it was an event that all of those who got baptized will remember. I guess the key thing when someone gets baptized is now "how" they get baptized (in a church, a font or an ocean), or "when" they get baptized—as a baby, a child, a teenager or an adult, but "what happens" after a person is baptized. Are they part of a supportive and encouraging spiritual community? Is the baptism seen as a gift that the newly baptized honors throughout his or her life? Or is it just a formality that holds little meaning. We all know that we don't reach the destination until the end of the journey. Most certainly, you can't reach the end without a beginning, but just beginning a journey doesn't mean you successfully reach the end.

I was away from Tampa for two Sundays in July—on one Sunday, I served the liturgy together with a former schoolmate from Seminary at St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church in Pasadena, CA, the church where I spent the majority of my youth. One lesson I continually have instilled in me when I visit another parish is that wherever I may be, our faith and our practice of that faith remains the same. Attending the Liturgy in California was the same as attending in Tampa—there was an identical service, same furnishings, same set up of the church and same message of faith. This is one of the hallmarks of our church, that wherever you go, you feel at home. On the other Sunday, I missed church. Yes, usually one Sunday a year I miss services. And I MISS going. Worship does something to not only my soul but to my mind. It sets the tone for the week. It puts my mind at ease. It makes my soul jump for joy. No, not every liturgy does that—Sadly, sometimes even I am not into

the liturgy. But the exercise of going to worship always does “something” positive for me. And by staying away, even for one week, I missed the “positive” thing(s) I always take from worship. I can’t imagine not going regularly, or only going once a month, or twice a year. Worship is such an integral part of my life. As we wind down the summer and turn our thoughts to our fall schedule, for those who don’t worship regularly, try making a new habit for yourself, so that you too, can look forward to starting your week with something “positive” each week.

My final vacation story occurred on a beach in Hawaii one afternoon. Nicholas and I were playing with a ball in the water and another little boy came up and asked if he could play with us. So, we included him in our game. We asked the little boy where he was from, and he said he was from Australia. As we continued to play and get to know one another, we asked him if he had any brothers or sisters. And he replied, “Yes, there is my sister ‘Despina’”. To which I immediately said “Are you Greek?” He answered, “Yes, and how

did you know?” I told him “Well, Greek are the only ethnic group that give the name Despina.” Shortly after I found the boy’s father and greeted him, in Greek. So, here I am, talking to a Greek man from Australia in Greek on a beach in Hawaii. The moral of the story—There are Greeks everywhere, even on islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean!

It’s always good to take some time away from work and from life to enjoy family and rest. But it is always good to come back home to Tampa and to St. John!

With love in the Lord,

+Fr. Stavros

## A Change of Scenery: St. Helen’s Pilgrimage to Greece and Constantinople: Part 1 By Charles Hambos

The wind was blowing and the sun was shining eye level as I sipped my third little glass of steaming Turkish tea on the upper deck of the ferry. Minarets were all over the place as far as you could see. The older parts of the city were joined with the newer parts of the city with high-rise apartments, part of a large building boom in the city. Not many mosques have four minarets surrounding them but I knew that soon we would be passing in the distance, the most famous and beautiful church, Hagia Sophia.

This was the routine during each one of our commutes from Heybeliada, an island off the coast of Istanbul in the Sea of Marmara to a small port on the Golden Horn of Istanbul. Twenty-one students and one professor from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology traveled to Thessaloniki, Greece for three weeks and then went on to Constantinople for less than a week.

This wasn’t my first rodeo to those two major cities of Byzantium. The summer before my final year at The University of Tampa, I had the opportunity to travel to Greece and Constantinople with the Journey to Greece Program. For me, it was kind of a pilgrimage for the rest of my life. I specifically chose the trip because it went to Constantinople. I wanted to travel to the epicenter of the Orthodox Faith before I made that final decision to enroll at Holy Cross and to start my journey to the priesthood.

So there I was back in the Queen City of Constantinople the summer before my last year at Holy Cross and what a blessing it was. There we stayed at Halki Theological School that remains closed by the Turkish government. Everything is still there and a small staff maintains the grounds. Currently, it is designated as a monastery.

While in Constantinople we saw several active churches including the church where the Life-giving spring is located (Ζωοδόχος Πηγή). We also visited the Church of the Holy Trinity located in the heart of Taksim Square where there were still visible signs of trouble. At one of the churches, we were served a delicious, multiple course meal prepared by members of the community. This community used to have several thousand people but now only has 40 people. The important thing I learned was that the Greek Orthodox communities in Constantinople are still active but struggling, with stunning churches.

We went to several other churches that are currently being used as museums or mosques. Three of the most significant were Hagia Sophia, Chora Church and the Pamakaristos Church. Hagia Sophia is the most beautiful and significant church in the entire world. Seeing it in real life is unbelievable. Chora Church and the Pamakaristos Church have some of the most famous iconography and mosaics in the entire world.

We attended the Church of St. George, which is located in the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the Feast of Pentecost. The amount of relics in this church is incredible. On one side of the church, they have the relics of the Three Hierarchs: St. John Chrysostom, Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian. On the other side of the church are the relics of St. Euphemia, St. Theophano and St. Solomon. The opportunity to venerate these relics and the many other relics we saw was definitely one of the major highlights of the trip. Our class also had the opportunity to join His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew for a formal lunch and audience with him on a different day. Almost each day we returned to the Phanar (location of the Ecumenical Patriarchate) to have lunch. It almost felt like it was our home. As a matter of fact, that is what I told a classmate of mine when we arrived, “It’s good to be home.” As Orthodox Christians directly under the Ecumenical throne in Constantinople it is our home. The situation there is not that great but things have gotten better since Turkey wants to become a member of the European Union. They have a lot of work to do but the Religious Freedom in Turkey for everyone is something that needs to be addressed. Overall, the amount of history in Constantinople is incredible and it is still my favorite city.

Before our journey to Constantinople, the class spent three weeks in Thessaloniki. During our stay we took Modern Greek classes at Aristotle University every afternoon. Thessaloniki is full of churches with beautiful history and iconography. St. Demetrios, Panagia Acheropietos and Hagia Sophia are some of the most famous. The small ones that could hold less than twenty people were often times the most surprising. During our first week there, we attended a vigil in the crypt of St. Demetrios, the place of the saint’s martyrdom. It was an incredible experience.

As I visited the churches on a daily basis, just to light a candle or sit and read, I transported myself back to the United States and the life of the Orthodox faithful there. In Greece the churches are open all day long, with the

exception of a few hours in the afternoon. Before I began my day of sight-seeing in the city, I would always try to stop by a church close to our hotel to venerate an icon and say a small prayer. This is something we can't do in the U.S. During the services themselves, there was a constant flow of people in and out of the church. Lighting candles, saying a prayer, venerating the icons, staying for some of the service and then leaving. Of course this isn't the ideal. People should stay for the entire service. However, it was the experience of this way of life that mattered. I wish people in Tampa could stop by the church on their way to work to light a candle, venerate an icon and say a prayer. It's very relaxing and I would almost say it is something that is prescribed for the Orthodox faithful living in what we call an "Orthodox Country."

This way of life does not prevent problems from happening. As we know, Greece has a lot of problems and the people of Greece are suffering. We wit-

nessed demonstrations everyday and the infrastructure of the city needs some work. In a discussion with a resident of Thessaloniki, she told us that when we return to the United States to not forget about our experiences and to also pray for the people of Greece, so that once again they may find their soul because they have lost it.

I've decided to write about my trip to Greece and Constantinople in parts because there were so many experiences that I want to share. In the next part, I would like to share my experiences at Mt. Athos and other monasteries that we visited as well as our trips to see different Metropolitans and other leaders of the Church.

*Charlie Hambos is about to begin his fourth and final year of study at Holy Cross Seminary.*

## The Establishment of Small Group Ministries for Men and Women

**I printed this in the last issue of the Messenger and have received many responses. If you didn't read this last month, or didn't send in a response, this is another chance to do so. As I wrote on the front page, we are going to establish at least three groups, which will be set to debut in September.**

### What is it?

Other churches have established "Small Group Ministries," in the form of "specialized" Bible Studies or prayer groups for specific subsets of their parishioners, for instance, a men's prayer group that meets for breakfast on Tuesdays, or a mom's group that meets mid-mornings on Wednesdays, or a women's group that meets on Thursdays for dinner. These groups are usually small and are led by a lay person, not a pastor or priest (the lay leader interfaces with the priest for guidance and curriculum). The meetings are discussion-based where people get together to talk about their faith. They engage in a structured study of either a book of the Bible or a religious-based book. They pray for one another and with one another, so that people are not only brought together socially in church but spiritually connected as well. St. Paul tells us to "Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ," (Galatians 6:2) and the small groups help in this regard as well. It is a chance for fellow parishioners to help one another bear burdens, i.e. Dads talking about the challenges of fatherhood, or Moms talking about the challenges of motherhood, or adults talking about the challenges of work, and everyone talking about the faith.

### What is it not?

These small groups are NOT a substitute for any of our current ministries. What they will be, I hope, is an opportunity to come together in a small group to talk about and grow in our faith. These small groups will not necessarily meet at the church, but rather in homes around the Tampa area. Our church is not a neighborhood church, as many others are, since it is the only Greek Orthodox Church in Hillsborough County. The idea is to establish small groups that can meet at places and times convenient to members so that there can be more discussion and spiritual growth on days other than Sundays.

### Why do we need this at St. John?

BECAUSE YOU HAVE ASKED FOR IT!!! Several people have approached me over the past few months asking about having small group Bible studies. Several members of our church are actually attending Bible studies at Protestant churches and are deriving benefit from them and want to have something like this at our church. How did those people from our church decide to attend a small group ministry at another parish? They were invited. If we are serious about growing in our faith as individuals, and if we are serious about growing our church (and I think that we are), this is among the next steps we need to take. As our community matures spiritually, and the members mature spiritually, it seems that many of you have a desire to talk about God and learn about God but to do it in small groups, not necessarily at a retreat or a traditional Bible Study, and this is great!

As you hopefully read in my Paschal sermon, I received a great piece of spiritual advice that made the difference in my Holy Week. This piece of advice did not come from a priest, or from a sermon, or from a theology book—it came from a FRIEND! We need groups of people, to come together, as friends, to support one another, to pray for one another and to encourage one another to grow in faith. In some ways, we also need people to hold us accountable in our Christian lives. A small group of friends (or even people who don't know one another well who will become friends) is a perfect way to accomplish all of this and more. The priest is not the only one who should bear our burdens, nor is the priest the only one who can pray for us. We have many wonderful, positive, spiritually alive people in this parish. We should enjoin one another to help share and lift our burdens, through help, through support and especially through prayer. Of course, these groups are not only spiritual support groups, but opportunities to learn and discuss in small groups matters of faith applied to our daily lives.

### How will this work at St. John?

What I'm looking to do RIGHT NOW is gauge interest and identify people who are interested in attending, hosting or leading a group, and how often people would like for a group like this to meet.

1. Fill out the attached short questionnaire and mail it back to Fr. Stavros in the office.
2. We will hold a meeting in August to divide up into small groups and each group will figure out times, places and frequency of their meeting. I hope that some of these meetings will be held in

homes. We certainly can accommodate the South Tampa meetings at the church if desired. Hence I would like to get your responses by the end of June.

3. The goal is to eventually establish small groups in various places around town.
4. I will help each group get off of the ground, with the goal to get small groups of people together with discussion questions and curriculum, like reading a book together, so that the group is led by a group member and not by me.
5. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT—We need a strong nucleus of committed people who are going to commit to starting and staying with a group until the group establishes a firm foundation. So, when you are filling out this questionnaire (and for those who are married, fill out a separate questionnaire for each spouse and mail it in), please consider your involvement seriously and prayerfully.

### What kind of commitment are we talking about here?

How often will these groups meet? Again, you will help determine that. There are three ways a group can meet:

- a. Once a week concurrent with the school year (breaks for Christmas, summer, spring break, Holy Week)
- b. Twice per month throughout the year with hiatus for Christmas, summer and Holy Week
- c. As a series, where the group meets every week for six weeks for one curriculum/book, then takes a break, then meets another six weeks, etc. As an example, a group meets for September-October; then again January-February; then meets after Easter let's say for late April-May, so the groups do three "series" a year, something like that.

### The Establishment of Small Group Ministries for Men and Women

Please fill out the sections below and return it to Father Stavros:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Your involvement:

- \_\_\_\_\_ I would love to attend and participate in a small group
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would feel comfortable leading a discussion group if materials and guidance are provided
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would love to host a group in my home/office on a regular basis
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would consider hosting a group in my home/office on a rotating basis.

#### Frequency of meeting:

- \_\_\_\_\_ I can commit to meeting every week (in this case, we would meet concurrent with the school year)
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can commit to meeting every other week
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can commit to meeting once a month
- \_\_\_\_\_ I can commit to doing a series of meetings (i.e. six week series, followed by time off, then followed by another series)

#### Time of Day: (\*Times are approximate, they can be flexible)

- \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to meet early morning before work, 7:00 – 8:00 am
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to meet mid-morning, 10:00 – 11:00 am
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to meet at lunch time, 12:00 – 1:00 pm
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to meet in the evening, 7:00 – 8:00 pm

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# Oratorical Festival Speech by Angelina Bartucci

Angelina competed at the Metropolis Level of the Oratorical Festival, which was held after the last issue of the Messenger went to press. She represented herself, her parish and our faith at the Metropolis level for a third time. Her speech appears below:

## The Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

After reading the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian, it occurred to me that this prayer describes the ideal Christian that I am striving to be. For those of you who are not familiar with the prayer, it goes like this:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Lord and Master of my life, cast away from me the spirit of laziness, idle curiosity, love of power and vain talk.  
But grant me, Your servant, the spirit of moderation, humility, patience and love.  
Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own faults and not to judge my brothers and sisters.  
For You are blessed forever. Amen.

It amazes me that these words that held exceptional meaning 1700 years ago still bear wisdom that has the power to better our lives today.

In the first line of the prayer it recognizes God as the "Lord and Master of my life." This parallels with the first commandment, "Thou shall have no other Gods before me." Now although most people don't build golden calves anymore, we have been known to put more emphasis on money and worldly treasures than on God as seen all throughout history. But now, in the 21st century, we have found a new master: Technology. With iPhones and iPads, Facebook and Twitter, it's so easy to get caught up in all the excitement. But then, if we aren't careful, those distractions start dictating our lives. This prayer gives us a reality check and forces us to reflect upon ourselves. It reminds us that God is and forever shall be the Lord and Master of our lives.

After recognizing this, we ask God to "cast away from me the spirit of laziness." Personally after a long week of school and homework, I am overjoyed when the

weekend finally comes. But I don't get to go hang out with my friends like most teenagers do, I work a part time job on the weekends to help my mom. It only takes a second for a thought to come into my head- how great it would be if I could just catch up on some sleep instead of going to work. But soon enough I reflect and realize, working is the responsible thing to do with my time. More importantly, I realize God does not want us to waste our lives away. We learn this in the parable of the talents, Mathew 25:14-30. The moral of the parable is that we receive gifts by God, and He expects us to use our gifts to the best of our ability. One day God will judge whether or not we used our gifts. So when I hear the words "Cast away from me the spirit of laziness" it reminds me of how God really wants me to live my life.

St. Ephraim also mentions humility in this prayer. Having humility in today's society can be especially difficult. One reason is that everything has become a competition in life. Whether its getting a job promotion or getting into college, it is a competition, and you have to beat out all your peers. So when we do succeed, how are we expected to humble ourselves? I mean society teaches us we deserve what we have and more. That's the American Dream- having it all. How can we find humility? Well I personally believe humility can be found through prayer and fasting. And this lenten prayer of St. Ephraim is one of repentance. It makes us reflect on our lives as Christians.

All of these passions and sins mentioned in the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian weigh us down. They prevent us from reaching our full potential as Christians. I pray this prayer in hope to rid myself of these sins and one day, with Gods help and guidance, to become the Orthodox Christian I am striving to be.

*Angelina is going to be a senior in High School. She is active in Sunday school, GOYA and the dance group.*

## The St. John Oratorical Festival- "Sometimes the real winners are the losers" by Peggy Bradshaw

I was driving in my car the other night and was listening to the gospel station on my satellite radio. The name of the song was, "I love Jesus more than I can say". I couldn't help but to think about our students in the Oratorical Festival and how they love the Lord and His Church in as many words as they CAN say (within the time permitted by the rules of course).

For those of you who are not familiar with the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival, please allow me to let you in a little secret...it really does operate as a competition, even though it is supposed to be a Festival to showcase our students' devotion and talents as writers and mainly orators. But no matter what, there are winners; they just call them finalists. There are also losers; they call them "Honorable Mentions".

If I am sounding cynical, please stay with me, because my intent is not that by any means. I want you to know each and every one of our students who partici-

pated, how important this was to each of them, and how this competition really transformed them.

Let's start with Father Stavros. Every year, he reminds us how he participated in this as a youth, and every year, he never even advanced beyond his church's competition! This is a profound reminder and example of how the "loser" really was the winner. I love that he reminds us of this; it really lifts up my spirits when I feel I have to comfort a child (or myself) who does not make it to the next level. I am pretty sure that out of all the contestants in his time, his faith has probably matured and prospered the most. His faith is so strong that he shares it with us every day of his life in his chosen profession of being a clergyman. As pastor of our church, he imparts love, inspiration, but most of all, a shining example of what it means to leave everything and follow Christ. I don't know who the winner of his church competition was back in the early '90s or late 80's (I'm guessing based on

his ripe old age of 41), but I seriously doubt that he or she is doing anything close to preaching and living the Gospel as is our dear Father Stavros.

The "Festival" is judged by various people in the communities and these people are chosen by the Oratorical Chairman and the parish priest. To give you an idea of how diverse these judges are, consider this. At the local district level, the Oratorical Chairman chose 6 judges. Out of the six, three were non-Orthodox, but they were attorneys. The other three were Orthodox, and one was an attorney and another was physicist and scientist, and another was an academic (professor). In contrast, at the Metropolis level, all the judges were priests!! They were Orthodox, but not of the Greek Archdiocese. At our church, I have been blessed to have very non-biased judges. Over the last five years, I have asked Brett Mourer, Maria Xenick and Bill Manikas to judge. As you know they are professionals, and love our children at the same time. They did a great job year after year and I may add 3 more to the list next year in order to have a more diverse judging in the junior and senior division (all with Father's blessing of course)-six judges total. I can promise you that I will never have a non Orthodox judge as I believe this to be unfair to our children who are following the rules that clearly state that they are to reference not only biblical scripture but Orthodox theology as well.

Let's get to the kids. I can tell you that the first year we did this I brought my son, Nicholas Patides, Imad Hanhan and Andy Palumpis to the districts. None of them "won" but all have served our church with dignity as acolytes and have a deep understanding and love of the faith. All three have now graduated and are thriving as they continue to serve in the altar when they come home from school-winners all!

In that first year, a young lady, Arianna Krinos decided to join us in the 6th grade even though there was no competition for her age group! I remember vividly how shy she was in her delivery then. Astoundingly, she has now blossomed into this incredibly articulate, confident and inspiring orator! Her faith truly shines and defines her. Through her years in the oratorical, she has beat Father Stavros-she made it to the district level! Of course, I thought she should have been a finalist for our Metropolis; her speech was phenomenal in every way. But even as good as she is now, I feel she has even more potential to make it to this level next year. I guess what impresses me most about Arianna, is that she never gets down, and never gives up. She writes her speech probably at least 2 months in advance of all the rest of the group and never really expects to win. She has told me point blank-she does this because she loves it and loves our Lord. How can you tell me that this girl is not a winner?

Let's talk about some other "veteran" participants-Alex Peckham joined us in the second year. He didn't want any help from me and did this entirely on his own. Again, not a winner. . . really? Alex is one of our most dedicated acolytes. Whenever he is home from college he is always serving in the altar. I can see his faith from his actions and just the sheer look of dedication in his face while he is holding the cross. In this same vein, I would also add Maria Lynn Cauthorne. Yet, another dedicated student who participates in church while she is in school in Gainesville. How strong is the faith of these children; they are in college but despite peer pressure she still finds time to attend the Greek Orthodox Church in Gainesville as well as here in Tampa when she is home with her parents. This is what being a winner is to me.

Most currently, we had Mihail Kaburis and Nedi Ferekides advanced to the junior division. Both honor students, both dedicated to the Lord; they were meticulous and contentious about every single detail of their speech. They poured their heart and soul into their speeches and must have practiced a hundred times! They delivered like champions and I truly thought they both should have been finalists, (but that is just my humble opinion). But again, they have "lost" before, and did not come to this expecting to win. They were truly satisfied knowing that they did the

best that they could and both expressed to me how grateful they were to expand their knowledge about their faith. After not advancing, both of them told me it was ok, because they knew I was so upset. But, in their graciousness, they were not upset, and their beautiful smiles proved to me that they both are true winners in the Lord.

Now it is time for someone who actually did make it pass the judges to advance to the Metropolis level- Angelina Bartucci. Angelina truly has a raw talent for communication and is affable when conveying her deep love for the Lord in all her speeches. She has an effect on people when she speaks, and people want to listen to her. This has served her well for three years as she has advanced to this level three times! To date, she is our most coveted participant. However, she knows the agony of defeat too. At the Metropolis level, she did not advance to the finals. Is she a loser? Angelina is one of the most faithful and dedicated children I have ever come across; you can see the love she has for the Lord in her big smile that she gives to all she comes across. She has overcome obstacles that most do not know about and yet, almost every Sunday without fail, she is in church with her mom. No matter what she was doing the night before or how much homework she had to maintain her high level of academic standing, Angelina just shows up. Her dedication paid off when the Academy of the Holy Names just awarded her a \$16,000 scholarship for her senior year, next year. One more winner for the Lord!

Because there are only two spots in the senior and junior division, there were three children that did not make it past the church level this year; Larissa Krinos, Savvas Ferekides and Christos Nenos. Larissa Krinos shows her love for Christ every week by attending liturgy and Sunday School and is an amazing orator! She is extremely confident and I am expecting her to go to districts next year. She is an incredibly independent thinker and I feel she walks to the beat of her own drummer! This is what sets her apart and I can never compare her to her older sister; she is her own person and determined with passion that you can hear in her voice when she delivers her speeches. Savvas Ferekides had one of the biggest transformations I have seen as the chairperson of this festival. He went from extremely shy to confident in less than two weeks! He is one that I also expect to move on to Districts and maybe one day, just win it all! He is so well poised and mature beyond his years. His speech was well thought out and was written with much detail. He has just the right combination of presence and content and I know that he also told me he learned a lot more than he expected from this experience (his first time this year). Christos Nenos was the most enthusiastic speaker we had! He was so excited to work on his speech every Sunday in our Sunday School class, and truly poured his thoughts and heart into it. You can tell by his speech that every word was truth and he truly is and always will be a winner!!!

Unlike soccer or football, there truly are NO LOSERS in this Festival. That is why I decided, with the help of my generous donors to give every child an award that includes cash for their efforts. Remember, this takes dedication and our Lord will reward them in heaven for their faith; I just wanted to give them a small reward here on earth while they are still children. While they are still children, full of hope and promise, they can say that their church family rewarded them for their work. Soon enough, they will enter the "real world" of adulthood, where competition and winning is all that seems to matter in the secular world. Hopefully, they will remember this experience and it will remind them how much they are loved and revered by their St. John family in Tampa and it will be just another reason to stay rooted in their faith.

Peggy Bradshaw teaches Sunday school, and is responsible for reviving our St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival and has chaired this event for many years!

# Liturgical Schedule for August

Friday, August 2 Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 4 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.  
Altar Boys: Anyone attending may serve  
Ushers: Brett Mourer, Kevin Fentress, Ippokratis Kantzios  
Coffee Hour: Young at Heart

Monday, August 5 Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 6 Feast of the Transfiguration of our Savior  
Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.  
Blessing of Grapes

Wednesday, August 7 Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 11 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.  
Altar Boys: Anyone attending may serve  
Ushers: Amin Hanhan, George Mltseas, Mike Trimis  
Coffee Hour: Daughters of Penelope

Monday, August 12 Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 10:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 14 Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, August 15 Dormition of the Virgin Mary  
Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, August 18 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.  
Altar Boys: anyone attending may serve  
Ushers: Chris Kavouklis, Florin Patrasciou  
Coffee Hour: Philoptochos

Sunday, August 25 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.  
Altar Boys: Anyone attending may serve  
Ushers: Pete Trakas, Ed Gerecke, David Voykin  
Coffee Hour: AGAPE Luncheon for Charlie Hambos, sponsored by the Parish Council

Thursday, August 29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist  
Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, September 1 Feast of the Indiction—Beginning of the Ecclesiastical (Church) Year  
Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, September 8 Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary  
Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.



# Liturgical Notes for May

**Paraklesis Services of Supplication to the Virgin Mary** The service of Paraklesis or “Intercessory Prayer” to the Most Holy Theotokos, the Mother of God, is chanted during the fast period of the first fourteen days of August, preceding the Feast of the Koimisis or “Falling Asleep” of the Virgin Mary, which is August 15. During these fourteen days, the church observes a period of fasting, and the celebration of the Paraklesis Services. In this service we ask the Theotokos, the Mother of God, to pray for us and to intercede for us with her Son and our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not the Theotokos who saves us. Only God saves us. Thus we do not pray to the Theotokos, but we pray through the Theotokos, that through her intercession, we may find favor with God. The Paraklesis service is chanted not only for fourteen days in August, but can be chanted in at any time of the year, for those who are in need of prayer in time of sickness, despair, struggle, or any occasion, since any of life’s experiences provide us an opportunity for prayer. The Paraklesis Service consists of soft, melodic chants of supplication to the Virgin Mary, and lasts about an hour. It is also one of few services in the church (another being the Artoklasia, the service of the Five Loaves), where we commemorate individuals out loud during the service. Enclosed in this Messenger is a paper on which to write the names of you and your families, loved ones and friends (who are living) to be commemorated at the Paraklesis Services in August. Please mail these to the church office, or bring them to the services. Paraklesis services will be held five times this August—Friday, August 2 (6:00 p.m.); Monday, August 5 (6:00 p.m.); Wednesday, August 7 (6:00 p.m.); Monday, August 12 (10:00 a.m.—note morning starting time); and Wednesday, August 14 at 6:00 p.m. Please make an effort to attend at least one of these services to pray for you and your loved ones. The Feast of the Dormition will be celebrated with Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 15. We should all attempt to keep the fast, at least from meat, during the first fourteen days

of August, and we should each plan to receive Holy Communion on August 11 or 15.

**Transfiguration of our Savior–August 6**–We read in the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark and Luke, how Jesus was Transfigured on Mount Tabor in the presence of His Disciples. Matthew 17:2 says that “His face shone like the sun and His clothes became as white as the light.” Jesus was shown in the fullness of His glory as God, and standing beside Him were Moses and Elijah, the two greatest prophets of the Old Testament. This showed the Disciples that the man Jesus was indeed God as well, and pre-figured His glory at the Resurrection and Ascension. Right after the Transfiguration, Jesus began to tell His disciples upon His upcoming Passion and Resurrection. The event of the Transfiguration probably happened only a few weeks before Palm Sunday. But since this feastday is so important, so it would not be lost in Lent, the Church has placed it on August 6, 40 days before the Feast of the Holy Cross (September 14), since the feast is tied to the Passion and Cross of Christ. Also, on August 6, we bless grapes, because it is the season of the harvest, in both material terms—this is the time of the year we harvest grapes. But also in spiritual terms—this was the time Jesus, through His blood, was going to harvest His followers into His kingdom.

**Beheading of St. John the Baptist–August 29** – St. John the Baptist, according to the Gospel accounts, was beheaded in prison. We commemorate this event each year on August 29, which is also a strict fast day. As St. John the Baptist is the patron saint of our parish, we honor this fast day, and we pray for his intercessions over each of us and our parish.

## Parish Registry

**Baptism**–Evangelos Laliotis, son of Stavros and Adrienne Laliotis, was baptized on Sunday, July 7. Stacey and Georg Gicopolous were the Godparents.

**Double Baptism**–Audrey (Elizabeth) and Ignatius Gallos, children of Spiros Gallos and Julie Oliver, were baptized on Sunday, July 21. Fr. Daniel and Pres. Maria Bethancourt were the Godparents. Na Sas Zisi!

**Chrismation**–Natassa Lee Quinn was Chrismated on May 26. Garifalia Meis was the Godparent.

**Wedding**–George Fellios and Zeina Berchane were married on Saturday, June 22. Congratulations!

**Funeral**–Azar Hanhan passed away on May 29. Funeral services were held on June 1.

**Funeral**–Marilyn Neyland passed away on June 20. Funeral services were held on June 24.

**Funeral**–Nick Sakkis passed away on June 29. Funeral services were held on July 3.

**Funeral**–James Liakos passed away on July 19. Funeral services were held on July 24.

**Condolences** to Maria Apockotos, on the passing away of her father, Peter Stratos.

**Condolences** to Ed Gerecke, on the passing away of his aunt, Christina Beyerle.

# COMMUNITY NEWS

**Altar Boy Robes need cleaning**—We've had our altar boy robes for over seven years now and it's time to have them dry cleaned—there are 18 white ones and 18 gold ones. It will cost roughly \$25 per robe or \$450 per set of 18, or \$900 for the overall project. If you are interested in donating all or part of this, please see Fr. Stavros.

**Memorial Monies**—Every time someone in our community passes away, people make donations to the parish in memory of the person who has passed away. About the time of the 40 day memorial service, the family is informed who made donations to the church in memory of their loved one. Over the years, there has been lots of confusion over what should happen to that money. For instance, if \$1,000 comes in, in memory of someone, does this person's family have a say-so in what the money is spent on? Some families have come back years after the death of a loved one wanting to "spend the \$1,000 that is there" in memory of their loved one, as if this is a bank account that the family can draw on at any time. Again, this has created some confusion, and in a few cases, bad feelings. The Parish Council decided effective September 1, 2012, this is how memorial money will be handled. When a person dies, about the 40 days, the church will inform the family how much money was collected and at that point, ask which of four options the family would like to do with the money that has been donated. They are as follows:

1. The Altar Fund—money can be put towards the purchase of something needed in the altar. However, the altar has many nice, relatively new things in it, so the list of items to be purchased is rather small. Also, if only a small amount of money comes in, it may not be enough to purchase the thing that is needed. Therefore it would go towards the purchase of something, so that when enough money is amassed, then that item can be purchased.
2. Buildings and Grounds—We have a very large and beautiful facility that is constantly in need of repair and updating. If money is donated to buildings and grounds, it would be used for things that require maintenance and updating, like the air conditioning, and other systems of the church, new equipment, etc.
3. Current campaign—The church, at any point in time, is working on a major "campaign" to get some project done. Right now, that campaign is repairing the stained glass windows. In other years, we have done campaigns to repair iconography, replace carpeting, etc. If this option is chosen, then the money will be put in the fund for the current campaign.
4. General Fund—The general fund is where salaries, utilities and the day to day operations of the church get paid from. And obviously this is the most important fund, because if we don't fund the day to day operations of the parish, then all the beautiful things in the altar, the icons, and the church building go for naught.

Using this new system will still give each family a chance to say where they want the money to go, while at the same time, avoiding any confusion and misunderstanding and allowing the money to be spent in a timely fashion, rather than sitting for what amounts to years, sometimes, in the memorial fund. If you have any questions about this, please see Fr. Stavros or Katherine Sakkis, Parish Council President.

**Alarm System in the Church**-Effective immediately, the church is being alarmed when not in use. If you are someone who comes into the church on a regular basis, or need to enter during times when the church may be alarmed, please see Father about disarming the alarm. If you come during office hours and find the church locked, please ask the office staff and they will be happy to disarm the alarm and open it for you.

**New Altar Boys**-Anyone young man entering 4th grade this fall or older is eligible to serve in the Altar at St. John. Please let Fr. Stavros know if you are interested by August 10. This coming year, there will be four teams. The new schedule will take effect on September 1. **There will be a meeting for all altar boys on Sunday, September 8, following the Divine Liturgy. All altar boys are requested to attend to go over procedures for how to serve in the altar. This meeting will last approximately 1 hour.**

**2013 Archangel Michael Award Winners**-Every year, the Metropolis of Atlanta recognizes one adult and young adult (or person who has made significant contribution to the youth) from each parish for their outstanding contributions to the life of their parish. They are recognized at a banquet and Divine Liturgy each November, which are held in Atlanta and presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios. This year, our award winners are Mary Maas and Aris Rogers. Congratulations Mary and Aris, and thank you for your outstanding contributions to our parish of St. John!

**College Graduate**—Charles J. Myer, son of Magda and Ron Myer, graduated from the University of Tampa with a BS degree in Sports Management/Business, with a 3.7 GPA. He was inducted into 3 honor societies with the most significant being Phi Kappa Phi, a national honor for students in the top 5%.

**Food Pantry Raffle**--A big Thank You to all at St. Johns who recently supported the Food Pantry raffle event. The raffle was very successful with generous amounts of food brought in and 90 tickets sold. We raised \$238 in money and gift cards. We would like to thank then the people who donated the baseball shirt for their kind contribution which made this raffle possible, And Kathy who helped, setting up and decorating the table. Please keep on supporting us to help the needy with canned Tomato products, Tuna, Salmon, Chicken etc, Peanut butter, Jam /honey, Oil etc.

**AGAPE Luncheon in honor of Charlie Hambos**-Everyone is cordially invited to a luncheon/benefit honoring CHARLIE HAMBOS, as he begins his second year at Holy Cross Seminary. This event will be held on Sunday, August 25 following the Divine Liturgy in the Kourmolis Center. The lunch will be for donation. All profits from the luncheon will go to Charlie for his Seminary Education. Charlie will also offer the homily in church on August 25 at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

**Successful Junior Olympics**-A big THANK YOU goes out to Byron Nenos for organizing the 28th Annual Junior Olympics, which was held on June 14-16. Over 100 GOYAns and advisors from around North Florida participated this year. Thanks to Byron for the many hours he spent organizing this wonderful and successful event. Special thanks go to Elaine Halkias, George and Donna Hambos, Christine Scourtes, Ed and Terri Gerecke and many, many others who helped run the venues, drive and work in the kitchen to make this event a success.

**Meeting of Ministry Heads**-A meeting will take place for the heads of all ministries for the purpose of putting together a calendar for the upcoming year. The following ministry heads are requested to attend: Day School, Choir, Sunday School, Olympics, GOYA, Festival, Dance Groups, Philoptochos, Parish Council, Bookstore, Senior Group, Greek School, AHEPA. A mailing went out in the middle of July with a draft of a calendar to use as a starting point for important dates of the new school year. Please bring your ideas, your schedules, your plans and your ideas about hosting coffee hour to this meeting. It will be held in the Zaharias Room following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, August 11.

**And to our High School Grads headed off to college, please send Fr. Stavros your new mailing address so we can add you to the Messenger list and keep you up to date with the goings on at St. John.**

### Leave the Church in Your Will

Part of our life's legacy is the inheritance we leave our children. By leaving an inheritance, a part of us lives on through them. When preparing your will, you should consider leaving money to our church—this is the church of your children and part of their future can be positively impacted by leaving some of your inheritance to the church. The ability of the church to spread the Word of God is facilitated by everyone's stewardship. By leaving a portion of your inheritance to the church in your will, you remain a steward in perpetuity, but more importantly, you help cement a solid financial future for the church for your children and your grandchildren. If you are interested in leaving the church in your will, please contact Russell Sibley (church member) at [rsibleylaw@gmail.com](mailto:rsibleylaw@gmail.com). Thank you for your consideration.

### Names to be Commemorated for Paraklesis

Please write the names of all those whom you wish to be commemorated in the Paraklesis Services this August. Friday, August 2; Monday, August 5; Wednesday, August 7; and Wednesday, August 14, services will be at 6:00 p.m. On Monday, August 12, we'll hold the service at 10:00 a.m.. Please mail into the office or bring to church as soon as possible.

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## Meeting Schedule for August

Sunday, August 11	Ministry Heads	Following Liturgy	Zaharias Room
Tuesday, August 13	Parish Council	6:15 p.m.	Multipurpose Room
Saturday, August 24	Sunday School Teachers Seminar	9:00 a.m.	Kourmolis Center
Sunday, August 25	GOYA	5:00-7:30 p.m.	Kourmolis Center

## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE (AS OF JULY 15)

	2013	2012
Pledged Families	265	272
Amount Pledged	\$294,668	\$272,041
Average Pledge	\$1,112	\$1,000

*If you have pledged for 2013, we sincerely thank you for your support of our church. If you have not pledged for 2013, we ask that you please do so today. If you need a pledge form, please contact the church office and we'll be happy to send you one today. As you can see, we are ahead of last year's pledged amount (good) but behind last year's pledged number of families. Please make your stewardship pledge TODAY if you haven't done so. In order to be considered a member of good standing of the church, you must fill out a form every year. If you need a pledge form, please contact the church office. Thanks!*



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**Friends of St. John**-Some of you who receive The Messenger do not live in the Tampa Bay area or are members of other Greek Orthodox parishes. We would like to ask for your support of our parish as a "Friend of St. John". Your contribution as a "Friend" will help offset the cost of mailing The Messenger, among other things. Being a "friend" does not make one a steward of St. John or afford membership rights and responsibilities, but gives one who is a member elsewhere, an opportunity to make a gesture of financial support to our parish. If you are interested in being a "Friend of St. John", please fill out and return the form below. Thank you for your consideration of our parish.

### FRIENDS OF ST. JOHN

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to be a "Friend of St. John". I am enclosing a contribution in the amount of:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50      \_\_\_\_\_ \$100      \_\_\_\_\_ \$200      \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Please mail this form and check to: St. John Greek Orthodox Church 2418 Swann Avenue, Tampa, FL 33609

# MINISTRIES

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Sunday School Teachers Seminar—August 24**—Our Sunday School teachers are invited to attend a seminar on Saturday, August 24, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Fr. Stavros will lead sessions and answer questions, as we prepare for the beginning of the new Sunday School Year!

**Sunday School Classes will begin on September 8**—Sunday School Registration will take place on August 25 and September 1 following the Divine Liturgy each Sunday.

## ADULT GREEK SCHOOL

**Choir Conference Coming to Tampa, July 25-28**

The Adult Greek School program will start at 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 10, 2013. The teacher Mrs. Magda Myer will use the same text book for beginners. Those interested in learning Greek, please contact Mrs. Myer at (813)

909-2327, [aspis69@aol.com](mailto:aspis69@aol.com) or contact the church office at (813) 876-8830.

## GOYA

Our first GOYA meeting of the new school year will be held on Sunday, August 25, from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Dinner will be provided. One parent of each GOYAn is asked to attend the meeting also—there will be a parents' meeting with GOYA Advisor Elaine Halkias while the GOYAns meet with Fr. Stavros to go over procedures for the year, review the yearly calendar, fill out emergency forms and arrange for parents to sign up to do a meal for one of the meetings.

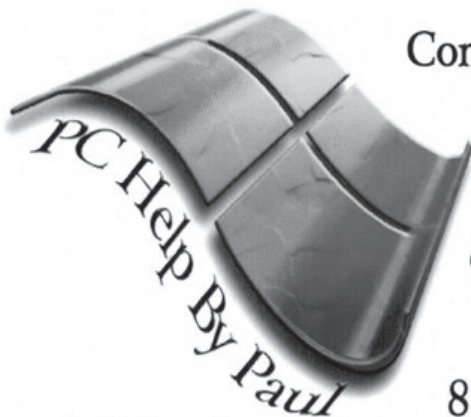
## YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (YAL)

The YAL will resume Bible study on Wednesday August 21st with a study of the Epistle of St. James. Meetings begin at 6:30 and will be held at different homes each week. Dinner is provided by the group. For more information or to be placed on the email list, please contact Mary Ann Konstas at [mapkonstas@gmail.com](mailto:mapkonstas@gmail.com).

The YAL social for August will be on Saturday August 10th and will be a beach day. Details of time and place to come via email.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Thank you to everyone who continues to support our Community Outreach ministry to serve the homeless and those in need. For those who don't know, we serve breakfast at First Presbyterian Church on the third Saturday of each month from 8:00-10:30 a.m. Upcoming dates are Saturday, August 17 and September 21. For more information or to sign up to serve one Saturday, please contact, please contact Betty Katherine Palios at [bettypalios@gmail.com](mailto:bettypalios@gmail.com) or 813-468-1596.



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# List of Pledged Stewards for 2013— as of July 15, 2013

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 Abramis, John & Nicky  
 Alexander, John & Anetta  
 Alikakos, Maria  
 Alithinos, Maria & Kathy  
 Alsina, Angel & Lisa  
 Ambrozy, Edward & Philip  
 Anagnost, Deno  
 Andreadakis, Nicholas & Doris  
 Antonakakis, Nickolas & Judith  
 Argyros, Harry & Linda  
 Armstrong, James & Myra  
 Assimiadis, Paul  
 Badrane, Denise  
 Bakirdgi, Joan  
 Balasis, Matthew & Suzy  
 Bedran, Rita  
 Betinis, Giovanna  
 Blackburn, Robert & Kathryn  
 Blakenbaker, James & Michelle  
 Blankenship, Wayne, Athanasia, & Alexander  
 Borgeas, Heidi & Ken Beach  
 Bouglas, Constantine & Angela  
 Bradshaw, Pelagia & Harold  
 Brown, Chrysanthi  
 Bush, Dorothy  
 Calamunci, Alex  
 Calamunci, Catherine  
 Calamunci, Chris & Crystal  
 Cantonis, George & Maria  
 Carter, John & Georgia  
 Cauthorn, Ken & Helen  
 Chagaris, George & Kalliope  
 Chakonas, Ethel Athena  
 Charalabakis, Terry  
 Cherpelis, Basil & Alyssa Zwarych  
 Choundas, Marina & Greg  
 Thachter  
 Choundas, Peter  
 Christodoulou, Louis & Maryann  
 Christou, Tammy  
 Circello, Vincent & Tamera  
 Colado, David & Alexandria  
 Colado, Mary & Hector  
 Conner, Michael & Artemis  
 Cotterman, Sandy  
 Courialis, Telly & Tola  
 Crassas, Alkis & Aime  
 Cunavelis, Frances  
 Cunavelis, John  
 Dalaklis, Joanne

DeJesus, Roy & Anna Tataris  
 De Maio, Alexandra  
 Demas, Anna  
 Demas, John  
 Diamantakes, Georgia  
 Diamantides, Melpo  
 Dimas, Gregory & Evelyn  
 Patsavos  
 Diniaco, Peter & Rebecca  
 Doucas, Deborah  
 Drossos, Patricia  
 Edquid Marc & Maraquet  
 Eggleston, Charles & Catherine  
 Evdemon, Stan & Maryellen  
 Fallieras, George N.  
 Fallieras, Lauren  
 Fallieras, Nicholas & Susan.  
 Farkas, John  
 Fellios, George  
 Fentress, Andrew Kevin & Maria K.  
 Ferarolis, Alexandra  
 Ferarolis, Stamatis & Cheryl  
 Ferekides, Christos & Debbie  
 Forde, Dwight & Ewana  
 Fotopoulos, Anthony & Carole  
 Frazier, Chris  
 Frinmenko, Mary  
 Garcia, Mark & Anastasia  
 Garcia, Richard & Stamie  
 Garos, Victoria  
 Georgas, Thomas & Janet  
 Georgiou, Aristos & JoAnna  
 Georgiou, Speros & Eleanor  
 Gerecke, Edward & Terri  
 Gombos, Jack & Harriet  
 Gorter, Maria  
 Halikoytakis, Alex  
 Halikoytakis, Michael  
 Halkias, Evangeline  
 Halkias, George & Elaine  
 Hambos, George & Donna  
 Hanhan, Amin & Gloria  
 Hartsfield, Christine  
 Hartung, Mark & JoAnn  
 Harvie, Andrew & Krista  
 Harvie, Evan  
 Henderson, Nickollet & Kenneth  
 Higdon, Skip  
 Hoppenstand, Anna  
 Horack, Scott  
 Horrigan, Paulette  
 Iraklianos, Michael  
 Irwin, Jon & Pam  
 Jacobsen, Anne  
 James, Arthur  
 Jennewein, Georgia  
 Johnson, Aphrodit  
 Joseffy, Justin & Valerie House-  
 man

Kabougeris, Pete & Voula  
 Kaburis, George & Kathy  
 Kafantaris, Michael & Amy  
 Kalojiannis, Nic & Alicia  
 Kane, Lance & Georgia  
 Kantzios, Ippkratis  
 Kapetan, Martha  
 Karagiannakis, Keith & Katerina  
 Karaku, Ellen  
 Karas, Anthony & Sophie  
 Karpelenia, Loretta & Daniel  
 Katsadourous, Konstantin & Katherine  
 Katsamakis, Perry  
 Katsifis, John & Margaret  
 Katzaras, George & Elina  
 Katzaras, Nick & Helen  
 Katzaras, Stefan & Kara  
 Kavakos, Estelle  
 Kavouklis, Chris & Debbie  
 Kavouklis, Laz & Maria  
 Kavouklis, Nicholas & Edie  
 Kladakis, Katherine  
 Kladis, George  
 Kladis Theodore  
 Koch John & Cathie  
 Kokkas, John  
 Komninos, Tom & Gina  
 Konstas, Demetrios & Maryann  
 Korakis, Alexander  
 Korakis, Alexandros & Louise  
 Korakis, Tina  
 Kostaris, Irene  
 Koudouna, Dora  
 Kouimanis, Despina & Frank  
 Bartos  
 Krinos, John  
 Krinos, Dimitri & Melissa  
 Kwasny, Foti & Fatin  
 Kyrusm Chris & Katherine  
 L'Hommedieu, Timothy & Tia  
 Laliotis, Stavros & Adriana  
 Laskey, Fred & Coleen  
 Lavdas, Steve  
 Lenardos, Steve & Melissa  
 Leontsinis, Nicole  
 Letobarone, Domenic & Melanie  
 Liakos, James  
 Liakos, Nicholas  
 Lobue, David & Tracy  
 Luter, Thomas  
 Maas, Mary  
 MacLaury, Kathryn  
 Madill, Chad  
 Maltezos, Stephen  
 Manikas, Bill & Nancy  
 Manikas, Clara & Nicholas  
 Martin, Tyson & Marissa  
 Matassini, Nicholas & Christina  
 McKinnon, Joseph & Christina

Mellon, Andria, Keith Lynn & Andrew  
 Melton, Gregory & Victoria  
 Metcalf, Maria  
 Milligan, David & Mary  
 Milonas, Lula  
 Milonas, Taso & Thay  
 Mitchell, John & Edith  
 Mitseas, George & Catherine  
 Moran, Andy & Stefanie  
 Morgan, Theodora & Christopher  
 Mourer, Brett & Ana  
 Moutsatsos, Spero  
 Mueller, William Jeffrey  
 Myer, Ronald & Magdalini  
 Nakis, Betty Ann & Emmanuel  
 Nenos, Byron & Jeanie  
 Nenos, Mary  
 Nenos, Peter  
 Neyland, Bill & Marilyn  
 Nicklow, Thomas & Demetra  
 Nicolao, Chris & Dee  
 Nolen, Pamela  
 Nolas, George & Cheryl  
 Norcross, Diane  
 Olsen, Scott & Elpida  
 O'Malley, Rachel & Zaharis,  
 Constantine  
 Palios, Artie  
 Palios, Betty Katherine  
 Palios, George & Julie  
 Palios, Michael & Bessie  
 Paloumpis, Athanasios & Jenny  
 Panos, Euripides & Denise  
 Papadakis, Alec & Lauren  
 Papadeas, Venetia  
 Papadopoulou, John  
 Papakosta, Peter & Vasiliki  
 Papas, George  
 Pappas, Paul & Georgia  
 Passalaris, Isidoros  
 Passavanti, Anthony & Brittany  
 Osgood  
 Passavanti, Robert & Debbra  
 Patellis, Theophilos  
 Patracoiu, Florin & Marenca  
 Pavlopoulos, George  
 Payne, Georgia  
 Peckham, Richard & Victoria  
 Perdicas, Ernest & Nancy  
 Piperaki, Eleni & Tom Sheridan  
 Plakas, Theodore & Kyriakoula  
 Quinn, Mary Elisabeth  
 Quinn, Tola  
 Rindone, Ryan & Megan  
 Rogers, Aris  
 Rogers II, Aris  
 Rose, Mary  
 Roussos, Archie & Eleftheria  
 Royack, Florian & Jeanie

Saavedra, John  
 Sakellaris, Leo & Anne  
 Sakkis, John & Katherine  
 Scarfogliero, Alexis & Gennaro  
 Scharbach, Michael  
 Scourtes, Christine  
 Serbanos, Michael & Patricia  
 Sermier, Eustace & Bennette  
 Shanahan, Kenneth & Katrina  
 Shearer, John & Fifika  
 Sibley, Russell & Despina  
 Skourellos, Dante & Lindsey  
 Skourellos, Michael & Shirley  
 Skourellos, Petros  
 Slater, Sam & Joanna  
 Sorolis, Eftihia  
 Sorolis, Sophia  
 Sotiropoulos, Paul  
 Sotiropoulos, Peggy  
 Sotiropoulos, Vasiliou & Jenny  
 Spanos, Peter  
 Spencer, Wayne & Pauline  
 Stavropoulos, Jane  
 Stavrou, George & Katina  
 Stephanides, Christos  
 Stephanides, Marios & Ourania  
 Theophanous, Peter  
 Tingiris, Mary  
 Tisdale, Gregory  
 Trakas, Alysa  
 Trakas, Andrew & Adrienne  
 Trakas, Pete & Donna  
 Trimis, Michael & Diane  
 Tsbiris, John  
 Valaes, James & Lynn  
 Vasilopoulos, Kostadinos & Tola  
 Voykin, David  
 Voykin, Mary  
 Wade, Deborah  
 Wagner, Christine  
 Ward, Gary & Sandra  
 Whallen, Donald  
 Worley, Chistene  
 Xenick, Emanuel & Maria  
 Xenick, George & Cindy  
 Xeroteris, Evangeline  
 Yohai, Eleni  
 Yotis, Victor  
 Yotis, William & Eleonora  
 Zabetakis, Maria  
 Zeban, Peter  
 Zoumberos, Stavros & Kathy

\*\*If your name doesn't appear on this list and you have filled out a pledge form for 2013, please contact the office.



# August 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Fast Day	5 Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 6:00 p.m. Fast Day	6 Transfiguration Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Fast Day	7 Paraklesis 6:00 p.m. Fast Day	8 Fr. Stavros out of town 8/8-8/10 Fast Day	9 Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 6:00 p.m. Fast Day	10 Fast Day
11 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Meeting of Ministry Heads Fast Day	12 Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 10:00 a.m. Fast Day	13 Parish Council 6:15 p.m. Fast Day	14 Paraklesis Service of Supplication to the Virgin Mary 6:00 p.m. Fast Day	15 Dormition-Koimisis Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m.	16 Fast Day	17 Community Outreach
18 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m.	19 Fast Day	20 Fast Day	21 Fast Day	22 Fast Day	23 Fast Day	24 Sunday School Teachers' Meeting
25 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. AGAPE Luncheon	26 Fast Day	27 Fast Day	28 Fast Day	29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Fast Day	30 Fast Day	31 Fast Day

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK  
ORTHODOX CHURCH**

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Tampa, FL 33609-4712  
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**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

*Timetable of Services*

**Sundays:** Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.  
**Weekdays:** Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

**Parish Priest:** Rev.Fr.Stavros Akrotirianakis  
813-876-8830 (office) 394-1038 (cell)  
frstav@gmail.com

**Parish Council:**  
Katherine Sakkis, President 813-309-1073  
Bill Manikas V. President 813-716-8185  
Diane Trimis, Secretary 813-968-9038  
Skip Higdon, Treasurer 813-831-9021  
Nick Antonakakis 813-477-6639  
Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668  
Carole Fotopoulos 813-982-0947  
Byron Nenos 813-789-0729  
Dante Skourellos 813-765-9534  
Despina Sibley 813-251-5384  
David Voykin 727-415-5603  
**Stewardship Chairperson:**  
Bill Manikas 813-716-8185

**Office Staff:**  
Christine Bostrom, Operations Coordinator 813-876-8830  
Michele DeLally, Administrative Assistant 813-876-8830

**Office Fax:** 813-443-4899

**•Choir:** Artie Palios, Director 813-831-1294  
Jim Leone, Organist 813-254-7844  
**•Chanter:** Nick Andreadakis 813-876-8830  
**•Sunday Sch.:** Victoria Peckham 813-406-5626  
Maria Xenick 813-839-9897  
**•Finance Committee:** Mike Xenick 813-340-8737  
**•Adult Greek School:** Magda Myer 813-909-2327  
**•AHEPA:** Gregory Tisdale, President 813-922-9979  
**•Community Outreach:** Chairperson  
Betty Katherine Palios 813-215-9862  
**•Daughters:** Ourania Stephanides, Pres. 813-546-4711  
**•Food Pantry:** Anetta Alexander 863-224-3001  
**•GOYA Adv.** Elaine Halkias 813-968-9129  
Byron Nenos 813-789-0729  
**•JOY/HOPE:** Maria Xenick 813- 839-9897  
**•Philoptochos:** JoAnn Hartung, Pres. 727-432-0228  
**•Oratorical Festival Chairperson**  
Peggy Bradshaw: 727-244-1374  
**•Young at Heart:** Nick Antonakakis 813-477-6639  
Mary Nenos 813-935-2096  
**•Jr Olympics:** Byron Nenos 813-789-0729  
**•Ushers:** Tom Georgas 813-985-0236

**•Altar Angels:**  
Engie Halkias, Viorica Kirby &  
Sia Blankenship. 813-932-5859  
**•Bookstore:** Jon & Pamela Irwin 813-679-4113  
**•H XAPA ΜΑΣ Dance Group:**  
Alex De Maio & 813-340-9668  
Marina Choundas 813-877-6136  
**•Glendi Dancers:**Jenna Mingleddorff 813-610-7365  
**•Panigyri Dancers:** Vanessa Aviles 813-221-2194

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is a parish under the spiritual and ecclesiastical oversight of His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios of the Metropolis of Atlanta, of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America in the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

The *Messenger* of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is published on a monthly basis. Publication is the first of each month. Deadline for notices and announcements for the Messenger is the 15th of each month. You may send announcements to the church office or through **email to: stjohngoctampa@gmail.com**

Website: [www.greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com](http://www.greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com)

“May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.” From the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom