

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

November 2015

Mission Statement:

St. John the Baptist 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 member to grow in their faith.

Father Stavros' Message

CHANGE YOUR LATITUDE BY CHANGING YOUR ATTITUDE TO ONE OF GRATITUDE

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created man in His own image, in the image of God, He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of the all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. Genesis 1:26-29

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, the waters, the seas, the sky, the stars, the sun, the moon, the plant and the animals. At the end of each day of the creation, God looked upon what He created, and saw that it was good. (Genesis 1: 4,12, 18, 21, 25). Then He created man in His image and likeness. So important is this point, that we are

made in His image and likeness, that it is said THREE times—In verse 26, and, in verse 27 where it is said twice. He gave the human beings dominion over everything, told us to "fill the earth and subdue it." And when God had finished creating everything, at the end of the sixth day, having placed man as the crowning jewel in the Creation (why the crowning jewel? Because only the human being is created in God's image and likeness, the plants and animals are not like that), then "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was VERY good." (1:31) This is the only occasion in the Creation story that the superlative "VERY" is used when describing what was created.

And at the beginning, mankind lived in harmony with God, in a state of Paradise. No pain, no sorrow, no suffering. Present at all times, however, was a choice. God told mankind "You may eat freely of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the union of good and evil, you shall not eat, for in the day you eat of it you shall die." (Genesis 2:16) God gave man free will, the choice to choose God and the choice to go away from Him.

What was the first sin? Most people quickly answer that the first sin was disobedience, that mankind partook of the tree. Let's look more closely.

Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. (Genesis 3:1-6)

The woman (and the man too, it wasn't just Eve) were tempted by the serpent. The serpent presented them with an idea—that you can have something you don't have, and that somehow life will be better if you have that thing that you don't currently have. And instead of saying "No, we are thankful and content with what we DO have," they looked with desire at something they didn't have and weren't supposed to have. They became GREEDY. So the first sin of the human being was greed, ingratitude, lack of thankfulness. The second sin was disobedience, when they actually ate of the fruit.

And the third sin was that they did not repent for what they had done.

Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate." (Genesis 3: 7-13)

Immediately after eating the forbidden fruit, mankind realized that they had done wrong, and rather than running to God in repentance, they instead began to take steps to cover their tracks. First, they realized he was naked so they put on cloths. When they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden, they hid themselves. And when God asked them if they had eaten of the forbidden tree, the man blamed the woman and the woman blamed the serpent. No one took responsibility, no one asked for forgiveness, no one offered repentance. In fact, rather than show some humility, both man and woman showed anger.

When you think about the Ten Commandments, the root cause of breaking each of them is ingratitude.

I am not grateful to God,
so I have other gods before me.

I am not grateful to God,
so I worship other images.

I am not grateful to God,
so I dishonor Him by using His name in vain.
I am not grateful for the mouth God gave me,
so I dishonor Him with my words.

I am not grateful to God,
I see no need to worship Him, so I use the Sabbath (or day of worship) for my own needs, ignoring not only a commandment to worship God but an inherent need to do so.

I am not grateful for my parents,
so I do not honor them.

I am not grateful for my neighbor,
so I cause harm to him.

I am not grateful for what I have,
so I steal so I can have what I don't have.

I am not grateful for my marriage,
so I seek pleasure in someone else. And for those who are not married, I am not grateful for the institution of marriage, and so having failed to reach this state, I take "marital pleasure" without the marital commitment.

I am not grateful for my neighbor,
so I speak poorly about him. I am not grateful for my own life, so I invent things about myself to make me look greater.

I am not grateful for what I have,
so I look with jealousy on what others have.

As I have reflected on my own sins and shortcomings, I am coming to realize that the root cause of ALL of them is a sense of ingratitude. If I can train myself to have a THANKFUL heart, then I will eliminate all my sinful behavior. Obviously, we are all going to fall, no one will eliminate all sinful behavior. But if I want to grow in my relationship with Christ, if I want to lessen my sinfulness, the perfect place to start is by being more thankful.

In November, we'll celebrate the feast of Thanksgiving. Just writing that sentence makes me shake my head. Why? Because Thanksgiving is a feast that should be celebrated EVERY day, and not just on the fourth Thursday of November. And because when we actually get to this day of Thanksgiving, we actually ACT a lot like Adam and Eve, as we gluttonously devour whatever is in front of us. It becomes a feast of food instead of a feast of thanks.

Then there is the Thanksgiving Prayer. Many families who never pray will actually offer a prayer on Thanksgiving, because, well, it's part of the tradition. It's actually EASY to offer a prayer of thanksgiving when the table is richly laden.

It's another thing to offer a prayer of THANKSGIVING when the table is BARE.

I'm writing about Thanksgiving in this message, not to disparage a feast that all of us love. Trust me, I plan on eating well on Thanksgiving, and I plan on watching football too. But to highlight for us that above all other feasts, this is the feast we should celebrate EVERY DAY of the year. We should thank God for our food at every meal. We should thank God every morning for the gift of another day. We should thank God for the blessings we see, and even the ones we don't see. We shouldn't be ungrateful for the blessings we won't see, but be grateful for the ones we will see.

And we should be more thankful for our neighbors. Every political campaign is based around the premise that "I am the only good candidate." There is no value in the other candidate. Every athletic contest is based on "my team is the only team that deserves to win." Competition to get into a college or to land a job depends on not only someone succeeding but on someone else failing. Rather than be thankful for our own successes, even small ones, it is almost the human tendency now to root for others to fail. Like I can't succeed unless someone else fails.

So, if you want to change your life, CHANGE YOUR LATITUDE BY CHANGING YOUR ATTITUDE TO ONE OF GRATITUDE. The grateful person sees his glass as half full and not half empty. The grateful person can shake the hand of his opponent in defeat. The grateful person sees his neighbor with thankfulness, rather than as a threat. Let's look again at the Ten Commandments and put statements of gratitude in them.

I am grateful to God,
so I have Him front and center in my life.

I am grateful to God,
so I give Him the first place of honor and value.

I am grateful to God,
so I honor Him by glorifying His name and speaking good things about him to other people.

I am grateful to God,
so I will take some time each week to worship Him. I will take time each day to pray to Him.

I am grateful for my parents,
so I will honor them, even if I do not agree with them all the time.

I am grateful for my neighbor,
so I will make sure I work hard to see that no harm comes to him.

I am grateful for what I have,
so I will not steal what I don't have.

I am grateful for my spouse,
and I will love them no matter what shortcomings they might have. And for those who are single, I will trust in God that He has a plan for my life, and will stay pure until God blesses me to enter into the sacrament of marriage.

I am grateful to my neighbor,
so I will not speak poorly about him.

I am grateful for what I have,
so I will not be jealous about that I don't have. In fact, I will celebrate the successes of others, even if they are not my own successes.

If you wake up every day fearing the challenges, you won't have as many successes as if you wake up grateful for possibilities.

If you see the bad points in people, you won't be grateful for their good ones.

If you are so preoccupied being disappointed in what you don't have, you won't feel gratitude towards God for what you do have.

Earlier in my life, I used to think a negative thought every morning when I woke up, and that thought was "darn, the alarm already." My first thought was a selfish one—why can't I sleep more? Over the years, I have tried to train my mind to be prayerful first thing in the morning. So that on most days, my first thought when I wake up is "Thank You God that I am alive to see another day." I actually say five "thank you's" before I get out of bed each day.

Thank You God that I'm alive.
Thank You God for my wife.
Thank You God for our son.
Thank You God that I have a roof over my head.
Thank You God that I have a place to go today.

Before my feet hit the floor each morning, I say five thank you's and now can't imagine starting the day off without them. As I go to sleep each night, I try to say five thank you's as well.

Thank You God for the day that has passed, that I lived to see the end of it.
Thank You God for my family.
Thank You God for the roof over my head.
Thank You God for the gift of rest.
Thank You God for the gift of Your Son. If I do not live to see the morning, please forgive my sins, and give repose to my soul.

Now, I still get mad when I'm driving, though when I'm sitting in traffic I try to remember that it's better to be driving 20 miles an hour than walking three miles an hour in the hot sun. And I still sometimes wish for things I don't have. Sometimes I fail to see the good in my neighbor, and even worse, fail to help my neighbor. I've got a ways to go in lots of areas. But I'm coming to realize that the key to living a Christ centered life is to do the thing that Adam failed to do—to be grateful to God for all that He has given me, to be grateful for what I have rather than coveting what I do not have.

And anytime I'm not happy with my "latitude", I try to change

my attitude with gratitude. Let's not make Thanksgiving something we only celebrate on one day in November, and not even very well on that day. Let's make thanksgiving something we celebrate every day—each morning, each night, at each meal, and throughout the day.

One more note on Thanksgiving. In Greek, the word for "Thanks" is "Efharisto" and for "thanksgiving" it is "Efharistia". "Efharistia" also translates as "Eucharist." The "Eucharist", Holy Communion, is an act of Divine Thanksgiving to Christ. So not only are we receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, we are GIVING thanks by receiving. We grow in the Lord in Thanksgiving—in the Eucharist, in prayer, and in attitude.

Imagine how the history of the world would have been changed had Adam and Eve just said "Thank You God for what we have" rather than partaking of what they didn't have. Imagine

how your life would change if every time you were in the place of Adam and Eve—and we all are in that place every day—if you said "Thank You God for what I have. It would change our attitude, it would change our latitude, if we all had just a little more gratitude.

Allow me to close my message by thanking you for being part of my ministry, part of our parish family, offering your prayers, worship and talents to help further the Christian message in Tampa and far beyond. I thank God for YOU!!!

With love in the Lord,
+Fr. Stavros



Make this Your Best Advent Ever by Joining the Advent Prayer Team

Many of you, 300 and counting, are part of the Prayer Team. You get a daily message from me. I am grateful for your prayers. Normally for the Prayer Team, I'm writing a message on different topics during the week and on the weekends I write about Praying the Liturgy. From November 14-January 8, I will be writing on the scriptures of Christmas and Epiphany. Advent for the Orthodox Church begins on November 15. This is a period where we are supposed to fast and prepare ourselves for the Feast of the Nativity. In America, Advent is marked by decorations, parties and shopping. The scriptures of Christmas are read on Christmas, after the entire season of preparation has passed. For the period of Advent, every day there will be a piece of scripture of the Nativity story in the Bible, with reflections and prayers each day to help focus our thoughts on this most important feast.

If you are already part of the prayer team, you'll continue to receive these messages as you do now.

If you are not part of the prayer team, please email me at frstav@gmail.com or email Charlie at charlie.hambos@gmail.com and we'll be happy to add you to the list.

I spent a few days in October outlining the journey through the scriptures that we will take during Advent. Many of them have already been written. I've never looked at the Christmas scriptures verse by verse, sometimes word by word. But there is an absolute treasury of information and inspiration that I look forward to sharing with you. What a great gift it would be to our community, if every member of the community shared in this Advent journey together by joining the prayer team. All you have to do is 1) send an email; 2) read a short reflection each day; and 3) offer a prayer for Father, Charlie and our community.

If you are wanting to give me something this Christmas, please offer your name for our prayer team and let's share this journey to the manger together.

+Fr. Stavros

"Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but also the parent of all the others."

-- Cicero, Philosopher

Liturgical Schedule for November 2015

Sunday, November 1 5th Sunday of Luke

Orthros: 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Captains and St. John (Dean Mitseas, Chrstios Nenos, Antonio Bavaro, Nicholas Yotis, Peter Chandler, Zach Chandler, Niko Bavaro, Anthony Catrone)

Ushers: Florin Patrasciou, Mike Kavouklis, Tammy Christou

Welcome Committee: Greeters: Debbie Kavouklis, Skip Higdon; Ambassador: Kalliope Chagaris; Caller: Edie Kavouklis

Get Acquainted: Ewana Forde, Dwight Forde

Coffee Hour: Small Group Bible Study

Friday, November 6 Tampa Greek Festival Orthros: 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Saturday, November 7 Tampa Greek Festival Orthros: 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 8 Synaxis of the Archangels

Orthros: 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Anyone attending may serve

Ushers: Ron Myer, Perry Katsamakis, Peter Theophanous

Monday, November 9 St. Nectarios Orthros: 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Friday, November 13 St. John Chrysostom Orthros: 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 15 8th Sunday of Luke - Nativity Fast Begins

Orthros: 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Captains and St. Matthew (George Hambos, Nicholas Katzaras, James Katzaras, John Palios, Andrew Patrasciou, Genaro Scargofliero, Makis Crassas, Jonathan Brannan, John Nicholas Krinos)

Ushers: Gregory Tisdale, John Christ, George Trimikliniotis

Welcome Committee: Greeters: Skip Higdon, Vanessa Aviles; Ambassador: Donna Trakas; Caller: Christine Worley

Coffee Hour: Festival Appreciation

Monday, November 16 St. Matthew Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, November 18 Holy Unction 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 21 Entrance of the Theotokos Orthros 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 22 9th Sunday of Luke

Orthros: 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Captains and St Mark (John Karamitsanis, Lukas Karamitsanis, Brigham Sibley, Dominic Garcia, Benny Hidermichel, James Kavouklis, William Sotiropoulos, Alexander Sotiropoulos, Garrison Borgeas-Beach)

Ushers: Brett Mourer, Demetrios Halkias, Amin Hanhan

Welcome Committee: Greeters: Donna Hambos, Jeanie Nenos; Ambassador: Skip Higdon; Caller: Christine Worley

Coffee Hour: AHEPA/DOP

Monday, October 26 St. Demetrios Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 29 13th Sunday of Luke

Orthros: 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Anyone attending may serve

Ushers: David Voykin, Ed Gerecke, Pete Trakas

Welcome Committee: Greeters: Vanessa Aviles, Jenny Paloumpis; Ambassador: Carole Fototopoulos; Caller: Lisa Alsina

Coffee Hour: Young at Heart

Monday, November 30 St. Andrew Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Liturgical Notes for November

Sunday, November 1 - Feast of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, the unmercenary healers

Sts. Cosmas and Damian are the Patron Saints of the Philoptochos, as they went from place to place healing people and not taking any money for their services. Sts. Cosmas and Damian (called Agioi Anargyroi) are also saints we pray to for intercession when we are sick, and also are patron saints of doctors.

Friday, November 6 and Saturday, November 7 - Liturgy on ALL DAYS OF THE FESTIVAL

The Divine Liturgy can be celebrated any day of the year except Good Friday. As we have done in the past two years, which also coincides with the two best festivals we have ever had, we will be celebrating the Liturgy all three days of the Greek Festival, to ask the Holy Spirit to come down upon us and upon the Holy Gifts on what is an important weekend in the life of our parish. Liturgy on November 6, 7 and 8 will begin at 9:00 a.m., preceded each day by Orthros at 8:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 8 - Feast of the Archangels

This feast commemorates the Archangels Michael and Gabriel and all of the “bodiless powers” of heaven, all of the angels.

Monday, November 9 - Feast of St. Nectarios

St. Nectarios is a “modern day” saint, a saint of the 20th Century, (Died in 1920, Canonized as a Saint in 1960), who was a bishop in Greece. St. Nectarios is the patron saint of cancer patients and is considered one of our “healing” saints, meaning that we invoke his intercessions when we are praying for those who are sick. Cancer sufferers and survivors are urged to attend this Liturgy in order to pray for continued healing through the Intercessions of St. Nectarios. Father Stavros has oil from the tomb of St. Nectarios in Aegina, Greece, with which he will anoint the faithful in attendance at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on November 9

Thursday, November 13 - Feast of St. John Chrysostom

St. John Chrysostom lived in the 4th Century. He was a Bishop of the Church and is recognized as one of the Three Hierarchs (together with St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory the Theologian). He received the title “Chrysostomos,” meaning “the Golden Mouth,” for his great ability in oratory. St. John Chrysostom authored the Divine Liturgy that we celebrate on most Sundays. Therefore, we offer the Divine Liturgy on this day in honor of St. John Chrysostom.

Monday, November 16 - Feast of St. Matthew the Evangelist

St. Matthew is the author of one of the four Gospels. It is customary to celebrate the Liturgy on the feast days of the Four Evangelists, reading from their respective Gospels on their respective feastdays.

Wednesday, November 18 - Holy UNCTION for the beginning of Advent at 6:00 p.m.

The forty day period of Advent begins on November 15. It is a period of fasting and reflective preparation. In America, Advent is marked by a period of shopping, decorating and parties, none of which really help us prepare spiritually to celebrate the great feast of the Nativity. As we have done in past years, we will hold a Holy Unction Service as we begin the period of Advent—it will be on Wednesday, November 18, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Please bring your Holy Week book as the service will follow what is in the Holy Week book for Holy Wednesday evening.

Saturday, November 21 - Feast of the Entrance of the Virgin Mary into the Temple

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

Wednesday, November 25 - Feast of St. Katherine the Great Martyr

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

Wednesday, November 25 - Evening Liturgy for Thanksgiving

In Greek the word for Thanksgiving is “Eucharistia,” so the Holy Eucharist is the “Holy Thanksgiving.” As we celebrate Thanksgiving with turkey and the Dallas Cowboys on Thursday, set aside Wednesday to receive the Holy Thanksgiving. As is our custom at St. John, we will celebrate Divine Liturgy for Thanksgiving on Wednesday, November 25 at 6:00 p.m.

Monday, November 30 - Feast of St. Andrew

St. Andrew is the first-called of the Apostles. He is also the patron saint of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

Healing the Pain of the World within Us – The Church as a Hospital

By Charlie Hambos

Author's Note: This is Part 2 of a three part series in The Messenger, exploring some different metaphors of the church. In this issue, we check ourselves in to the Church, as a hospital for sinners and find the healing we need through Christ. In the October issue, we embarked on a journey across the stormy seas of life and saw how the church is the boat, which we need to climb aboard for safety. Look forward to the December issue where we will stretch out our arms and legs and imagine the church as the Body, not anybody but the Body of Christ.

“**T**he church is a hospital for sinners not a museum for saints.” Perhaps we have heard this quote by Abigail Van Buren. She is correct. Now, on a surface level, walking into an Orthodox Church ornately decorated with icons of the saints, it may feel that we, as Orthodox, maintain a museum for saints. And, many of us, have indeed done this. I can assure you, however, these icons are not meant as “artwork” but as “windows into heaven.” It is a part of the therapy of the church. It is a part of the worship of the Orthodox Church. It is a part of the Sacramental life of the Orthodox Church. What this quote really means, however, is the idea that the church is for those who are lost and sick and not for the elite, with their nose sticking high in the sky, feeling that they are better than their neighbor in the same pew. “For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost (John 19:10).” Don’t get me wrong, there exists a balance in being respectful of the sacred space which is the church, and being over the top or being careless.

Now, back to the metaphor at hand. Christ says in Matthew 11:28-29, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” We toil in this world. It is a hard place to live. The Church must be a place where we can lay our burdens down, giving them over to Christ, or at least let Him help lift what we are carrying. Christ here is actually speaking about those who labor and are heavy laden in following the Law (not just the big 10, but all 613 commandments). This was geared towards the Pharisees, in particular, because they would wear themselves out by trying to keep the law, forgetting its purpose, to show them they were sinners and needed a Savior. Many of us, come to church, and leave our burdens outside and pick them up on the way out. Making ourselves appear to be what we aren’t. Come to church and bring all your “poop” with you. Open up to Christ and let Him take the “poop” away.

The Church is a hospital. What kinds of people do we see in a hospital? We see sick people. We see the family of the sick people, coming to visit. We see doctors, nurses, surgeons and the army of technicians and specialists. We also see people who clean and cook and maintain the facilities. Everyone has a purpose.

The goal of a hospital is to heal. The goal of a church is also to

heal. The goal of a hospital is to diagnose, treat and heal physical and mental diseases or ailments for a better, more meaningful life here on the earth. The goal of the church, is the same, to diagnose, treat and heal not only for a better life here on earth but the ultimate goal of preparing our “state of being” for eternal life with our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. The body sooner or later will die. Spiritual health is eternal and more real.

The metaphor of the church as a hospital can be problematic in two ways as pointed out by Dr. A.J. Swoboda in his article, “The Church is Not a Hospital,” on Christianitytoday.com. “By saying the church is a hospital, we imply two things—first, the picture of a church as a building that employs a class of professional elite healthy people who get paid to get sick people better. Second, the church as a place someone goes when they’re sick but should leave when they’re healthy. (Nobody lives in a hospital.)” Dr. A.J. Swoboda based on these two things, is correct. Indeed, the Church is not a hospital. Both are definitely very wrong assumptions as we classify the church as a hospital. First, Father Stavros Akrotirianakis and every other priest have many, many skills and are extremely talented “Doctors of the Soul.” However, they are not psychiatrists, surgeons, dentists etc. More often than not, the care team, at a Church is just the Priest. Obviously, that is not going to work, well. What will work is if the Church, is wise enough to have the resources needed for well-being of the soul which are outside the confines of what the Church can provide.

The second way the church metaphor is a problem is that once a person is healthy, they can leave. Or, people only come when they are sick. This is definitely not what we want in the church. As we said, before, the goal of the church, is the same, to diagnose, treat and heal not only for a better life here on earth but the ultimate goal of preparing our “state of being” for eternal life with our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. This means, that the church, does some serious follow-up. In fact, the follow-up continues throughout the rest of our lives. First of all, no one is going to be completely healed until reach the point of becoming one with God (theosis). This requires a thorough Treatment Plan, which is called the Sacramental Life of the Church. The medicine is the sacraments. The sacraments require preparation and abstaining. For example, Holy Communion is not a bowl of cereal (please forgive the very non-chalant idea here). If there is not understanding of what we are doing when we receive or preparation then it will not be the medicine it needs to be. Holy Unction is not a magic potion, which heals the infirmities. It is through the power of prayer, intercession of the saints and the use of something of creation (oil) to provide healing. If we go to the doctor and get prescribed a medication, there are some warnings. For example, some prescriptions require abstinence from alcohol, while taking the medication, because the results if taken with alcohol could be fatal or definitely not helpful. If we take communion, but continue in the same habitual sins, without struggling and using communion as a tool with adequate preparation, then it is useless, for the most

part. I also believe, the Holy Spirit is present everywhere and fills all things and we must also put our faith in the mystery of the Sacramental Life. Even if someone, receives Communion, habitually without understanding, it is possible that the Holy Spirit can move the soul in a direction toward Christ.

The Church's primary work is therapy. Therapy to heal the split between humanity including all of creation and God, our Creator. Through the Church, we learn we were created perfect by a perfect God. The "state of being" was the total love of human beings toward God, toward one another, and toward Creation. Humanity fell, from that "state of being" through Adam and Eve. Now, our "state of being" has been plagued with confusion, sin, anger and death. This is not what was intended. The therapy that the Church provides is not intangible. It is very tangible. The therapy must take place now, not after we die.

Fr. Maximos, from "Gifts of the Desert: The Forgotten Path of Christian Spirituality," by Kyriacos Markides:

"We must not forget that this healing has distinct and identifiable attributes in the same way that a therapy for bodily illness has distinct and identifiable characteristics. Do you remember Paul's epistle to the Galatians? Like the good doctor of the soul that he was, he identifies what the symptoms of sin and spiritual ill-ness are: hostility, jealousy, anger, idolatry, murder,

drunkenness, debauch-ery, adultery, and so on. He then points out that the therapy from such illnesses is not some-thing abstract and vague but something concrete and clearly recognizable. He goes on to enumerate the tangible fruits of spiritual healing: love, joy, peace, forbearance, goodness, gentleness, faith, and the like [Gal 5:22]. In other words, the Apostle Paul shows us that the Church's therapeutic interventions have real and tangible results. That means we can identify and test for ourselves whether we have been spiritually healed from the illnesses that haunted us. Such therapy has practical consequences in our lives."

The Church indeed is a hospital. Just like in any hospital we can find, doctors, nurses, recovering patients, acutely sick people, terminally sick people and all of those providing the support necessary. We may even see a dead person. It doesn't really matter what role we play in this spiritual hospital. Through Jesus Christ and the Sacramental Life in the Church, we have the hope and the possibility to achieve our own resurrection of body and soul and the restoration of our spiritual health.

We must always remember this important role of the Church in our lives and the life of the entire universe. If we do, the Church becomes another worldly institution. We are called to be more.

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. Thank you for your consideration.

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Community News

Parish Registry

Wedding - Oscar Howard Barbery and Jean Annette Barbessi were married on Friday, September 18. Maria Xenick was the Koumbara. Congratulations!

Wedding - Brian Cazzola and Roxana Stoican were married on Saturday, September 19. Holly Swayne was the Koumbara. Congratulations!

Wedding - Daniel Gregory and Alicia Marie Stefero were married on Saturday, September 26. Fr. John Stefero and Fr. Stavros officiated. Elaina Stefero was the Koumbara. Congratulations!

Wedding - Austin Sigety and Kimberly Law were married on Saturday, October 10. Alexandra Law was the Koumbara. Congratulations!

Condolences to Maria Fentress and family, on the passing of her father, Christos Koumparakis, on September 28. May his memory be eternal!

Books Available for Weddings, Baptisms, and Funerals

Weddings, baptisms and funerals in our church are not only occasions that mark important milestones in life. They are also opportunities to pray and worship, as well as learn more about our faith. Each service is rich with theology, packet with meaning, filled with hope (yes, even the funeral service is filled with hope). But because we haven't had a text in the pews of these services, people have missed out on the opportunity to offer the responses, pray the prayers, and understand the meaning of what is being said. This problem is no more. Thanks to the work of a small committee and a generous donation by Pres. Loretta Karpelenia in memory of her husband, Fr. Basil, we now have a "sacraments" book, which includes the texts of wedding, baptism and funeral. At each one of these services, books will be placed in the narthex for you to use. Please return them either to the narthex or to the front of the church after each sacrament. Please treat these books well and we will be able to enjoy them for years to come. If you wish to have a text of any of these services for use at home, please email Father Stavros or Charlie and they will be happy to email you the text.

Get Acquainted Sunday, November 1



In an effort to get to know one another better, we are going to continue our "Get Acquainted Sundays" one Sunday of each month. We will have nametags and markers in the entry way of the Kourmolis Center and will ask that each person put one on during coffee hour and introduce yourself to at least one person that you do not know. This will serve to help us increase our fellowship and sense of community.



Greek Festival Appreciation Luncheon Sunday, November 15

Though this edition of the Messenger is being written prior to the Festival, we invite all festival workers to come join with us the Sunday after the festival for a festival appreciation luncheon, sponsored by the Festival Committee Tampa.

AHEPA Family Scholarship Opportunities



St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is pleased to announce the AHEPA and Daughters of Penelope Scholarship Committee are now accepting applications. The scholarship's purpose is to promote, encourage, and advance education at the college, university and graduate school levels. Please contact Edie Kavouklis at 813.758.0305 or Marina Paras at 813.966.9527 for additional information.

The deadline for submission is November 30th, 2014



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. This month we will be serving Saturday, November 21. For more information or to sign up to serve one Saturday, please contact, please contact Betty Katherine Katsamakakis at bettypalios@gmail.com or 813-468-1596.



GOYA

Our GOYA meeting for November will be Sunday, November 22, from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Dinner, as always, will be served.

Men's Basketball

On Tuesday nights at 8:00 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center is open for men's basketball pick up games. If you are interested in joining the games, please contact Perry Katsamakakis at 516-403-3118 or Jimmy Konstas at 813-220-7352 or just come to the gym and join a team! **No skills necessary.**

Ministry of Mothers Sharing (MOMS)

MOMS are changing their meeting day! Please join MOMS every other Friday as we provided Biblical encouragement and support to women as they begin their journey of motherhood. This month we will be meeting Friday, November 6 and Friday, November 20. Please join us on November 6 at 11:00 a.m. at St. John the Baptist Tampa Greek Festival! All future meeting locations will rotate. Contact Lindsey Skourellos 813-503-7845/lskourellos@yahoo.com or Mary Ann Konstas 813-215-9862/mapkonstas@gmail.com for more information.

Young at Heart

The next Young at Heart Meeting will be Thursday, December 3, 2015 in the Zaharias Room.

The Young At Heart is taking reservations for the annual Christmas Dinner show that we attend. It is at the Showboat Dinner Theater in Hudson on Saturday, December 19 at 11:00 a.m. We will meet at the church and carpool to Hudson. They serve a buffet meal and there is a show. This year is a "Christmas Revue" with a "Living Nativity." Our reservations must be in as soon as possible (they sell out quickly) but no later than November. The cost is under \$43. Please contact one of the Young at Heart members. We would love to have a big group to share in the fun. Everyone is welcome to join!



It is time to start thinking of what costume you are going to wear to the upcoming dance (Mardi Gras Ball) the Young at Heart will be hosting on Saturday, February 27. There will be cash prizes for best costumes and a raffle. Live music by John Demas and The Omega Project. Catering will be by Big Star Catering. Tickets will go on sale in December and January
Adult \$40.00 Ages 10-18 \$25.00 Kids Under 10 are free!

Please stay subscribed to Constant Contact

Our church is now using Constant Contact for mailings for GOYA, Philoptochos, Sunday School, and other ministries, as well as for announcements. The whole community receives community announcements. We have separate group lists for Sunday School, GOYA, etc., so members of those groups will receive those messages. If you unsubscribe from the community list, you will NOT get Constant Contact reminders from the other lists you may be on. Unsubscribing from the community list unsubscribes you from a GOYA list, or Sunday school list, etc. If you are not on constant contact right now, or have unsubscribed and wish to be added, please email Charlie at charlie.hambos@gmail.com and we'll add you to the list.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Thank you for the great start to our 2015-2016 Sunday School year. We've having record attendance thanks to all the teachers, parents, and children who are committed to our program. We will keep track of Perfect Attendance for the year and award those students at our Graduation Ceremony. Currently there are over 45 students with Perfect Attendance.

The Sunday School Topics for the month of October were: HOLY COMMUNION, MUSIC/HYMNS OF THE CHURCH, AND THE THEOTOKOS. We would like to thank Fr. Stavros for supporting our Sunday School and Charlie Hambos for his visits to our classrooms. He has already conducted lessons in our Kindergarten, First Grade, Second Grade and Middle School classrooms about our Church Vessels. He also give a children's sermon on Youth Sundays.

Our children sang beautifully on Sunday, Oct. 18th for the YOUTH SUNDAY SERVICE under the direction of Maria Xenick. We would like to thank our children for singing and our High School students for reading the Epistle. Our Fifth Graders also learned about and made Prospora for our church on October 4th under the direction of Melissa Krinos. Our 3rd graders did the same on October 18th. The congregation of St. John's is truly blessed to have such wonderful children.

We would like to thank Tom Pessemier for sending the teachers the video of Fr. Stavros' Sermon to us every week. One of the negatives about Sunday School is missing these great sermons. Watching these videos is the next best thing to listening to them in person. We would also like to thank Olya Clifton for taking all our class pictures this year. Don't forget to check out these pictures on our Sunday School Bulletin Board the next time you are in the hall.

GET TO KNOW OUR TEACHERS:

(We will feature more teachers in the next Messenger.)

Stella Polycarpou - 1st Grade Co-Teacher

"I am so excited to be able to teach the First Grade Sunday School class this year! Being able to pass along my knowledge and understanding of our faith to the kids at such a young age is something that brings me great joy. I am originally from Denver, Colorado, where I taught Sunday School for two years prior to moving here to manage a psychiatry clinic for adults and adolescents. I am thrilled to be included as a part of this parish and I am looking forward to a great year!"

Marina Choundas - 2nd Grade Teacher

"It is going to be such a great Sunday School year! I am excited to share prayer, Bible stories and spiritual fellowship with the 2nd graders so we can all apply God's Word in our daily lives. I have been a member of St. John's since 1981, and my involvement with Sunday School started when I was 17, as an assistant in the pre-K Sunday School class. I was in the church's dance group that performed at St. John's very first Greek festival and now co-teach the St. John's dance groups. I am a business lawyer, and my husband Greg and I have two children: Andrew Thatcher (5th grade) and Ariana Thatcher (3rd grade). I am honored to be teaching the Orthodox faith to the children of our community, and I look forward to an inspiring year."

Stamie Garcia-3rd Grade Sunday School

"I love teaching Sunday School because at a young age is the best time to plant God's seeds of love". I was born and raised in Daytona Beach, FL and attended St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church. My grandparents were one of the original founders of St. Demetrios in Daytona, so I take great pride in being Greek Orthodox. My profession is in pharmaceutical sales and have been with the same company for 15 years. I have also been married for 15 year to my wonderful husband Rick and have two amazing children, Dominic (13) & Sophia (11). My style of teaching is fun and on the kid's level so they know God is real and loves them so so much!

Vickie Peckham - 5th Grade Teacher and Director of the Sunday School

"It is an honor and a privilege to serve the children of St. John's Church. I have a love for our Orthodox faith and for children, so naturally my calling is to be involved in the Sunday School. I actually taught my first Sunday School class at age 18. I was born in Rochester, New York. Married my husband, Rick, and then moved to Hartford, Conn. Our two boys, Alex and Matthew, were born there and we moved to Tampa in 1996 when they were 4 and 2. Shortly afterwards I started teaching Sunday School and I haven't stop since. I am a Florida certified teacher and have taught in all three states in Special Ed. and Regular Ed. Education is so rewarding and I am always inspired by my Sunday School students interest in learning as much as they can about our faith. My ultimate goal is for them to develop a personal relationship with GOD."

Maria Xenick - Music Program and Retreats.

"I am so excited to have started such an awesome Sunday School year! I teach our short music lesson each week to start our Sunday School classes for grades 1-5. We have been overflowing with students and that is such an inspiring way to start our lesson! We typically sing for about 10 - 15 minutes and we range from fun Christian songs to hymns of our church to seasonal music. I am a History teacher by trade, but I have a great love of music, especially our beautiful sacred hymns of the Orthodox Church. I have a wonderful husband and three beautiful children who share my love of music. I have sung in the St. John Choir for over 30 years! I started singing with the big choir when I was 12. It is a joy and a pleasure to share my love and experience with our young children."

Please feel free to contact us with any questions, suggestions, or comments regarding St. John's Sunday School Program. Parents: If you do not receive our weekly e-mails about our Sunday School Program, please contact Vickie Peckham at 406-5626 or e-mail her at vickiepeckham@gmail.com.



Our Annual Greek Festival is coming up in a few days. This is the major fundraiser for our church, so it's important that everyone get involved. But as we did last year, the primary focus is not going to be on money, it's going to be on Christ. Last year, we came together every morning and we celebrated the Liturgy, to call the Holy Spirit down upon us, upon our whole community. We prayed over, around, before, during and after the Festival. It was truly done in a spirit of prayer and of community. We are going to do the festival covenant again this year. Why? Because in signing that covenant, we all agreed to raise the standard of our behavior. And we all did. And those covenants, the covenants were kept in the altar for the three days of the festival, and every name was commemorated in the Divine Liturgy all three days. This year, we are going to celebrate the Liturgy on all the days of the festival again, so that we can again, call for the Holy Spirit to come down on all of us during this special time. The festival will be fun. Hopefully the festival will be profitable. But most of all, we hope that the festival is meaningful, because the meaningfulness of the festival will last a lot longer than the laughs and the profits.

~OPA~

It is not too late to Sign up and VOLUNTEER your TIME for our annual festival. We thank all of our dedicated volunteers that helped to plan for this event and the 100s ready to commit a great deal of time over the festival weekend. We are ready (with comfortable shoes) for a great deal of fun and hospitality next weekend to showcase our faith and the Greek Heritage!

Look for exciting Social Media Changes as our annual Greek Festival gets connected on Twitter and Facebook.

**Follow us on Twitter @TPAGreekFest and check out our
Tampa Greek Festival FaceBook Page!**

Go to Tampagreekfestival.com for more information and follow the
Volunteer Link to sign up TODAY!

If for some reason you did not sign up (but find yourself able to volunteer Festival Weekend), just stop at Volunteer Check-in - WE will find a place for YOU!

If any questions please email tpagreekfestival@gmail.com or call Sandra Pappas - 813-785-3747

Festival Days/Hours

Friday November 6 - Sunday November 8, 2015

Friday & Saturday: 11 a.m. - Midnight

Sunday: 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Please note that Divine Liturgy will be held
from 9:00-10:15 a.m. on Sunday, November 8

2015
Tampa

GREEK

FESTIVAL

Festival Committee

Alkis Crassas, Overall
acrassas@gmail.com, 813-690-3867

Dan Bavaro, Food & Beverage
dan@bavarofoods.com, 732-239-7273

Theo Camene, Admissions
tcamene@gmail.com, 727-482-1302

Catherine Mitseas, Advertising/PR
cmitseas@icloud.com, 813-571-0658

Theo Panopoulos, Marketing/IT
tp2@me.com, 248-868-3697

Sandra Pappas, Volunteers
spappas11@gmail.com, 813-785-3747

Florin Patrascioiu, Vendor Sales
florinp@gmail.com, 813-817-4070

Mike Xenick, Buildings & Grounds
mxenick@gmail.com, 813-340-8737

Area/Booth Chairs

Album Sales, Maria Gorter
Mariag44@live.com, 813- 841-1883

Bar-Outside, Ryan Rindone
ryan.rindone@gmail.com, 704-564-2046

Beverage Carts, Greg Melton
gmelt12@gmail.com, 813-355-6360

Bookstore, Bill Manikas
manrou2000@yahoo.com, 813-960-3679

Choir, Artie Palios
jpalios1@tampabat.rr.com, 813-831-1294

Church tours, Charlie Hambos
charlie.hambos@gmail.com, 813-876-8830

Dance group, H XAPA ΜΑΣ, Alex De Miao
alexandra.demaio@libetrymutual.com 813-340-9668
Bessie Palios, bmp1126@yahoo.com, 813-523-0347
Maraquet Edquid, maraquet@gmail.com, 813-422-8963

Dance group, Kefi, Anna-Maria Bavaro
annamariabavaro@gmail.com, 732- 239-9085
Marina Choundas, mchoundas@foley.com, 813-877-6136

Dance group, Panigyri, Vanessa Aviles
vanessaavilies@outlook.com, 813-221-2194

Food/Buffer, Donna Hambos
dhambos@msn.com, 813-843-8412

Food/Inside Gyros, Ari Georgiou
ageo_1967@yahoo.com, 813-841-7236

Food/Kitchen/Production, George Hambos
dhambos@msn.com, 813-368-9226

Food/Paper Products, Theo Camene
tcamene@gmail.com, 727-482-1302

Food/Salad Production, Debbie Kavouklis
dkavouklis1@verizon.net , 813-690-0155

Greek Market/ Bar, Theresa Smyrnakis-Rodriguez
tsmyrnakis@southernwine.com, 813-843-8412

Gyro Grill-Outside, Byron Nenos Jr
byron@nenoslaw.com , 813-789-0729

Kafenio, Chris Ferekides
ferekide@gmail.com, 813-948-9994

Kids Area, Alexis Scarfogliero
ascarfogliero@hotmail.com, 813-920-9085

Loukoumades, Engie Halkis
engiehalkias@aol.com, 813-932-5859

MC/Announcements, George Fellios
gfellios@gmail.com, 813-495-7562

Music, John Demas
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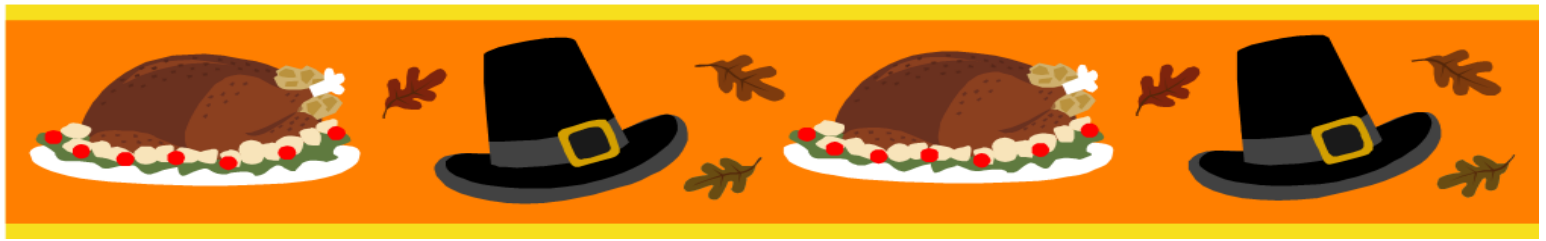
Social Media, Deano Kastis
deano@nakedfitfoods.com, 407-719-6500
Vanessa Aviles, vanessaaviles@outlook.com, 813-417-4364

Take-Out, Amin Hanhan
hanhanamin@aol.com, 813-846-2957

Hope/Joy Fall Harvest Festival

Sunday, October 18





Hope/Joy Fall Food Drive

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

"During the Holiday Season, a box of food turns into a Box of Hope. Your family can be part of that hope by providing a family of four with food for the holidays.

One family reaching out to another family."

Please join St. John's Hope/Joy ministry in providing a meal to families in need through Metropolitan Ministries. Make this your family project for the month of November and help us put together 60 Boxes of Hope filled with all the items needed for a Holiday Dinner. There are many ways you can help provide a Box of Hope for these families in need.

- ♦ Shop for the items below over the next few weeks, bring food to church by Sunday, November 22 for the kids to sort the food and fill the Boxes of Hope during Sunday school.
- ♦ Donate \$25 and we will purchase a Box of Hope for you.
- ♦ Come to church on Sunday, November 22 and help fill the boxes - every age is welcome - even the smallest child can help us sort cans!

BOX OF HOPE contains:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| • 1 turkey or \$15 gift cert. for turkey | • 2 cans of black beans |
| • 1 box of cereal (hot or cold) | • 2 cans of cranberry sauce |
| • 1 can of fruit | • 1 bag of dried beans |
| • 1 pkg of Kings Hawaiian Rolls | • 1 box or bag of rice |
| • 4 cans of vegetables | • 1 can or packet of gravy |
| • 2 cans of yams | • 1 box of dessert mix |
| • 1 bag or box of stuffing mix | • 1 package of cookies or pastries |
| • 1 box or can of potatoes | • 1 family box Jell-O/Pudding |

Items will be accepted any time during the month of November through Sunday, November 22nd.
Boxes will be picked on November 23rd.

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

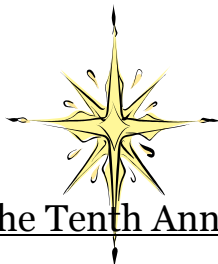
Let's Learn Together

Over the past three years, Fr. Stavros has written over 40 lessons for our Sunday School program, which are the primary curriculum for our Sunday School Students. Charlie Hambos has also written several lessons. These are working well for our Sunday school students. Many teachers, as well as other adults who have seen them, have requested that these lessons be printed in the Messenger, so that adults can also learn the same material as their children. While our children will learn one lesson each week, we will occasionally print some of these lessons in the Messenger. This is something you can go over with your children for reinforcement, or with your spouse, or with a friend or fellow parishioner. Let's learn together! Appropriately for November, the month of Thanksgiving, our lesson is on:

Charity/Thankfulness

1. In Greek, the word for thankful is Eucharisto
2. In Greek, the word for thanksgiving is Eucharistia
3. That is also the word for Eucharist (or Holy Communion). The Eucharist is the Holy Thanksgiving, or the Theia Eucharistia
4. Inside the word Eucharistia are two other Greek words
 - a. Haris - meaning Grace
 - b. Hara - meaning Joy
5. So, thanksgiving, grace and joy are intertwined.
6. And in the Eucharist, we receive the grace of God which brings us joy.
7. At this point in the lesson, we ask the student about things for which they are thankful. Bring to mind some of the things YOU are thankful for.
8. A good thing to do every day in prayer is to remember at least five things for which you are thankful—goes along with the prayer rule of 5 - 5 things for which you are thankful, 5 people I wish to pray for, and 5 things which I am in need of today.
9. In many of Christ's miracles, the first thing He did was give thanks, i.e. before multiplying the five loaves. So, we are supposed to give thanks for all things.
10. The two great commandments of the Lord for us are for us to love the Lord with all our strength, heart, body and mind. The second commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves. How do we love our neighbor? We extend charity to our neighbor.
11. Charitable giving is supposed to be a regular part of our lives. Whether that is supporting the church through stewardship, or supporting a local charity or helping your neighbor, this is one of the commandments—to be kind to others. Can you think of other ways that you can be a good neighbor.
12. The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) tells us that our neighbor is everyone, and the one in the parable who acted like a neighbor was the one who had mercy and compassion on his neighbor. Acts of charity also show our mercy and compassion for other people.
13. It is easier to be kind to others when we are thankful for what we have. Charity and thankfulness go hand in hand. When we feel a sense of entitlement and are not thankful for what we have, we are less likely to be charitable towards others.
14. Partaking of the Eucharist, Holy Communion, is also an act of Thanksgiving to God for His gifts to us. So we receive communion as an act of thanksgiving, as well as obedience to His commandment, as well as our humility.
15. The Lord tells us that we are to share with those who are in need, that the one with two coats is to share with the one who has none. In Matthew 25: 31-46, we are told that our eternal judgment will be based in how well we have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, welcomed the stranger and visited the sick.
16. We've got to do better, as individuals and as a parish, in showing charity to our neighbor.
17. Think of constructive ideas on how to show charity/love for our neighbor. In our church, organizations like Philoptochos and Community Outreach give us opportunities to help our neighbor. But there are even more subtle and regular opportunities to help our neighbors, be they the person who lives next to us, or who works next to us. Think of ways that you can show charity/love for your neighbors.

When we offer the Holy Gifts at the Consecration at the liturgy, we sing "We praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You and we pray to You Lord our God." Before we ask God for anything, we are supposed to praise Him, bless His Holy Name and Thank Him. This is in line with the prayer rule I have mentioned in the past—that we should thank God for five things, then pray for others and then pray for ourselves. But we begin our prayers with thanksgiving.



Please join us for the Tenth Annual Advent Retreat

The Needful Things:

Managing Stress While Still Having Joy

Do you feel like your spiritual life suffers during the hectic holiday season?

Do you feel like you aren't getting enough out of prayer and worship!

Come join us in reviving your spirit as a community just in time for Christmas!

Saturday, November 21st 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
2418 W. Swann Avenue~Tampa, FL~33609-4712
813-876-8830**

Retreat Leader: Father Stavros Akrotirianakis

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Entrance of the Virgin Mary in the Temple

10:00 a.m.. Refreshments

10:30 a.m. Session One What Does God Say About Stress

11:30 a.m. Session Two Sharing our Stresses and Inspiring Each other with our Joys

12:30 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Bringing Back Joy

2:30 p.m. Closing Prayer

There will also be ample time throughout the day to ask questions pertaining to prayer and worship as other general questions about our faith and our church.

Cost is \$15 per person. Lunch will be provided.

Adults only please.

Please return this registration form by mail or take it to the Church Office by

November 15. We look forward to seeing you there!

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Will you be attending with other family members? _____ **If yes, please list:**



What Stewardship Means to Me.....by Christy Pessemier

“Don’t give a little bit. Don’t even give what you feel like. Give with sacrifice.” Years ago, I heard this from a pastor in a church I attended and it changed my view on stewardship and giving.

A church is held together and strengthened through the generosity of its stewards. When everyone gives with sacrifice, the church is blessed, along with the community around it.

There are many things we take from our church. The priest prays with us and baptizes our children, performs weddings, and listens to our confessions. The church gives our children and adults so many spiritually enriching programs. Stewardship is giving back with our money to thank the church for being there for us.

It’s very easy to forget the high cost of keeping a church running and thriving. Right now, the ceiling of our church desperately needs repair. Each time we give, we are helping our church to get closer to the goal of restoring the beautiful Christ icon and the angels that were damaged over the summer.

In order to impact a parish, stewardship must involve sacrifice. Recently, Father Stavros mentioned in his sermon that our church is missing one thing-and that is stewardship. He asked all of the stewards of St. John’s to pitch in for the church ceiling repair. He asked us: what if we took the money we would spend eating out, or buying a Starbucks latte and gave it to the church instead? Imagine what would happen if everyone gave another \$100-\$150 per month more than they normally do!

To me- stewardship is looking at your monthly bills when you get paid and saying “You know what, I am going to give to God first.” And giving 5%, even 10% (why not?) and giving it in faith that God will bless you and your family as a result. Sometimes, it’s a little scary to give more than you’re used to giving. A lot of Orthodox faithful (myself included) have been raised to give a little bit here and there but rarely a percentage.

Stewardship is everyone giving as much as they can on a regular basis. It’s everyone pitching in for the glory of God. It’s looking at the priest and knowing he doesn’t have to worry about how the bills will be paid, because the people in the church take care of him and they take care of the church. It’s a sign of a strong and thriving parish when the parish has enough money. It’s a blessing to all who are involved and belong to the church, and to the many people who will be brought to our faith because they see how we work and they want to be a part of it.

Friends of St. John the Baptist - 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 the Baptist”. 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 the Baptist”, please fill out and return the form below. Thank you for your consideration of our parish.

Thank You to all of Our Friends!

Barbara Akrotirianakis - Whittier, CA
William J Camarinos - Alexandria, VA
Richard & Mickie Bass - Asheville, NC
Jason & Kelly Bangos - Clearwater, FL
Jerry & Debbie Galovic -Tampa, FL

Nicholas & Anna Karnavas - New Port Richey, FL
Michael Kapetan - Ann Arbor, MI
Perry & Fay Stamatiades - Asheville, NC
Melvin & Violet Tamashiro - Kaneohe, HI

Friend of St. John the Baptist

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 the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church 2418 Swann Avenue, Tampa, FL 33609

~Stewardship...Your Time, Talents and Treasure!~

With grateful hearts we thank our 2015 loyal Stewards for your pledges, essential to keep ‘Our House of God’ operational, and your Time and Talents that keep our community vibrant & thriving!

Soon you will begin to receive communications about the 2016 Stewardship Year that may look and feel a little different than past years. We will also introduce an Online Pledge Form and options for online donations.

This year we have indeed experienced a St. John milestone with over \$400,000 in Stewardship Pledges. We also learned a lot about our community, connecting to one another and keeping our eyes turned to God and the reasons we give of our Time, Talents and Treasure.

‘For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required’ Luke 12:48

If you haven’t pledged to St. John this year it is not too late. Our official Stewardship Sunday is marked for December 6th for 2016 pledges. This day will also provide an opportunity to review 2015 commitments. And early next year we will target another day to share details on our Stewardship program and how your valued dollars keep our parish alive.

Little of This and That...

Consistent donations are a tremendous help for our church operations and easy to set up with your Internet Banking or Electronic Funds Transfer, if you wish to automate. We can help if you have any questions.

YES - Stewardship Pledge Forms really are critical. When you fill out a form and provide your commitment, this helps us determine how much income the Church can expect to support our ministries and expenses. Pledge Forms also provide details on your family information and areas of interest so we can tap into your Talents! And lastly, pledge forms and current contributions meet the Uniform Parish Regulations (UPR) of our Archdiocese as well as our local by-laws to enable participation at Parish General Assembly Meetings, Nominations and Voting for Parish Council in December.

Please feel free to share your thoughts to the office email - officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com or speak directly with Fr. Stavros, Sandra Pappas or Pete Trakas -Stewardship Co-Chairs. We are here for YOU!

	2015
<i>Stewardship Goal</i>	<i>\$470,000.00</i>
Pledged	\$406, 246.00
Amount Collected	\$316, 953.93*
Average Pledge	\$994.00
Median Pledge**	\$600.00
# of Parishioners (Families) Pledged with a completed form	319
# of Parishioners (Families) that have given a Stewardship Check without a form+	20

*Dollars received - Based on YTD as of 10/12/15

** Pledge amount in the Middle – ½ of Stewards pledge higher & ½ lower

+Per our Bylaws, to be considered a Voting Member of St. John the Baptist you must have a completed Pledge Form.

Small Group Bible Study

We have **Six Small Groups** that meet once a week. If you haven't joined a group yet, you may do so at any time!

Monday Night Bible Study (for everyone)

We will be studying the book of I Corinthians.

Location: St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in the Administration Building meeting room

Group Leader: Charlie Hambos

Charlie.hambos@gmail.com, 813-843-8471

Meeting time: Monday evenings from 6:30– 8:00 p.m.

November Meeting Dates: November 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Women's Group (for adult women of any age)

Location: Meets at the home of Debbie Kavouklis, Debbie lives in South Tampa, a mile or so from the church. 3315 Jean Circle, Tampa, FL 33629

Group Leader: Debbie Kavouklis

dkavouklis1@verizon.net, (813) 690-0155.

Meeting time: Tuesday mornings from 10:00-11:30 a.m. (9:30 a.m. for coffee and refreshments)

November Meeting Dates: November 3, 10, 17

Men's Group (for adult men of any age)

Location: St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in the Administration Building in the meeting room

Group Leader: Father Stavros for the first one but we are going to rotate this among group members. Please email Fr. Stavros at frstav@gmail.com or contact him at 813-394-1038.

Meeting time: Wednesday mornings from 7:30-8:30 a.m.

For this early morning group, bring your own coffee or breakfast food if you wish—we will not be providing these things.

November Meeting Dates: November 4, 11, 18

South Tampa Mixed Group (for any adults)

Anyone can attend this group but obviously this will be most convenient for those who live in South Tampa

Location: St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in the Zaharias Room

Group Leader: Bessie Palios

bmp1126@yahoo.com, 813-523-0347.

Meeting time: Tuesday evenings from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

November Meeting Dates: November 3, 10, 17

East Tampa Mixed Group (for any adults)

Anyone can attend this group but obviously this will be most convenient to those who live on the East side of town

Riverview, Brandon, Valrico, Seffner, Lakeland

Location: Home of George and Donna Hambos

2604 Herndon Street, Valrico, FL 33596

Group Leader: Donna Hambos

dhambos@msn.com, 813-843-8412

Meeting Time: Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

November Meeting Dates: November 3, 10, 17

Young Adult Group (for adults ages 18-40)

Location: TBA

Group Leader: Mary Ann Konstas

mapkonstas@gmail.com, 813-215-9862

Meeting Time: Sundays following the Divine Liturgy

November Meeting Dates: November 8, 22

St. John the Baptist is on Social Media!



Sermons on Youtube Channel Each Sunday

Father's sermons each Sunday are available on our YouTube channel. Just go to YouTube and type in "St John GOC Tampa" and you'll find them. If you miss a sermon or wish to hear a sermon again, you'll find it there!



Do you Like our Facebook page? Like our page and suggest it to your friends. Announcements are posted frequently so you are up to date with everything going on at St. John the Baptist. You can find our page at StJohn-GOCTampa.

Live Streaming - All of our services are being video recorded and are available on our Livestream page. To access this page

1. Go to our Church's website: greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com,
2. Scroll the mouse over the "Multimedia" tab on the menu bar,
3. Click "View Liturgy,"
4. Then click on the link where it says, "Check out our live stream of the Divine Liturgy here <http://new.livestream.com/accounts/2454446>.

All of the services are available to watch at anytime.



Never Say Amen

By Tracie Miles

"Never stop praying." 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NLT)

"Are you still talking with her?" I asked my daughter Kaitlyn. She'd been texting with a friend for what seemed like hours. She nodded and continued texting.

"I just don't see how you can have that much to talk about. Does the conversation ever end?" I asked.

"Nope," she proudly exclaimed. "We never really end the conversation or say goodbye. We just take breaks and then pick back up later where we left off."

I rolled my eyes and suggested she force herself to take a break, or I might just help her take a really long break from her phone altogether. We chuckled as she slid the phone into her pocket. As I thought back to her answer, it made me wonder about my conversations ... particularly with God. How might my relationship with God grow if I simply never said, "Amen"? If I just kept the conversation going all day, picking back up where we left off or talking about new things? In today's key verse, Paul urges us to pray continually. Not because God requires it, but because our hearts long to feel close to Him.

Talking with God throughout the day invites Him into even the smallest details of our lives. Of course He doesn't need us to fill Him in on our problems, prayer requests and praises. Instead, we receive the blessing because we will feel His presence throughout each and every day. Just as my heart leaped at the idea of continual conversation with God, my mind chimed in with logistics: How can I possibly pray all the time when I obviously have other thoughts going through my mind? How can I stay focused on prayer in the midst of the chaos of work, to-do lists, daily obligations, frustrations, parenting and busyness?

Praying continually doesn't mean we have to stay on our knees all day and never stop to do anything else. It simply means maintaining an attitude of prayer. A mindset that God is always there, like a trusted friend walking beside us or merely one text away. A friend with whom we can jump back into the conversation — with confidence that He will be there.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, "Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus" (NLT). Having a heart attitude of prayer simply means developing a focus on joy and gratitude.

When we focus on the good, instead of the bad, we develop a mental attitude of thankfulness. When our hearts are full of thankfulness for God, we will find ourselves longing to talk with Him more and more and learning to recognize His holy whispers.

We must be aware that Satan will do everything in his power to distract us and try to keep us from having an attitude of prayer and thankfulness. He knows the more time we spend talking with God, the more we will depend on Him and trust Him with our whole hearts.

I can keep my daughter from having a never-ending texting conversation, but no one can keep us from having an ongoing conversation with the Most High. Nothing can stand in the way of us conversing with God unless we let it, and prayer is a conversation worth continuing and never saying "Amen."

Lord, fill me with a desire to talk with You all day long and to feel Your Spirit leading me through our conversations. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

TRUTH FOR TODAY:

Colossians 4:2, "Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." (NLT)

Romans 12:12, "Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying." (NLT)

REFLECT AND RESPOND:

What is it that keeps you from talking to God more often? What can you do to change your mindset about praying without ceasing?

Consider the worries that have been heaviest on your heart, or those issues keeping you too busy or distracted to spend time in prayer. Open up a conversation with God about those things and invite Him into the details of your everyday life.

What is the Sound of One Hand Clapping?

By Fr. Steve Dalber

In the Zen tradition this type of question is referred to as a Koen. This and other seemingly unanswerable questions would be asked of the Zen novices and told to complicate the answers. Theoretically the answer would be different for every individual and have the power to transform one's life.

So . . . as I was contemplating the answer to this question, I came up with a profound answer: the sound of one hand clapping is "nothing." In the Zen community my answer must be respected as correct (for me,) therefore unchallengeable, even though it may be un-verifiable by others. This I find very interesting. If everyone's answer to the same question is necessarily different, those who follow Zen are in fact, themselves, individual forces in the universe, without need to each other, therefore they are the epitome of one hand clapping.

Jesus has taught us very differently. Just as one hand can't clap without another hand we as human creatures are designed to interact with others. By ourselves we are just one hand flapping through the air. Just as God is a relational being as Trinity, we having been created in His image and are necessarily relational beings. Our relationship with God and with others completes us in purpose just as two hands come together in a common purpose, to clap. Our purpose on this earth has a great deal of meaning, but only if we regard ourselves as "we." "I" has no meaning. One can contemplate the "I" all they want. They can come up with their own secret "Zen" answers, but anything they do, think, or say is meaningless without a common verification by God and their fellow man.

Some other Christian followings teach that a "personal relationship" with Jesus is the end-all purpose of our existence. But here again Jesus has taught us very differently. "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there I am also in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20) Just as one hand cannot clap without the other, the Church Fathers would say "One Christian cannot be a Christian."

The instructions which our Lord gave us while still with us are all tied to and dependent on a relationship. Love God, receive My Body and My Blood, love your neighbor, feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty, comfort those who are sick or in prison, etc. these are all instructions to relate to others. He instructed us to proclaim the gospel and to baptize into the Church. The Church is the Body where we enter into communion with God and each other. It is in this relationship that we find meaning. God's purpose is to relate. Without God and each other, we are one hand trying to clap. We are one hand seeking a purpose which doesn't exist.

Life without a purpose is a life without meaning. It is illogical. It is insane. It is a question that cannot be answered. What can be more horrible? What can be more hellish than an eternity trying to clap with one hand, forever trying, forever failing.

My friends, the ruler of this world (the Devil) is trying to separate us from God and from each other. His intent is to suck us into his own eternal insanity. He provokes and tempts us using all his worldly resources. Promising us whatever we want in treasures and pleasures if we bow down and worship him. But bowing to worship a being that is not God is an act of foolishness. It is a meaningless act. It is an act without true purpose or benefit. It is the insanity of trying to clap with one hand.

*Fr. Steve Dalber is the Proistamenos of
St. Nektarios Greek Orthodox Church in Charlotte, NC.*



Do you have the Messengers from the last year and not know what to do with them? Do you read the Messenger and just throw it away? Did you know you can be emailed the Messenger?

Do you want to Go Paperless?

You can read it on your computer, tablet, phone everywhere you go! All you have to do is email the office at **officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com** and let us know you want to be emailed the Messenger!

In the Subject Line just type: **Please Email Me the Messenger** and you will be emailed and not mailed the December Messenger!

~ November 2015 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Get Acquainted Sunday H XAPA MAΣ YABS	2 Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Kefi Dance Practice 5:00 p.m. Pangryri Dance Practice 7:00 p.m.	3 WBS 9:30 a.m. EBS 6:30 p.m. SBS 7:00 p.m. No Basketball	4** MBS 7:30 a.m. Pangryri Dance Practice 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	5 Greek School 6:00 p.m.	6** Orthros 8:00 a.m. Liturgy 9:00 a.m. Tampa Greek Festival 11:00 a.m.-12:00 a.m. MOMS 11:00 a.m.	7 Orthros 8:00 a.m. Liturgy 9:00 a.m. Tampa Greek Festival 11:00 a.m.-12:00 a.m.
8 Archangels Orthros 8:00 a.m. Liturgy 9:00 a.m. Tampa Greek Festival 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.	9 St. Nectarios Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m.	10** WBS 9:30 a.m. EBS 6:30 p.m. SBS 7:00 p.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	11** MBS 7:30 a.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	12** Greek School 6:00 p.m.	13** St. John Chrysostom Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m.	14**
15** Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Youth Sunday AHEPA mtg. YABS	16** St. Matthew Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	17** WBS 9:30 a.m. EBS 6:30 p.m. SBS 7:00 p.m. Parish Council 7:00 p.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	18** MBS 7:30 a.m. Holy Unction 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	19** Greek School 6:00 p.m.	20** MOMS 11:00 a.m.	21** Entrance of the Virgin Mary Orthros 8:00 a.m. Liturgy 9:00 a.m. Adult Advent Retreat 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Community Outreach
22** Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Boxes of Hope YABS GOYA 5:00 p.m.	23**	24** Basketball 8:00 p.m.	25** St. Katherine Orthros 5:00 p.m. Liturgy 6:00 p.m.	26** Thanksgiving Office Closed	27** Office Closed	28**
29** Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. GOYA Christmas Card Sale YABS	30** St. Andrew Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:0 a.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Philoptochos Board Meeting	**Fast Day YABS-Young Adult bible Study SBS-South Tampa Bible Study MBS-Men's Bible Study WBS-Women's Bible Study EBS-East Bible Study				

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

2418 W. Swann Avenue

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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) 813-394-1038 (Cell)
firstav@gmail.com

Pastoral Assistant Charlie Hambos

813-876-8830 (Office) 813-843-8471 (Cell)
Charlie.hambos@gmail.com

Parish Council

Alkis Crassas, President	813-690-3867
Mike Xenick, Vice President	813-340-8737
Sandra Pappas, Secretary	813-785-3747
Ed Gerecke, Treasurer	813-229-4306
George Chagaris	727-420-1920
Carole Fotopoulos	813-982-0947
Skip Higdon	813-831-9021
Catherine Mitseas	813-571-0658
Byron Nenos	813-789-0729
Despina Sibley	813-758-0520
Dante Skourellos	813-765-9534

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Monica Gjerde, Office Manager 813-876-8830
officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com
Debbie Bowe, Bookkeeper
debstjohnnpa@gmail.com fax: 813-443-4899

Adult Greek School

Magda Myer 813-909-2327

AHEPA

Gus Paras, President 813-254-6980

Altar Angels

Engie Halkias 813-932-5859
Sia Blankenship 813-968-8855

Basketball

Perry Katsamakias 516-403-3118
Jimmy Konstas 813-220-7352

Bible Study

Charlie Hambos 813-843-8471

Bookstore

Bill Manikas 813-960-3679

Chanter

Nick Andreadakis 813-516-6081

Choir

Artie Palios, Director 813-831-1294
Ruth Losovitz, Organist 727-688-2782

Community Outreach

Betty Katherine Katsamakias 813-468-1596

Dance Group

H XAPA MAE, Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668
Bessie Palios, 813-523-0347
Maraquet Edquid 813-422-8963
Kefi, Marina Choundas 813-877-6136
Anna Maria Bavaro 732-239-9085
Panigyri, Vanessa Aviles 813-221-2194

Daughters of Penelope

Edie Kavouklis, President 813-758-0305

Finance Committee

Gary Ward 813-846-3898

Food Pantry

Mick Scharbach 813-458-1620

Gasparilla Parking

John Kokkas 727-992-4615

GOYA

Elane Halkias 813-629-1843

Hope/Joy

Amy Kafantaris 727-743-1297
Debbie Nicklow 813-690-0671

Junior Olympics

Bryon Nenos 813-789-0729

MOMS

Mary Ann Konstas 813-215-9862
Lindsey Skourellos 813-503-7845

Oratorical Festival

Peggy Bradshaw 727-244-1374

Philoptochos

Lisa Alsina 813-728-1094

REAL

Charlie Hambos 813-843-8471

Small Group Bible Study

East, Donna Hambos 813-843-8412
Men, Fr. Stavros 813-394-1038
South, Bessie Palios 813-523-0347
Women, Debbie Kavouklis 813-258-5571
Young Adult, Mary Ann Konstas 813-215-9862

Stewardship

Sandra Pappas 813-785-3747
Pete Trakas 813-505-2193

Sunday School

Vickie Peckham 813-406-5626

Usher

Tom Georgas 813-985-0236

Visitation Committee

Charlie Hambos 813-843-8471

Welcome Committee

Maria Xenick 813-765-3587

Young at Heart

Carole Fotopoulos 813-982-0947
Mary Nenos 813-935-2096

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 10th of each month. You may send announcements to the church office through email.

“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.