

THE MESSENGER

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

"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 2018

VISION:

Love God, Love your neighbor and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ as an Orthodox Christian community.

MISSION:

The mission of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church is to welcome and serve people with love, truth, joy and peace, and to create an environment that encourages all to seek salvation through Orthodox Christianity.

CORE VALUES:

Love, Worship, Community, Learning, Service

Father Stavros' Message

The Ecclesia: The WHY, the HOW and the WHAT

During the months of October and November, I'm doing a series of sermons about the Why, the How and the What of our Ecclesia, leading up to our Stewardship Sunday on December 9, which will define our parish for the year 2019.

Defining the Word "Ecclesia"

First, **what on earth is "Ecclesia?"** It is a Greek word which most often gets translated as "church." When people think of the word "church" the thing they most often think of is the church building. The word "Ecclesia" is used 118 times in the New Testament and not one time does it refer to the church building. "Ecclesia" comes from the Greek word "Ek-kaleo" which means "called out from." It refers to a group of people, Christians, called out from the rest of the people for a sacred task, to spread the hope of Christ to all nations.

Scripture builds a case for this:

In Galatians 3:27, St. Paul writes *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."* By virtue of our baptisms, we have put on Christ.

In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus gives His Disciples what we call "The Great Commission": *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age"* By virtue of our putting on of Christ, we have become His disciples. And as a disciple of Christ, we, too, inherit this Great Commission that was given to the original disciples.

In II Corinthians 6:16-18, Saint Paul writes *"For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, 'I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.'" Here is where St. Paul calls us the "temple" (the Greek word here is "naos") of the living God and tells us that our call to put on Christ and to follow Him makes us different than other people. We are not to conform to the world but to be separate from it. We are not to bow to secularism or materialism or any other kind of -ism. We are to be living temples of God.*

The "ecclesia" is not a mere gathering of people—people gather for all kinds of things, i.e. football games, parties, meetings. The "ecclesia" again, is people gathering for a holy purpose. The "ecclesia" is wherever God's people gather for Him, this is where the church is. During most of the 168 hours of the week, our church building is empty. Christ is present on the altar table in the tabernacle. But the majority of the time, the people of the church are absent from the church building. Yet, there is never a time that we are not part of the church. Thus the "ecclesia" can't be tied to the building, but rather to the people of the community, who enter the church building to worship, but on other days gathers for different purposes. On Monday nights, the "ecclesia" gathers for Bible study. On Tuesdays, there are two Bible studies, two chances for the "ecclesia" to come together to learn. On most Wednesday, the choir practices and the "ecclesia" gathers in the Zaharias Room to practice singing God's praises. The "ecclesia" (the holy gathering of

Rev. Fr. Stavros N. Akrotirianakis, Priest

2418 W. Swann Avenue, Tampa, FL 33609 Office: (813) 876-8830 Email: officestjohnogotampa@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com>

people) gathers for meetings, in hospitals, at retreats, at youth events. The “ecclesia” meets the priest one at a time for confession, comes together to plan things, and works on events.

The Old Testament understanding of “church” concentrated on a building, the temple in Jerusalem. This is why we read that people were constantly making pilgrimages there. They thought that God resided in the temple and there alone. When the temple was destroyed, Jerusalem captured and the people of Israel were “deported” to Babylon, their sorrow was not only that they lost their city but they thought they had lost God. They thought that God died because the temple was destroyed.

In Orthodox Church communities, we do emphasize the actual church building. We build them to be grand monuments and decorate them with icons and make them into “heaven on earth.” We reserve them only for worship. Those are good things. But they are not the only thing. We can have an ecclesia without a church building, (on most days we do just that, as the ecclesia only uses the church building a small percentage of the time) but a church building is just a museum if it does not have an ecclesia to fill it.

The WHY - CHRIST

Before we get to the how’s and what’s of the ecclesia, let’s first state the WHY. It’s very simple. Our why is Christ. He is the reason we have the ecclesia. Take Christ out of the equation and we have a social club of people. It is Christ who give us our purpose, our focus, our direction and ultimately our hope, our salvation. This is why it is hard to comprehend people who ostensibly belong to the ecclesia, but never gather for worship and never partake of Christ. This is why it is hard to comprehend those who come only for the occasional sacrament and maybe for Christmas and Easter who claim to be part of the holy gathering.

Going back to the why—Christ came bringing a message of hope for today, tomorrow and for eternity. Our why—the reason for the existence of our church of St. John the Baptist is Christ. He is the beginning, the ending and everything in between.

The HOW - Core Values

If our “why” is Christ and spreading His message of hope to all nations, then HOW do we set about doing that? Our parish has established five core values that help us answer this question of HOW. We’ve been writing these five core values on each issue of the Messenger for almost two years now. And yet, how many of us know them? How many of us have memorized the five core values? How many of us truly understand what each means? And how well are we putting them into practice as our HOW? I read somewhere recently that successful churches remind their congregants of their core values, their mission and vision, on average ever 21 days, because we tend to forget things easily in our very busy world. That’s why advertisers market their product with the same slogans and same commercials over and over again. In order for us to understand, internalize and use our WHY, we have to hear it over and over again.

Our core values at St. John Greek Orthodox Ecclesia of Tampa are - Love. Worship. Community. Learning. Service.

Building did not make the list—it is part of worship. Culture did not make the list—it is part of community. The festival did not make the list—it combines community and service.

The core values define us—if we remove any of these, we are not an ecclesia.

LOVE - Everything begins and ends there. God created the world out of love. When the world fell, we read in John 3:16, that “*God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*”

In Matthew 22:35-40, we read:

And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, to test Him. “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” And He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.”

In John 14:34-35, Jesus said to His disciples: “*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*”

The cross itself is a reminder to us of the two great commandments—the vertical arm of the cross reminds us to love God. The horizontal arm reminds us to love one another.

The first two words of the Lord’s Prayer—*Our Father*--are another great reminder. The reference to God as our Father reminds us to love Him. Offering this prayer in the plural “*our*” reminds us that we are all in this together, and that we must love our neighbors and help them get to “*Our Father.*”

WORSHIP - The central activity of the Ecclesia is worship. If a person comes down to 2418 Swann Avenue once a week, it should be to worship. The other ministries are important, but not as important as the liturgical ministry. This is why the ministry that meets the most on our property is worship. By the end of 2018, there will have been nearly 200 gatherings for worship, more than any other ministry. The Divine Liturgy and the Eucharist are the life-sustaining events that define us as Christians. They also define our ecclesia—we are primarily a group of people who love God and gather to worship Him.

COMMUNITY - Christians exist in the context of community. We do not exist as individuals, islands or nomads. We are a community that prays together, and that ideally comes together to support one another. The Eucharist, by definition, must be celebrated in the context of community. If no one shows up for the Divine Liturgy, it cannot be celebrated. At least two people must be present in order for the Eucharist to be celebrated or distributed. Even in the hospital, when I offer Holy Communion to someone who is sick, the patient is there and I am there, two people. The work of the community goes well beyond worship. The church community is supposed to be a large spiritual support group. Ideally when a person is in need, there should be a whole community for them to run to, and a whole community available to run to them. In order for this to happen, the people of the church community must meet other people of the community. The best way for this to happen is in the context of small groups. Our ministries are examples of small groups, where members ideally know one another, support one another, help one another, and lift up one another in prayer. Not each small group needs to be a ministry. We have over twenty active ministries in our parish. Not everyone

is involved in one. Ideally, we create more ministries and more small groups, so that everyone in the community has a built-in spiritual group to offer spiritual and other kind of support as needed.

Let me give an example of how community is needed in real life. Many of our parishioners don't have family in Florida, many families, like mine, have moved here with little or no family. Let's say that someone in the family is sick or needs surgery. On the day of the surgery, who will watch that family's dependent children? There be a need to a ride to or from school, or help with a meal, or the need to someone to sit in a waiting room with a nervous spouse. This is just one example of something that should be taken care of the context of a *ecclesia*, among community members.

LEARNING - Knowledge is power. If we have no knowledge of something, it has no power in our lives. Thus, an important event in the life of each member of the *ecclesia* is learning more about the faith. Learning occurs in two ways—it occurs in a “community context”—the *ecclesia* has Bible studies, studies in the faith (Orthodoxy 101 in our community). And learning occurs privately, when we set aside time to meditate on the Scriptures. At Saint John, we also have the Prayer Team, a meditation on Scripture that goes out daily via email. It is important that we spend time learning about the faith. In most professions, seminars and continuing education are required, because in order to stay current in knowledge, we have to continue acquiring it. In order to stay focused on what we believe and how to live that out, we need to continue learning.

SERVICE - The *ecclesia* is not an end to itself. It exists to help the greater community. In fact, in the early church, the *ecclesia* was concerned with only two things—teaching the word of God and feeding those who didn't have food. When the *ecclesia* does just enough to get by without having something left over to share with the greater community, it is not fulfilling its mission. In our community, we serve in two specific ways. We give time to charitable causes like community outreach and through Philoptochos. Our charitable outreach program involves serving breakfast to the homeless of Tampa on the third Saturday of the month. If everyone went to community outreach once a year, we'd have enough people to staff that every Saturday, with everyone going once. I encourage everyone to participate in Community Outreach at least once a year. The second way we reach out is to give financial resources to charitable causes. With the recent hurricanes, Florence and Michael, we were able to immediately send \$500 to each one because we have that in the budget.

Many people think that the church is becoming irrelevant, and in many cases they are right. It is true that when the world outside of an organization is moving faster than the organization, the organization become irrelevant. In many corners of the world, Orthodoxy is in decline. Viewed by others as “stuck in our traditions” (Tradition is not a bad thing, it's only bad when it become the only thing we do) we don't get out and help enough.

Here's an interesting fact—helping others is ALWAYS relevant. There hasn't been an age since the Fall of mankind that people didn't need some kind of help, whether it's hungry people who need food, lonely people who need conversation, or discouraged people who need encouragement. Helping others is always relevant. If we want to keep our church relevant, the best way to do it is through service.

The WHAT - Ministries

Our “Why” is Christ. Our “How” is our core values. Which brings us to our “What,” our ministries. One of the best books about how a church should work is “The Purpose Driven Church” by Rick Warren. I quote a lot of non-Orthodox sources in sermons and in the Messenger because there is a lot of good stuff out there that is non-Orthodox. No church, I believe, can ever match the rich liturgical Traditions of the Orthodox Church. There is no better way to read the Bible than the original Greek. And there is something very comforting, as well as legitimate about belonging to the *ecclesia* that traces its origins to the day of Pentecost. In terms of the “what's” of church ministry, there are a lot of people out there that we can learn a lot from. One of the many interesting quotes from “The Purpose Driven Church” is where the author writes that we have to move our communities from a posture that says “*Lord, bless what I am doing*” to “*Lord, help me to do what You are blessing.*” (p. 15) In setting us ministries, we should seek to offer things that reflect what God is asking from us, ministries that help us learn more about Him and serve one another. In fact, it is imperative that our ministries reflect our core values. If we are doing a ministry that does not reflect the core values, that ministry must be changes or eliminated.

There is also room for new ministries. **INCLUSION MINISTRY**—I was so pleased that our community offered a retreat on “Inclusion of people with special needs” in early October. This retreat started a dialogue that is going to continue well into the future about how to minister to and include people with special needs in our church. We have several people that fall into this category. Are we actively looking to include them? Can we offer support for their parents? This retreat did not come up with all the answers. But it got the questions out on the table. This is going to be a new ministry in our community. And there likely will be more, as we seek additional ways to improve and grow our *ecclesia*.

I was also pleased that our Philoptochos offered something new: BAGS OF LOVE. The Philoptochos made fifty bags of love, with some essential items in them for people to take and give to people on the street who are in need. The fifty bags went quickly. People were eager to take them. As I said, helping people never goes out of style and it really is an awesome thing to help someone. This is another venture that we can add to in the future.

Some Unique Opportunities for the *Ecclesia* in the Month of November

Many Liturgies--There are three unique opportunities for our *Ecclesia* this November. First, a look at the calendar shows that there are TWELVE opportunities to celebrate the Divine Liturgy and receive the Eucharist. After Holy Week, November has the most opportunities to receive Holy Communion in a single month. (December, with 11, and January, with 11, are also months with many Divine Liturgies) Why November? The easy answer is, there are certain days of the year that are to be marked with the Divine Liturgy. Obviously every Sunday, but there are certain feast days that the *ecclesia* is supposed to gather and celebrate the Eucharist. This is a concession, actually, as in the early years of the *ecclesia*, the Eucharist was offered on a daily basis.

In the Liturgical section of the Messenger, you can read about the saints that are commemorated during November. We will

also celebrate the Divine Liturgy each day of the festival, asking the Holy Spirit to come down upon us and our community as we gather to offer this festival. By celebrating the Divine Liturgy, opening up our church for tours, having a “come and see” dinner (more information below) and offering 10 percent of our profits to charity, we’re slowly transforming our festival from a fundraiser to a ministry.

We will also celebrate the Divine Liturgy the night before Thanksgiving. Who comes to these Liturgies? Actually quite a few people. Some come every time because their schedule allows them to. Some will come out of a specific need on that day. Some days we have five people and others we have thirty. But the pace and the mood of the weekday Divine Liturgy is special, because the people who are there really want to be there, there is a spiritual energy they bring which is hard to replicate on Sundays, even when the church is filled.

The Festival - The Greek Festival is November 9-10-11. As noted in the previous paragraph, when we add worship (liturgy), evangelism (welcome ministry and church tours) and outreach (ten percent of festival profits going to charity), a cultural event transforms into a ministry. Add to this the opportunity to spend time with the people of our *ecclesia*, working side by side for the weekend, and the Festival offers us a great opportunity. I encourage each of you to not only sign up to work a few shifts, but to meet and get to know the parishioners you’ll be working next to. I encourage you to smile and warmly welcome all of our guests. So that they will see the love of Christ in our warm greetings. I am very thankful to the small committee that has spent months organizing the Festival.

What We Need From You

- It takes a lot of manpower to carry off the festival during the festival weekend. So, we need volunteers.
- The thing that can bring the most pure profit to our festival is the raffle. Please buy a raffle ticket if you have not done so.
- Most people come to the festival by word of mouth, so encourage your neighbors and your co-workers and non-Greek friends to come. Put a sign on your lawn or at your business.

Come and See The Spiritual Benefit of the Festival

Ever since we moved the festival to our church grounds, we have always opened up the church for tours of our sanctuary. A few years ago, we added a presentation by our choir of Orthodox Church music. As we deepen our understanding of the Christian faith and as I deepen my understanding of the priesthood and the role of the church, I hope we are seeing a greater and greater need and opportunity to share the joy of being a Christian. It would not be an exaggeration to say that at

least half of the people who live in the Tampa Bay area are unchurched, meaning they don’t go to any church. Probably half of the people who will patronize our festival are unchurched. When those people are already on our property, we should invite them to come and see our church. This year, I hope that collectively we will be more intentional in inviting people to come see our church sanctuary. When you meet people at the festival, in the food line, or at the raffle booth, or on the dance floor, ask them if they’ve come into the church yet, and if not, encourage them to take a church tour. It’s just a simple invitation that everyone can offer.

Building on something we did very well last year—the Come and See Dinner. Last year, our welcoming ministry set up a tent in front of the church to more formally welcome people to the church tours and to hand out information about our church and Orthodoxy to our visitors. They were on hand all weekend to answer questions from anyone who wanted to know more about our faith, and invite them to a dinner a couple of weeks after the festival. There were about 60 people at the Come and See Dinner last year, and half of them were not from our parish—they came because after the festival, they wanted to come and see us again, to learn more about us. And some were friends that were invited by parishioners to “come and see”. Many of these people came back to our Christmas Candlelight service and some even came to the Orthodoxy 101 class. It’s only a matter of time before some of them will want join our parish and come to Christ. This journey starts with an invitation to “Come and see”.

Our second annual “Come and See” dinner will take place on Tuesday, November 27 at 6:30 p.m. We would like to have members from all of our ministries present to welcome our guests. We will have “Come and See” postcards available not only at the Festival but on the Sundays of November so that parishioners can invite your neighbors, people who know you go to church, or people who have no church of their own, to come and see our church.

As usual, there is a lot of information in my monthly message. Thank you for taking the time to read it. November promises to be a busy time in the life of our parish, but moreso, a time to showcase our WHY (Christ) but living our HOW (Core values of Love, Worship, Community, Learning, Service) through Ministry (which in November is highlighted by many opportunities to celebrate the Liturgy as well as to show the love of Christ through our Festival).

I’m looking forward to sharing a busy and uplifting November with you. As we are also celebrating Thanksgiving this coming month, I am thankful to God for the many years that I have served here, and thankful to you for sharing in a wonderful, dynamic and Christ-centered ministry in this growing and loving *ECCLESIA!*

With love in the Lord,

+Fr. Stavros

Are we communicating effectively??? Is there something we can do better?? We would love to hear your feedback.

Please email Charlie Hambos, our Pastoral Assistant, at charlie.hambos@gmail.com or call him at 813-843-8471. He would love to hear from you.

Liturgical Schedule for November 2018

Thursday, November 1 **Sts. Cosmas and Damian, the Unmercenary Healers**
Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 4 **5th Sunday of Luke - Daylight Savings Ends**
Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Captains and St. Luke
Ushers: Brett Mourer, Amin Hanhan, Michael Bocancollins
Welcoming Ministry: Greeters: Marenca Patrasciou, Tany Robinson;
Ambassador: Katherine Sakkis; Caller: Helen Cauthorn; Getting Acquainted: Cindy Xenick, Maria Xenick
Coffee Hour: Young at Heart **Bookstore:** Thom and Angie Bougas



Please note the Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:00 a.m. from November 8-11 because of the Tampa Greek Festival

Thursday, November 8 **Archangels**
Orthros 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Friday, November 9 **St. Nectarios**
Orthros 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Saturday, November 10 **Tampa Greek Festival**
Orthros 8:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 11 **8th Sunday of Luke - Veteran's Day**
Orthros 7:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Anyone attending may serve
Ushers: David Voykin, Ed Gerecke, Pete Trakas
Welcoming Ministry: Tampa Greek Festival
Coffee Hour: Tampa Greek Festival **Bookstore:** Tampa Greek Festival

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

Wednesday, November 14 Sacrament of Holy Unction 6:00 p.m.

Friday, November 16 **St. Matthew the Evangelist**
Orthros 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 18 **9th Sunday of Luke**
Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Captains and St. John **Ushers:** John Christ, Byron Nenos, Chris Kavouklis
Welcoming Ministry: Greeters: Lisa Alsina, Kalliope Chagaris; Ambassador: Genie Carter; Caller: Christene Worley
Coffee Hour: Festival Appreciation Luncheon **Bookstore:** John and Anetta Alexander

Wednesday, November 21 **Evening Divine Liturgy for Entrance of Virgin Mary and Thanksgiving**
Orthros 5:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 25 **13th Sunday of Luke**
Orthros 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Anyone attending may serve
Ushers: Tammy Christou, George Mitseas, Florin Patrasciou
Welcoming Ministry: Greeters: Carole Fotopoulos, Donna Hambos; Ambassador: Elaine Halkias;
Caller: Katherine Sakkis **Coffee Hour:** AHEPA **Bookstore:** Brett and Ana Mourer

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

Sunday, December 2

14th Sunday of Luke

Orthros 8:45 a.m.

Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Captains and St. Matthew

Ushers: Nick Kavouklis, George Trimiklinitis, Peter Theophanous

Welcoming Ministry: Greeters: Skip Higdon, Debbie Kavouklis; Ambassador: Maria Karounos Caller: Betty Katsamakias

Getting Acquainted: Bessie Palios, Mike Palios Coffee Hour: Photography Ministry Bookstore: Rita Bedran

Tuesday, December 4

St. Barbara

Orthros 9:00 a.m.

Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

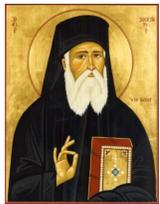
Liturgical Notes for November 2018

Thursday, November 1 - Feast of Sts. Cosmas and Damian

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 the Agioi Anargyroi) are also saints we pray for intercession to when we are sick, and are also patron saints of doctors. (in addition to St. Luke).

Thursday, 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. The Archangel Michael Feast was prayerfully conceived by His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios upon arriving in Atlanta, as the annual double feast of the Metropolis family. Since 1998, the Metropolis family comes together in Atlanta on the weekend of, prior to or following the November 8 Feastday of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. It is to honor and celebrate our Patron Saint and the lives of two people from each parish, who are living examples of the Orthodox Christian life and journey to Theosis. By extension, this special Metropolis feast also serves as the annual Metropolis celebration and thanksgiving for all devout stewards of the faith, giving their time and talent. **Congratulations to this year’s award winners Cindy Xenick and Peggy Bradshaw.**



Friday, 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 Divine 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.

Friday, November 9 & Saturday, November 10 - Divine 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 five years, which also coincides with the four 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. The Divine Liturgy on November 9, 10 and 11 and will begin at 9:00 a.m., preceded each day by Orthros at 8:00 a.m.

Tuesday, 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 to speak. 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.



Wednesday, November 14 - 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 14, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Please bring your Holy Week book as the service will follow the service of Holy Wednesday evening.

Friday, 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 Divine Liturgy on the feast days of the Four Evangelists, reading from their respective Gospels on their respective feastdays.



Wednesday, 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 21 - 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 21 at 6:00 p.m.



Sunday, 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.”

Friday, 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

Special Christmas Services in December

Monday, December 17

Candlelight Service in Preparation for the Nativity 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Please join us for an evening of prayer to recharge, reflect and refresh for the Christmas season.

This special candlelight service includes hymns and scripture readings about the Nativity. It also includes the opportunity to pray for people, by name so bring any names of people that could use some extra prayer. At the end of the service a Trisagion service will be chanted for all those who have passed away this year. *If you know someone who can use some prayer this Nativity, or someone who has lost a loved one, or someone who is sad, please invite them to this service. Allow us to pray for them and their loved ones. The service will be done entirely in English. It will last an hour. It will be done only by candlelight. This is a wonderful opportunity there is in the year to invite non-Orthodox friends to pray with us.*

Christmas Eve Services—There will be two Divine Liturgies on Christmas Eve. On December 24, we will celebrate the Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, including prophecy readings foretelling of the Nativity, from 8:45 -11:00 a.m. on Monday, December 24. Our Nativity Liturgy will be at 7:00 p.m. (Orthros at 5:30 p.m., Doxology at 6:45 p.m.) on Monday, December 24. Our choir will sing the Hallelujah Chorus and lead us in Christmas Carols at the end of the service.



Donations needed for the Altar

We have several sets of altar cloths where we don't have the complete set. For instance, we have the cloth for the altar table but not for the sacraments tables or the icon stand. We'd like to complete the sets we have (we will not be ordering additional sets but would like to complete the sets we have). If you'd like to donate towards this, please see Fr. Stavros.



Diver Applications for Epiphany

All young men of our parish who will be age 16-18 on January 6, 2019, are welcome to apply to dive for the cross at the Epiphany celebration in Tarpon Springs. Applications are available on the website of St. Nicholas Cathedral in Tarpon Springs. Applications are due by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, December 3, no exceptions. They need to be signed by Fr. Stavros so please plan accordingly.

St. John the Baptist Community News

Parish Registry

Chrismation - Edjir (George) Celin was Chrismated on Sunday, September 23. Norma Tadros was the sponsor. Congratulations!

Wedding - Josef Fenton and Angelina Bartucci were married on Saturday, September 22. His Grace Bishop John of the Antiochian Diocese of Worcester, Fr. John Fenton (Father of the Groom) and Fr. Stavros officiated. Jacob Fenton and Alexandra Donato were the sponsors. Congratulations!

Wedding - Gregory Sinadinos and Mary Brunot were married on Sunday, September 30. Maria Xenick was the sponsor. Congratulations!

Funeral - Melpo Diamantides passed away on September 25. Funeral services were held at St. John on Monday, October 1. May her memory be eternal!

Get Acquainted Sunday, November 4



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.



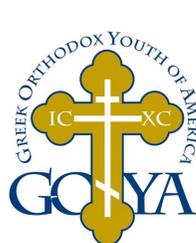
MOMS - Ministry of Mother's Sharing The MOMS group will begin meeting once per month at church for a gathering of prayer and fellowship! Mothers of all ages and stages are welcome to join us. We will alternate morning and evening meeting times to accommodate diverse schedules. We hope you can join us! Here is the schedule:

November 14 - 7:00 p.m.

Please contact mapkonstas@gmail.com with any questions and to be sure you are on the MOMS email list.

Community Outreach - Saturday, November 17

St. John the Baptist's Community Outreach will be serving breakfast to the Homeless at the First Presbyterian Church in Downtown Tampa from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The church is located at 412 Zack Street. The entrance is on Polk Street. Grab a cup of coffee and come help us! **We love to see new and old faces!**



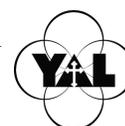
GOYA Meeting - November 18 - SPECIAL TIME AND SPECIAL INVITATION FOR PARENTS

- Our GOYA meeting for November will be Sunday, November 18, from 4:00-7:30 p.m. We will have dinner, as always. The meeting will begin at 4:00 p.m., one hour earlier. All parents are invited to return at 6:30 p.m. for a one hour seminar on how to encourage your children. From 6:30-7:30 p.m. we'll put on some music for the GOYAnS and hang out like we do at lock-ins.

Congratulations to our GOYA—At the annual GOYA Volleyball Tournament in St. Petersburg on October 12-14, our GOYAnS took second place in the both the junior and senior division. More importantly, they won the community sportsmanship award, reflecting their Christian character. A special thank you to Maria Koutroumanis, our GOYA advisor, for organizing our large contingent, and special thanks to our parents and coaches for all of their help. Congratulations to our GOYA!



Young Adult Ministry - Sunday, November 25 - The YAL fellowship dinner will be on Sunday, November 25, from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Please RSVP to Charlie if you are going to attend. Dates may change. Charlie will send an email.



Help the Welcome Ministry Host the Come and See Dinner

Over the three days of our Annual Greek Festival, approximately 9000 people come to our church property. If 10% take a look at our church, attend a tour or choir presentation, that's 900 people. If 10% of those are searching for a church home, that's 90 people who may come back for more.

Imagine the Greek Festival is a first date, and we are really excited to invite our visitors to come back to meet our family and get to know us better! It is really difficult to invite people to our Divine Liturgy. For those who don't have a church home or any experience of attending church, there is no context for understanding what is happening and there is really no chance for them to participate.

For the Greek Festival, our Welcome Ministry is once again hosting a Greeter Table at the front doors of our church throughout the weekend. This way, people who are curious about our church building and our faith will be welcomed with a personal greeting, will be given the chance to ask questions, and take some materials – pamphlets, welcome folders - home with them. We will also have a couple of “docents” inside the church to answer questions for anyone visiting during a time other than our scheduled tours. We will have a sign up for anyone wanting follow up materials emailed to them: the prayer team, the messenger, the weekly constant contact messages from our parish. We will have sample materials from our bookstore as well.

We are also going to offer a chance for them to return to learn more about our faith in several different ways:

- We will host a “Come and See” event for anyone who wants to get to know us better. This will be held on **Tuesday, November 27th**. This will be a free dinner, followed by comments and greeting by Father Stavros, and prayer time in our church. We want our most hospitable parishioners on board to welcome this group of people to our campus for fellowship and learn a little bit further about our faith. **This also gives us the opportunity to invite anyone who is seeking a church home to simply come to know us better.**
- We will then send an invitation to our beautiful candlelight Christmas prayer service on **Monday, December 17**. If you haven't been to this service, this is an opportunity during the hustle and bustle of the season to pause for some peace and quiet prayer time.
- Lastly, in **February (February 4, 11, 18 and 25)**, Father will host another installment of Orthodoxy 101 and these same people will be invited to experience a deeper understanding of our faith.

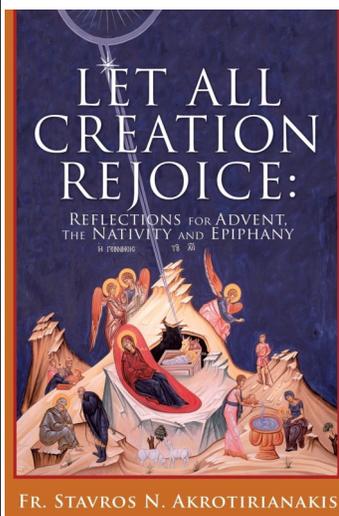
We'd love to have a great crowd of our church family to help host this first ever event! If you are interested in helping in any way, please contact Maria Xenick at mpxenick@gmail.com or 813-765-3587.

What do can YOU do?

INVITE your friends, co-workers, neighbors! This is a great opportunity to show them what our faith is all about in a way they can easily appreciate and ask questions.

For Tuesday, November 27 we need:

- ♥ Your support!
- ♥ Your presence!
- ♥ Welcoming our guests at a table.
- ♥ Serving food.
- ♥ Sitting and eating with our guests.
- ♥ Answering their questions.
- ♥ Introducing them to others.



Let all Creation Rejoice: Reflections for Advent the Nativity and Epiphany

This book is a series of short daily reflections on the scripture readings of Advent, the Nativity and Epiphany, to be read between November 15 and January 7.

Order your book today at www.xulonpress.com/

Interested in Joining the Prayer Team?

Over 1280 people have! The Prayer Team is a daily message that Father Stavros has been writing for more than 3 years! Each day, a scripture verse, a reflection written by Father, and a prayer are emailed to the Prayer Team via Constant Contact. If you would like to join the Prayer Team, please email Charlie at charlie.hambos@gmail.com and ask him to add you. If you receive the daily emails already and want to add a friend, please email Charlie or follow the link at the bottom of the daily emails to do so. If you want to forward to a friend, please use the “forward to a friend” option. Also, make sure frstav@gmail.com has been added to your contacts so that these emails stay in your Inbox rather than going to the Junk or Spam folders.

November 2018 Stewardship Message

*“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”
Hebrews 13:16*

We humbly thank our faithful Stewards of St. John and your continued support of our Church Mission and Ministries. The dedication of our parishioner time, talent and treasure is critical to help sustain our church for present and future generations!

Stewardship is a personal responsibility and prayerful commitment that each and every Christian makes in order to support the Church. Stewardship helps us understand that God is the true owner of our possessions, and each of us is accountable to God for the acceptable care and use of those possessions. We will hear more of this as we begin a new Stewardship Year with **Stewardship Sunday – December 9, 2018.** This is an opportunity to come together as a community to reaffirm our commitment to God. Ultimately, we must look to prepare a plan for the long term that will support our growing community!

Year to Year Comparison ~	2018*	2017*
Pledged Year to Date	\$434,512	\$412,776
Received Year to Date	\$386,512	\$357,072
Average Pledge	\$1,410	\$1,293
Median Pledge	\$800	\$600
# of Individual/Families Pledged/ Giving	350	354
*YTD as of 10/18/18 & 10/11/17		

We are accountable for our parish. We will be called to give an account for the use of the gifts, resources and talents given to us by God. Unlike the “one talent steward” who, having been given a talent by the Master buried it in the ground and did nothing with it, we need to willingly make a return to God for His investment in each of us.

One of the most important gifts entrusted to our care is our parish itself—not only parish facilities and resources, but care of the clergy, of one another, and of the parish’s mission, ministry and purpose. The purpose of a parish is to proclaim Christ through worship and praise, through word and deed. Our parish has been entrusted to us—not to keep or merely “maintain,” but to care for, to minister from, to strengthen and expand, and to pass on to future generations. We are responsible!

We remain with many families that attend our church regularly yet don’t participate or perhaps understand the importance of Stewardship in our lives. Help us help one another as we prepare for another Stewardship Year by encouraging your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to become Stewards of our beloved Community.

We lovingly remind everyone to review & fulfill your Stewardship Commitment for 2018, as we approach year-end. It is never too late to complete a Stewardship Pledge Form. We now have pledge forms available online and in the Church Narthex and Office. When you give to God, you discover what God gives to you.

Please feel free to share your thoughts to the office email - officestjohnngoetampa@gmail.com or speak directly with Fr. Stavros, Sandra Pappas at spappas11@gmail.com or Pete Trakas at ptrakas@gmail.com Stewardship Co-Chairs. ***We are here for YOU!***

Save the Date!

Stewardship Sunday, December 9

Start praying today about how your family will support our growing community and help us share the Love of Christ with our neighbors.

Save Money on Prescription Drug Costs and Nursing Ministry Update

Medication non adherence is a costly national problem that can lead to ineffective treatment & additional health care expenses. 75% of patients sometimes fail to take their medications as directed. 33% of prescriptions are never filled. \$100 billion is the estimated cost of medication related hospitalizations due to non adherence. Many times the reason is related to cost of the medications. Some people have no insurance. Others are on a fixed or limited income and can't afford the co-pays. Sometimes a person will have the prescription filled but only take half the dose to make the medication last longer. Most of us have heard stories of people that must choose between taking their meds or buying food. All of these situations can be detrimental to your health.

A personal story. My husband lost his job after 20 years due to downsizing back in March. Along with that, we lost our insurance. I currently take a prescription pill every day. The self pay cost for a 90 day supply was going to cost me \$350. Shortly after that, I was listening to a news report on the cost of medications in the US vs Canada. According to this report, it is illegal to buy medications from Canada and have them mailed to you in the states. That got my curiosity. I went to my computer and Googled Canadian Prescription Drugs. Many sites popped up. I clicked on a link to Blink-Health (US based). I completed a short form with my prescription information and the cost through Blink -Health for a 90 day supply was.....\$24!! Yes, only \$24 for the same exact medication I was getting at my local pharmacy. I put in my zip code and they even told me where I could get it locally at that price, including Walmart !!!

It is so important to be your own health care advocate. The hospitals are not sharing this type of information with you and neither are your doctors. In all fairness to them, they may not be aware. Sometimes you need to do your own research. If you are on prescription medications, I highly recommend comparing what you are currently paying vs Bink-Health. There may be some medications where you won't see a savings. But what a blessing it will be if you do. Blink-Health will give you a list of local pharmacies to choose from. Get a written prescription from your doctor, put in your prescription medication, pay for it on line and then go pick it up. Make sure you take the written prescription with you when you go to pick up your meds. If you already have a prescription that needs to be refilled, take the bottle with you. If you try this and are successful, please share with me your story.



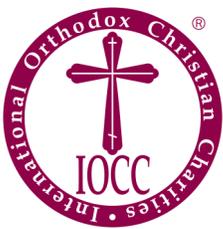
Parish Nurse

Update: On Sept. 30, we collected 139 containers of expired prescription medications at our Expired Prescription Drug Drive. Those medications were taken to the Sheriff's Department for proper disposal. If you were not able to participate and have expired prescription meds, please put them aside. We will do this again at some point in the future. On the same day we had several people take advantage of our Blood Pressure screenings. We will be doing several screenings in the coming months. Starting in Jan, we hope to be offering them on most Sundays.

On Oct 14th, Walgreen's offered flu shots to those interested in getting one. We had 10 parishioners take advantage of the convenience and opportunity to stay healthy. That was a great start. We hope that more will take advantage of this when we offer it again next year.

During the month of November, we are asking you to complete a survey of health related programs you would like to see at St. John. The survey will be on the tables in the hall for you to complete each Sunday through November. Once completed, hand your survey to one of the parish nurses. This is your ministry and we want to provide topics and information that is relevant to you and will only take a few moments. Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the survey.

Stavrula Crafa, RNC, Parish Nursing Ministry Leader



Join the IOCC Emergency Action Team

Are you interested in helping your neighbors get back on their feet after a disaster? When a disaster strikes, families often need help removing debris, tearing down water soaked walls, or ripping out buckled floors. In the event of a disaster in your greater community, IOCC will reach out to you to join one of our Emergency Action Teams. If you are willing to travel to a disaster affected area that is not in your greater community, please let us know that as well. Go to <https://www.iocc.org/take-action/join-action-team/emergency-action-team>.

Charitable Giving - \$1,000 was sent to IOCC for relief efforts following Hurricane Florence and Hurricane Michael. Through your generous offerings of stewardship, we have disaster relief as part of our charitable giving in our yearly budget.

The Young at Heart Says Thanks for the Memories

This year we will not be having the Mardi Gras Dance. It was hard for us to come to this decision because we enjoyed the great fun we had. We very much want to thank all of you who supported us during the last five or six years that we did this.

Because of your help and support we were able to raise quite a bit of money that funded such projects as our first donation of \$4,000 for the restoration of a window in the church, updating our security system, replacing the sound system in the church and hall, getting a new chair for Father's office, an icemaker, coffee pot, microwave, donating for food baskets as well as donating to the mortgage principal balance \$8,500. We aren't listing these things to brag. We just wanted to remind all of you who were always so supportive of what that generosity from you made possible!

So many thanks go to John Demas who played for all our dances and to the Hambos' for the wonderful dinners we enjoyed at our dances. We could never have done it without them!

We want all of you to know that we are still a happy group who will be meeting the first Thursday of each month (unless there is something else taking place at church) in the Zaharias Room at 11:30 a.m. We will play Bingo and go out to lunch (if we are not having a "pot Luck"). We will be having outings too, like going on trips, the theatre and other places. Anyone is welcome to join us.

We love our church and all of you so much!

The Young at Heart

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
Nicholas & Anna Karnavas - New Port Richey, FL
Michael Kapetan - Ann Arbor, MI
Perry & Fay Stamatiades - Asheville, NC
Melvin & Violet Tamashiro - Kaneohe, HI
Wesley & Melissa Thompson - Clearwater, FL
Demitrius & Katherine Klimis - Boardman, OH
Mary Spanos - St. Augustine, FL

Bessie Bliziotes - Palm Cost, FL
Suzanne Alvarez - Tampa, FL
Lazarus & Maria Kavouklis - Tarpon Springs, FL
William & Kane Chapman - Palmetto, FL
Lillian Thomas - Highland, IN
Kathleen Mendez - Ponte Vedra, FL
Theodora Poletis - Baltimore, MD
Basil & Dorothy Nosal - Fredericksburg, VA
Nicholas & Vaso Anton - Dunedin, FL
Gerald & Deborah Galovic - Tampa, FL

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 by being 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 the Baptist 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.

Thank you for your consideration of our parish.

Friend of St. John the Baptist:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

I wish to become a Friend of St. John the Baptist. 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 W. Swann Ave Tampa, FL 33609.

~New Order for Holy Communion~

We are going to make a change in the way we line up to receive Holy Communion. Everyone, with the exception of the choir, is going to come up the middle aisle to receive Communion. This includes people in the side sections of the church. Prior to Communion, our Sunday school teachers should line up single file on the right side of the middle aisle. Parents with infants or who are holding children should line up behind the Sunday school teachers. Sunday school students should line up single file on the left side of the middle aisle.

1. The order for Communion will be as follows:
2. The Sunday School teachers
3. The altar boys
4. Those carrying infants and young children
5. Sunday school students (who should try to line up by age)
6. Then the people from the side wings
7. Then the ushers will excuse people row by row to go up the middle aisle (as they do now)
8. The Choir
9. Anyone who cannot walk up to Communion, Fr. Stavros will walk to you.

It will take a few weeks to get used to this new system, so please be patient as we all learn. It is hoped that this new system will a) let our teachers get to class before their students and b) not make the traffic by the exit door so congested.

1. When there is no Sunday school, the order will be
2. The Choir (The choir will go first when there is no Sunday school)
3. The Altar Boys
4. Those carrying infants and young children (please be considerate of this need)
5. Then the people from the side wings (who will go down side aisles while the choir is receiving and then up the middle aisle to receive)
6. Then the ushers will excuse people row by row to go up the middle aisle (as they do now)
7. Anyone who cannot walk up to Communion, Fr. Stavros will walk to you.

When there is more than one priest offering Communion, the order will be the same. However, the one line will divide itself for each priest. There should be a line of 4-5 people in front of each priest, so that the priests are not waiting for people to approach, and this will make it go more efficiently.

Thank you for your patience!

+Fr. Stavros and Tom Georgas (Head Usher)



Community Outreach - Holiday Tent

Metropolitan Ministries is looking forward to having St. John Greek Orthodox Church volunteer on the following day and time at 905 Governor Street, Tampa, FL 33602.

**Sunday, December 23, 2 p.m - 4:30 p.m. –
We need a group of 50**

Below is the link that each person should use to register for this volunteer opportunity:
<https://metromin.volunteerhub.com/lp/stjohnsgreekorthodox/>

It is imperative that each person pre-registers for this opportunity as unfilled slots will be filled 1 week before your scheduled date.

Thank you for being HOPE this holiday season!



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."

Please join St. John's Hope/Joy children's 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 the items needed for a Christmas holiday dinner. There are many ways you can help provide a Box of Hope.

- Shop for the items below and bring to church on any day through Saturday, December 15. There will be a collection bin in the hall for the food every single Sunday. Please only non-perishable food donations. The kids will assemble the Boxes of Hope on Saturday, December 15.
- Donate \$25 (cash or gift card) for a Box of Hope.

A BOX OF HOPE contains:

• Gift certificate for a turkey or ham	• 2 cans of black beans
• 1 box of cereal (hot or cold)	• 2 cans of cranberry sauce
• 2 cans of fruit	• 1 bag of dried beans
• 1 jar of peanut butter	• 1 box or bag of rice
• 2 cans of vegetables	• 1 can or packet of gravy
• 2 cans of yams	• 1 box dessert mix
• 1 bag or box of stuffing	• 1 package cookies or pastries
• 1 box of potatoes	• 1 family box of Jell-O/Pudding

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



The Archangels

by Fr. Demetri Tobias

One of my favorite topics of discussion is the Holy Angels, the Synaxis of whom we celebrate on November 8th. There seems to be a lot of confusion about the Bodiless Powers, and I wanted to take the time to discuss them here.

The first and most prevalent misunderstanding about angels is that human beings become angels. "To which of the angels did God ever say, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'?" (Hebrews 1:13). Jesus did not come to save angels, but humans. We do not become angels when we die. That would be the equivalent of saying you become a dog or a cat when you die.

The reason perhaps people make this mistake comes from the verse in Matthew 22:30 "At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven." Notice the word "like." Even in the original Greek it reads: 30 ἐν γὰρ τῇ ἀναστάσει οὔτε γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίζονται, ἀλλ' ὡς ἄγγελοι θεοῦ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ εἰσιν. The similitude to angels lies in the fact that man and women will no longer be given in marriage. There will be no new children, but like the angels, we will worship God perfectly. This is further seen in Isaiah 6 and Revelation 4 as the angels show us the way to glorify God.

As a final image of this, look to the icons of the Angels in the domes of most Orthodox Churches.

So what are the angels? The angels are the servants of God that came into being between the first two days of Creation. In between then and the creation of the Garden of Eden, the angels warred with one another. Satan, the great deceiver, who was called Lucifer sought to become God. He lost the war, and a third of the angels fell with him. Luke 10:18 "I saw Satan fall like lightning." From then until now, the angels have served mankind to bring us closer to our creator.

The following is from the Minea of St Dimitry of Rostov and appeared in the November/December 1968 issue of Orthodox Life. This is taken from a reprint included in the booklet Orthodox Teachings on the Holy Angels compiled by Fr Demetrius Serfes (It may still be available through St John of Kronstadt Press)

The nine orders of the angels are divided into three hierarchies, each of which is divided into three orders: the highest, the intermediate, the lower.

The first hierarch, the highest and closest to the Most Holy Trinity, consists of the **SERAPHIM**, **CHERUBIM**, and **THRONES**.

The God-loving six-winged **SERAPHIM** stand closer than all before their Creator and Maker, as the prophet Isaiah saw, saying: "And the seraphim stood around Him, each having six wings" (Isaiah 6:2). They are fire-like since they stand before That One of Whom it is written: "For our God is a consuming fire." (Heb 12:29); "His throne was a flame of fire" (Dan 7:9); "the appearance of the Lord was like a blazing fire" (Ex 24:17). Standing before such glory, the seraphim are fire-like, as it said: "Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire" (Ps 103:4). They are aflame with love for God and kindle



others to such love, as is shown by their very name, for "seraphim" in the Hebrew language means: "flaming".

After the seraphim, before the All-knowing God, Who resides in inaccessible light, stand the many-eyed **CHERUBIM** in ineffable radiance. More than the other lower orders of angels, they are always radiant with the light of the knowledge of God, with the knowledge of the mysteries of God and the depths of His Wisdom; being themselves enlightened, they enlighten others. Their name "cherubim" in translation from the Hebrew language, means: "great understanding" or "effusion of wisdom", because through the cherubim wisdom is sent down to others and enlightenment of the spiritual eyes is given for the seeing of God and knowledge of God.

Thereafter stand the God-bearing **THRONES** (as St Dionysius the Areopagite calls them) before Him Who sits on the high and exalted throne, being named "thrones" since on them, as on intellectual thrones (as writes St Maximus the Confessor) God intellectually resides. They are not called "God bearing" according to essence but according to grace and according to their office, as the flesh of Jesus Christ (as St Basil the Great writes) is called "God-bearing" according to essence since it was indivisibly united with God the Word Himself. The thrones are then called "God-bearing" not according to essence but according to grace, given for their service, which is mystically and incomprehensibly to bear God in themselves. Residing on them in an incomprehensible manner, God makes His righteous judgment, according to the word of David: "Thou hast sat upon a throne, O Thou that judgest righteousness." (Ps 9:4). Therefore

through them the justice of God is pre-eminently manifested; they serve His justice, glorifying it and pour out the power of justice onto the thrones of earthly judges, helping kings and masters to bring forth right judgment.

The middle hierarchy also consists of three orders of holy angels: the **DOMINIONS**, the **VIRTUES**, and the **POWERS**.

The **DOMINIONS** are so named because, being themselves free, they dominate over the rest of the angels which follow behind them. Having abandoned servile fear, as St Dionysius the Aeropagite says, they voluntarily and with joy serve God unceasingly. Also they send down power for prudent governing and wise management to authorities on the earth set up by God. Further they teach how to control the senses, how to subdue in oneself dissolute desires and passions, how to enslave the flesh to the spirit, and how to rule over one's will and be above all temptations.

The **VIRTUES**, [the usual translation of the name of this order of angels as "virtues" is readily misleading if the old meaning of the word "virtue" as "power" or "force", especially as regards to divine beings (cf Oxford English Dictionary), is not remembered. Note of translator.] filled with divine strength, quickly fulfill the will of the All-High and Omnipotent Lord, strong and powerful. They both work very great miracles and send down the grace of miracle-working to God's saints, who are worthy of such grace, in order that these may work miracles, such as heal every sickness and foretell the future. The holy virtues also help people laboring and those overburdened by the bearing of an obedience placed on them by someone - by which their names "virtues" is explained - and they bear the infirmities of the weak. They also strengthen every man in patience, so that he does not faint away in affliction but rather bears all misfortune with a strong spirit, courageously, and with humility, giving thanks for everything to God, arranging all for our benefit.

The **POWERS** are so called because they have power over the devil, in order to restrain the power of the demons, to repulse the temptations brought upon people by them, and to prevent the demons from harming anyone to the degree that they would wish. The powers strengthen the good ascetics in spiritual struggles and labors, protecting them so that they may not be deprived of the spiritual kingdom. They help those wrestling with passions and vices to cast out evil thoughts and slanders of the enemy and to conquer the devil.

In the lowest hierarchy there are also three orders: the **PRINCIPALITIES**, the **ARCHANGELS**, and the **ANGELS**.

The **PRINCIPALITIES** are named thus because they have command over the lower angels, directing them to the fulfillment of divine orders. The management of the universe and the keeping of all the kingdoms and principedoms, of lands and all peoples, races and nations, is also entrusted to them since each kingdom, race and people have for themselves a special deeper and manager from the heavenly order called the principalities, for all their country. Further, the service of this angelic order (according to the explanation of St Gregory the Dialogist) consists in teaching the people to requite each person in authority according to his calling. Finally, the angels of this order raise worthy people to various honorable offices and direct them so that they take power not for the sake of their own gain and benefit, nor for the sake of love of honor and vain renown, but for the sake of honor from God, for the sake of spreading and augmenting of His holy glory, and for the sake of the benefit of their neighbors - as serving the general needs of all their subordinates.

The **ARCHANGELS** are called the great heralds of good news, announcing the great and most glorious. Their service (as the great Dionysius the Aeropagite says) consists in revealing prophecies, knowledge, and understanding of God's will which they receive from the higher orders of angels and announce to the lower order, ie. the angels, and through them, to men. St Gregory the Dialogist says that the archangels strengthen people in the holy faith, enlightening their mind with the light of knowledge of the holy Gospel and revealing the mysteries of devout faith.

The **ANGELS** are the lowest of all the orders in the heavenly hierarchy and the closest to man. They announce the lesser mysteries and intentions of God and teach people to live virtuously and righteously before God. They are appointed to guard each of us who believe: they sustain virtuous people from fallen, and never leave us though we have sinned, but are always ready to help us, if only we ourselves want it.

All of the heavenly orders are also called by the common name "angels". Although they have different names according to their situation and grace given by God (as seraphim, cherubim, thrones and the rest of the orders), yet all in general are called angels, because the word "angel" is not a denomination of essence, but of service, as it is written: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister" (Heb 1:14). But their service is different and not identical: each order has its own service; for the All-Wise Creator does not reveal the mystery of His design to all to the same degree, but from the one to the others, through the higher He enlightens the lower, revealing to them His will and commanding it to be as in the book of the Prophet Zachariah. There it is said that one angel, after conversing with the prophet, met another angel who ordered him to go again to the prophet and reveal the future fate of Jerusalem: "And behold, the angel that talked with me went forth and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man (that is, the prophet Zachariah), saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein: For I, saith the Lord will be unto her a wall of fire round about" (Zach 2:3-5).

Deliberating about this, St Gregory the Dialogist says, "When one angel says to the other: 'Run speak to this young man' there is no doubt that certain angels send others, that the lower ones are sent, that the higher send" (St Gregory the Dialogist, Interpretation of the Gospels, #4).

We find exactly the same thing in the prophecy of Daniel, that one angel orders another to interpret the vision to the prophet. From this it is evident that angels of higher orders reveal the divine will and intention of their Creator to angels of the lower orders, that they enlighten them and send them to people. The Orthodox Church militant, being in need of the help of the angels, celebrates the Assembly of all the nine angelic orders with a special supplication, as is fitting, on the eighth day of the month of November (Nov 21 OS) ie. the ninth month, since all these nine orders of angels will gather on the day of the Terrible Judgment of the Lord, which the divine teachers of the Church call the eighth day. For they say, at the end of seven thousand years will begin as if an eighth day, "When the Son of man shall in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him" (as the Lord Himself foretold in the Gospel - Matt 25:31). "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds." (Matt 24:31), ie. from the East, West, North, and South.

Fr. Demetri Tobias currently serves at St. Basil Greek Orthodox Church in Chicago, IL.

Why Burning Out Doesn't Have to Be Final Or Fatal: 10 Top Insights

By Carey Nieuwhof

Burnout is almost an epidemic among leaders today, and burning out is increasingly common among people who don't even consider themselves leaders.

It's no longer just reserved for over-40 leaders either.

Even young leaders are burning out. No longer is burnout an "I've been at this too long" kind of phenomenon.

So what happens if you burnout?

Can you come back?

Will you lead again?

Can you thrive again?

Is there hope?

12 years ago, I burned out.

It was the first time my fatigue pushed me over a cliff and left me unable to get back. It was more than physical exhaustion... it was emotional exhaustion. I had led for 12 years, but clearly, I had not processed my leadership properly. My first decade in leadership pushed me past the brink of burnout.

If you want more about my story, I write about it in detail in my best-selling book, *Didn't See It Coming*. Maybe your spouse or best friend saw your burnout coming, but usually the person who burns out doesn't.

Personally, I'll never forget the depth of the despair.

And yet, a full twelve years later, I have never felt better, never felt more alive, and never been more productive in my life.

Here are 10 ways my burnout changed the way I lead, and 10 insights that can help any leader lead better (whether or not you've burnt out).

1. LIMITS EXIST FOR A REASON

As a young leader, it's so easy to think limits don't apply to you. In some ways they don't.

Until they do.

People kept telling me I would burn out.

I thought I was invincible—and I was so wrong.

I have a much greater respect for God-given limits: limits for how much I can do, what I should be involved in, and even how much sleep I need.

I've discovered that when I respect limits, I ironically get far more accomplished. The desire to burn through all limits many leaders feel, is, in the end, counterproductive.

2. GOD IS STILL PRESENT, EVEN WHEN HE FEELS ABSENT

It's hard to feel God's presence when you've hit bottom.

There were months where I simply went through the motions—praying, reading my bible and following God as best as I could, even though I felt nothing.

There were moments in which I felt there was no way God could be present because clearly I had failed him, or I wouldn't be feeling the way I did.

But that simply isn't true.

God was very present when I was burning out. In fact, he was doing some deep work in me: prodding, shaping and refining who I was. You could even argue he was preparing me for what was ahead.

Did it have to be as painful as it was? Of course not. Had I listened earlier and heeded the warning signs, I probably wouldn't have burned out.

But God is sovereign, and his faithfulness doesn't depend on me.

God is still present...even when he feels absent.

3. YOUR UNRESOLVED PAST WILL SINK YOUR FUTURE

Unprocessed 'issues' are deadly.

My wife had urged me to go to counselling for a few years before I actually went. I was too proud to go. I *sent* people to counselling, I didn't *go* to counselling.

How stupid.

She saw issues I couldn't see. Others saw issues I couldn't see. I had issues...things that were driving me to hurt others unintentionally.

The truth is we all struggle with unresolved issues. The sooner you deal with them, the better everyone around you is.

Your unresolved past will sink your future, unless you deal with it.

4. GRIEVE YOUR LOSSES

A mentor once told me that ministry is a series of ungrieved losses. He was right.

Think about how much loss is involved in leadership. Someone leaves your church. A staff member quits. A decision doesn't go your way. You lose a friend.

Many leaders pretend it doesn't hurt when the reality is it does. Worse than that, we don't know what to do with our losses. So we just go back to work.

For years when I read the scriptural stories of how people grieved, I thought to myself, "What's wrong with these people?"

Why did they take 40 days to grieve the death of Moses?

Couldn't they just get back to work?"

Little did I realize that taking the time to grieve your losses is one of the healthiest things you can do.

I spent an inordinate amount of time in August 2006 crying.

It's like all the losses I ignored for decades couldn't stay inside anymore. And once they left...I found closure, even healing.

Now, I pay much more attention to feelings of loss. I pray about them. I process them. Occasionally I do shed tears over the deeper ones. And then I move on.

So much healthier.

5. IF GOD WANTS TO GO DEEP, IT'S BECAUSE HE WANTS TO TAKE YOU FAR

The #1 question I had in the middle of my burnout is *will this ever end?*

It took me three months to start functioning semi-normally again. Within a year, I was at 80%. But it took a full 5 years to be at 100% of normal, which wasn't the old normal, but a new normal (the old normal would have landed me back in the ditch again).

I realized God was doing some soul surgery in me that went very deep. I believe he wanted to get to the root of some heart issues that would have held me back from doing what he wants to accomplish with my life.

Over the last few years, I've been able to encourage other leaders going through burnout, spending some time to pray and talk with them, sometimes at length.

The question they always ask is this: *when will this be over?* All of us A-types want burnout over quickly.

My standard answer these days is "*don't rush it and don't delay it. Let it take as long as it takes.*"

Why?

There's a promise underneath the pain. If God is doing surgery, it's because he wants to bring healing.

It's also a sign of his love. If God wants to go deep, it's because he wants to take you far.

6. YOUR HEART WILL HEAL AND YOU WILL TRUST AGAIN

Your heart gets mangled in leadership because you:

Trusted people who betrayed that trust.

Hoped only to have your hopes dashed.

Believed only to discover what you were hoping for never happened.

That's the natural stuff of leadership, but in the process, your naiveté and innocence are lost.

As a result, it's hard not to grow cynical. It's hard not to let your heart grow hard. How do you thrive long term when leadership can be disappointing?

For me, it's a combination of realism and optimism. Yep, it can be hard. Yes, there will be disappointments. But despite that, I will believe again. I will hope again. I will trust again.

Here's something I've discovered: leaders who thrive see life for what it really is but keep their hearts fully engaged.

7. YOUR EMOTIONS EVENTUALLY CATCH UP TO YOUR OBEDIENCE

When you're burnt out, your emotions stop working properly. You sometimes feel nothing. Or you feel a deep despair. And at other times, you feel emotions but they are not proportionate to what is going on around you or what you should be feeling.

I think a lot of leaders simply quit because their emotions have stopped working.

What I've learned is that obedience is greater than my emotions.

I stayed in ministry because I believe God had not released me from my calling. So I just obeyed.

The amazing thing is, eventually, your emotions catch up to your obedience. As you get healthier, the emotions begin to work the way they should. Sometimes they work better than they ever have.

8. MANAGING YOUR ENERGY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MANAGING YOUR TIME

Prior to my burnout, I worked on time management.

Since I burned out, I still work hard on optimal time management, but I've discovered a much better approach: *energy* management.

Your energy waxes and wanes throughout the day. Rather than fight that, I've learned to cooperate with it. I've discovered that there are probably 3-5 hours a day when I'm at my best (for me, that's usually in the morning).

I've moved all my most important work to those hours when I'm at my best.

Doing what you're best at when you're at your best unlocks a world of potential many leaders miss.

9. SLEEP IS A LEADER'S SECRET WEAPON

Exhaustion was a major reason I burned out. Not the only reason, but a major reason.

Now, I guard my sleep zealously, when I'm at home or on the road. I've embraced naps. And I watch my fatigue levels like a hawk.

I've come to realize that most of us are like our phones. You start off in the morning with 100% charge and at various points in the day, you need to be plugged back in.

A quick nap at lunch can recharge me for a few hours. Getting 7-8 hours of sleep every night has become essential for me to perform at my best at work and at home.

10. YOUR BEST DAYS MAY ACTUALLY BE AHEAD OF YOU, NOT BEHIND YOU

Here's some hope for anyone struggling with burnout.

When I was burning out, I was mostly convinced my best days were behind me. With a decade's distance from my burnout, I can see that wasn't true in the least.

I came back from burnout, and I've accomplished more in the last 10 years than I ever imagined was possible.

I planted a church that has grown into the largest church I've ever been a part of.

People told me all through my 30s that I should write a book. I never did. In the last 9 years, I've written four.

My blog has grown to millions of readers a year, I launched a weekly leadership podcast, and I've had the chance to speak all over the world.

If you had told me God would open up doors like this when I was in the depth of my burnout, I would never have believed it.

I'm not sure I could have handled what God brought my way before I burned out. There were things he needed to do inside me before he did things through me. I see that clearly now.

The point is simply this...if you're burning out, keep moving through it. Maybe your best days are ahead of you, not behind you.

November 2018 SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Thank you for supporting our 2018-2019 Sunday School year. All our Sunday School Teachers are dedicated to providing great lessons about our faith to your children.

The Sunday School Topics for the month of October were: READING THE BIBLE, THE CREED, THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND HOLY COMMUNION-DIVINE LITURGY-WORSHIP. We would like to thank Fr. Stavros for supporting our Sunday School and Charlie Hambos for his visits to our classrooms. This month he conducted lessons about our Church Vessels and the Holy Bread in our Kindergarten, First Grade, 6th Grade, and 7th-8th Grade classrooms. Our THIRD Graders also learned about and made Prospora for our church on October 15 under the direction of Melissa Krinos.

Our second YOUTH SUNDAY of the year took place on October 14. We would like to thank our Sunday School students for singing our church hymns so beautifully.

Our HALL of FAITH program is to encourage our children to memorize and understand the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. Our Pre-K through 3rd Graders should be focusing on the Lord's Prayer and our 4th graders through seniors will focus on the Creed. Here are our Hall of Famers as of Oct. 11th 2018.

I HAVE MEMORIZED THE LORD'S PRAYER!

Constantine Ameres
Gryphon Borgeas- Beach
Remy Boomgarden
Maggie Brewer
Sofia Camene
Nicholas Carter
Zachary Carter
Adriana Catrone
Anthony Catrone
Kris Christopher
Aidan Clifton
Ariana Clifton
Bill Conner
Evie Conner
Ashley Henderson

Natalie Henderson
William Jernigan
Teddy Kafantari
Philip Kane
Charlie Katsaros
Julie Konstas
Yanni Lambrou
Leo Lenardos
Gabriele Molina
Louis Mantzanas
Lauren Mason
Elisa Mitseas
Nathan Moran
Emily Nicklow
Maria Nicklow

Aspasia Panos
Vasilios Panos
Aiden Ricks
Lucas Ricks
Uriah Ricks
Penn Serbanos
Ava Spirides
Katerina Sotiropoulos
Sofia Stonestreet
Ariana Thatcher
Sam Thomas
Maggie Trakas
P.J. Zelatis

I HAVE MEMORIZED THE LORD'S PRAYER AND THE CREED!

Nicholas Akrotirianakis
Gianni Bavaro
Alexander Demetriou
Alex Findlay
Dominic Garcia
Marianna Giallourakis
Benny Hidremichael
Calliope Kafantaris

Eleni Kataras
Mia Lenardos
Aaron Martinez
Abby Moran
Maria Palios
Demetri Passalaris
Matthew Robinson
Gennaro Scarfogliero

Brigham Sibley
Toula Trakas
Artemis Xenick
Elizabeth Xenick
George Xenick
Kaitlin Zelatis

NOVEMBER SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR

Sunday, November 4
YOUTH SUNDAY - (6th-8th Grade
Music at 11:50 a.m.)
Topic: Saints Cosmas & Damian –
Serving with Love
Prospora: 6th Grade

Sunday, November 11
No Sunday School Classes (Greek
Festival)

Sunday, November 18
Topic: Charity/Thankfulness
GOYA Meeting 5:00 p.m.

Sun., Nov. 25: No Sunday
School Classes (Thanksgiving)

2018 Raffle Buy One – Sell One Together, We all Win!

Goal - 700+ Tickets



This Year:

Five Prizes:

Car or \$20k Cash Prize

One \$1,000 Cash Prize

Three iPad Minis

Weekly Posted Sales

Updates!

How To Buy:

Mail in Check with Raffle Stub

Call in Credit Card; Bring in Raffle Stub

Stop by Hall After Church Sept. 30 – Nov. 4

Watch Bulletin for New Methods to Buy –

We're trying to make this easy for you!

Want to Learn Modern Greek?

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church Adult Greek School



Teacher born, raised, and educated in Greece with over 20 years of experience teaching the Greek language. Adult classes for beginners taught @ St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church 2418 W. Swann Ave, Tampa, FL 33609. Classes are held at 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. on Thursday evenings, starting on September 27, 2018. This will be the first of three sessions, with each session lasting three months.

- Speak Greek
- Read Greek
- Write Greek
- Basic Grammar & More.
- Some Greek History
- Book Included in Price!!

Price per session is \$100 for church members and \$125 for non-members.

Contact Ms. Magdalini Myer: at (813) 909-2327, aspis69@aol.com or the church office at (813) 876-8830.



The Annual St. John the Baptist Greek Festival is
November 9, 10 & 11, 2018

We will unite as a Parish to support our Festival. Help is needed in many ways leading up to and during the festival. Everyone doing something (big, small or somewhere in between) makes our festival a success! This is our opportunity to showcase our Orthodox Faith as well our food, dancing and Kefi!

Things We Know:

- ◆ **Raffle Tickets are available on-line and in the office. This year, we are raffling off a brand new car or \$20,000 cash plus great secondary prizes Make checks payable to St. John Greek Orthodox Church. If you wish to buy/sell the raffle tickets online and pay with a credit card, visit tampagreekfestival.com. (Great opportunity for distant relatives!!)**
- ◆ **We will also have a Festival Table setup for volunteers and additional Raffle Donations up until the Festival.**
- ◆ **We have over 1,200 volunteer slots to fill over our 3 days weekend. It takes the effort of our entire Church Community to host a successful festival. Sign up to volunteer at TampaGreekFestival.com or contact Sandra Pappas at tpagreekfestival@gmail.com or 813-785-3747.
Our GOAL: Volunteer for at least two shifts.**



Help Needed on the Following Dates:

Monday, November 5

We will be covering the Gym Floor



Festival Days & Hours

Friday, November 9 11:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 10 11:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 11 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Featured Book of the St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church Bookstore

“Surprised By Christ” by Rev. A. James Bernstein

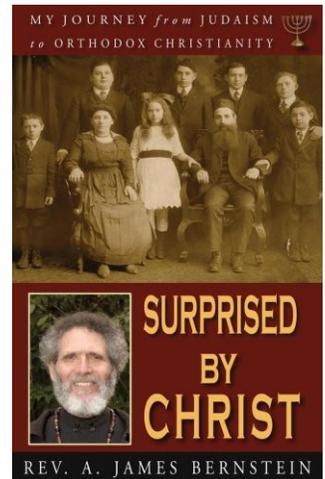
This book is a story of a man searching for truth and unable to rest until he finds it. It describes Father James’ journey from Judaism to Orthodox Christianity. “Surprised by Christ” is an autobiography, an intellectual history, and a conversion story, and more than these, conveys a spiritual and theological vision in a message that touches people from many different backgrounds. That vision is of the Living God revealed in Jesus Christ, who is the fulfillment of the Old Covenant, the life of the Faithful, the hope of the despairing, and the motivation for those who strive to preach the Gospel in all its integrity.

Raised in Queens, New York, by formerly Orthodox Jewish parents whose faith had been undermined by the Holocaust, Arnold Bernstein when on his own personal quest for spiritual meaning. He was ready to accept God in whatever form He chose to reveal Himself—and that form turned out to be Christ. But Bernstein soon perceived discrepancies in the various forms of Protestant belief that surrounded him, and so his quest continued—this time for the true Church.

“Surprised by Christ” combines an engrossing memoir of one man’s life in historic times and situations—from the Six-Day War to the Civil Rights Movement to the Jesus Movement in Berkeley—with an examination of the distinctives of Orthodox theology that make the Orthodox Church the true home not only for Christian Jews, but for all who seek to know God as fully as He may be known.

This book is available in the bookstore. We would love to hear from you, particularly what you think of the book after reading it.

P.S. If there is an Orthodox Christian religious item that you would like the bookstore to order, please contact us. We are often able to get a discount as a bookstore. -Brett and Ana Mourer



Small Group Bible Study

Our Bible Studies are going in full swing. New people are welcome at any time!

Monday Night Bible Study (for everyone)

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.

Meeting Dates: November 19 and 26

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

Location: Meets at the home of Debbie Kavouklis, 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)

Meeting Dates: November 6, 13 (at church) and 20

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: At the Church in the Library

Group Leader: Bessie Palios

bmp1126@yahoo.com 813-523-0347

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

Meeting Dates: November 6 and 13

New Policy and Steps for Memorial Services at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

Step 1 – Call the office to schedule a memorial service date.

Any date can be chosen to the closest date of passing if it is for a 40-Day memorial and a 1-year memorial. Any less (6-month) or more than (1+ years) can happen on a designated Memorial Sunday predetermined at the beginning of the calendar year by the Church Office.

Step 2 – Name and Initials

When making the initial phone call to the office, please provide the baptismal name of the deceased and the initials needed, if a Kolyva(es) is desired.



Step 3 – Reserving pews.

A certain amount of pews can be reserved for the family of the Memorial Service. Please request when making the initial phone call to the office. The pews will be reserved in the church on the scheduled Sunday until 10:20 a.m. (if the Divine Liturgy begins at 10:00 a.m.) and 20 minutes after the start of the Divine Liturgy if there is an earlier start time for whatever reason. If your family arrives after 10:20 a.m., the reserved pews will be forfeited to the general public.

Step 4 – Reserving tables in the Kourmolis Center.

Tables can be reserved in the hall for your family. Simply reserved. Tablecloths and other decorations (flowers, candles, etc.) are used at the family's discretion but is not required to be provided by the Philoptochos Society or the church.

Step 5 – Kolyva(es) from the Philoptochos.

Our Philoptochos Society is responsible for making Kolyves (plural of Kolyva). Please notify the office if you would like the Philoptochos Society to make the Kolyva(es). Do not contact the Philoptochos Society directly. The Church Office will make the requests and the Philoptochos will confirm. There is a three-week minimum notice needed in order to ensure someone can make the Kolyva(es). There is a \$100 suggested/enforced donation. This includes the Philoptochos Society to scoop the Kolyva(es) for coffee hour on the designated memorial dates.

Step 6 – Making your own Kolyva(es) or getting someone else to prepare.

Please notify the Church Office when scheduling the Memorial Service date that your family or someone you know will be making the Kolyva(es). If a family chooses to make their own Kolyva(es), the family will be responsible for scooping the Kolyva(es) in the kitchen after the Memorial Service to share with the entire community. The Philoptochos is not required to scoop the Kolyva(es) even if they prepared a Kolyva(es) on the same Sunday.

Step 7-Luncheon and other food items requested on a Memorial Sunday.

Additional food can be provided, whether that is simply Paximathia (memorial cookies) or an entire lunch or Coffee Hour. The family is responsible for working with the ministry or the families scheduled to host coffee hour to provide additional food/help necessary to set up, serve and clean up a coffee hour/luncheon for food that is provided for the whole community not just for the family of the memorial service.

If there are ever any questions about this, please call the office and ask to speak directly with Fr. Stavros or Charlie at 813-876-8830 or email the office at officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com.

GOYA Prepared for the Greek Festival with a Day of Service

A big group of GOYAnS came out on Saturday, October 20 to help beautify our grounds before the Greek Festival. They ripped out all of the flower beds on the Northeast corner of the Kourmolis Center and put down new mulch. They also ripped up the bushes along the BridgePrep Academy School Building put down mulch there as well. Nice work!



From YouTube to you!



BEE TREAT!

ORLANDO, FL



Saturday, November 17, 2018

9:30AM - 5PM

Youth (K - 12th grade)

Parents & Youth Workers

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

1217 Trinity Woods Ln., Maitland FL 32751

7PM

Young Adult Event

TO REGISTER:

y2am.org/BeeTreats

Led by:

STEVE CHRISTOFOROU - host of "Be the Bee"
AND THE BEETREAT TEAM!

"Be the Bee" is a weekly YouTube series exploring how we can focus on what is good and beautiful in our lives.

Visit youtube.com/y2am to learn more!



The Story of a Son

author unknown

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art.

When the Viet Nam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier.

The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands.

He said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art.

The young man held out his package. "I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this."

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears.

He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. "Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift."

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection. On the platform sat the painting of the son.

The auctioneer pounded his gavel. "We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?"

There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, "We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one."

But the auctioneer persisted, "Will someone bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?"

Another voice shouted angrily, "We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids! "But still the auctioneer continued, "The son! The son! Who'll take the son?"

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son. "I'll give \$10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford.

"We have \$10, who will bid \$20?" "Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the masters." "\$10 is the bid, won't someone bid \$20?" The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. "Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10!"

A man sitting on the second row shouted, "Now let's get on with the collection!"

The auctioneer laid down his gavel, "I'm sorry, the auction is over."

"What about the paintings?"

"I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything!"

God gave his Son 2,000 years ago to die on a cruel cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is, "The Son, the Son, who'll take the Son?" Because you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything.

Join the St. John Legacy Society Today! Make a Plan to Amplify Your Impact

- Have you ever thought about leaving a special gift to our beloved St. John Greek Orthodox Church in your estate plans? If you include the church in your will or leave a portion of a retirement fund or life insurance policy, you will become a member of the [St. John Legacy Society](#), an initiative to help provide for our church's future. Whether you put your donation to work today or benefit our church after your lifetime, you can provide for your family and at the same time support the church. For more information about the St. John Legacy Society please contact Fr. Stavros at [813-876-8830 ext. 103](tel:813-876-8830) or frstav@gmail.com. Please be sure to consult your financial and legal advisors and discuss your charitable plans with your family. Additionally, please contact Fr. Stavros so that we may include you as a member of the St. John Legacy Society and properly thank you.

THE MAGIC BANK ACCOUNT

This is a great email. Hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

THE AUTHOR IS NOT KNOWN. IT WAS FOUND IN THE BILLFOLD OF COACH PAUL BEAR BRYANT, ALABAMA, AFTER HE DIED IN 1982

The Magic Bank Account

Imagine that you had won the Following *PRIZE* in a contest:

Each morning your bank would deposit \$86,400 In your private account for your use.

However, this prize has Rules:

The set of Rules:

1. Everything that you didn't spend during each day would be taken away from you.
2. You may not simply transfer money into some other account.
3. You may only spend It.
4. Each morning upon awakening, The bank opens your account with another \$86,400 for that Day.
5. The bank can end the game without warning; at any time, it can say, "Game Over!" It can close the account And you will not receive a new one.

What would you personally Do?

You would buy anything and Everything you wanted right?

Not only for yourself, but for all the people you love and

care for. Even for people you don't know, because you couldn't possibly spend it all on yourself, right?

You would try to spend every penny, and use it all, because you knew it would be replenished in the morning, right?

ACTUALLY, This GAME is REAL... Shocked ??? YES!

Each of us is already a winner Of this *PRIZE*. We just can't seem to see it.

The PRIZE is *TIME*

Each morning we awaken to Receive 86,400 seconds As a gift of Life.

And when we go to sleep at Night, any remaining time is Not credited to us.

3. What we haven't used up that Day is forever lost.

4. Yesterday is forever Gone.

5. Each morning the account is Refilled, but the bank can dissolve your account at any time WITHOUT WARNING...

SO, what will YOU do with your 86,400 seconds?

Those seconds are worth so much More than the same amount in dollars.

Think about it and remember to Enjoy every second of your life, because time races by so much quicker than You think.

So take care of yourself, be Happy, love deeply and enjoy life!

St. John's to Partner with Love INC (in the Name of Christ)

Love INC (in the Name of Christ) networks local churches, church volunteers, and community organizations together to help people in need. Through Love INC, churches and individual Christians are mobilized to work together, across denominational lines, to provide coordinated help to struggling neighbors with basic needs such as food and clothing, to longer-term responses such as life skills training and transitional housing programs. For more information contact lhale@loveinctampa.org or www.loveinctampa.org. Charlie Hambos is our church contact. Contact him for more info. We look forward to being a strong partner both on an individual and community level.

Lunch N Learn

November 14

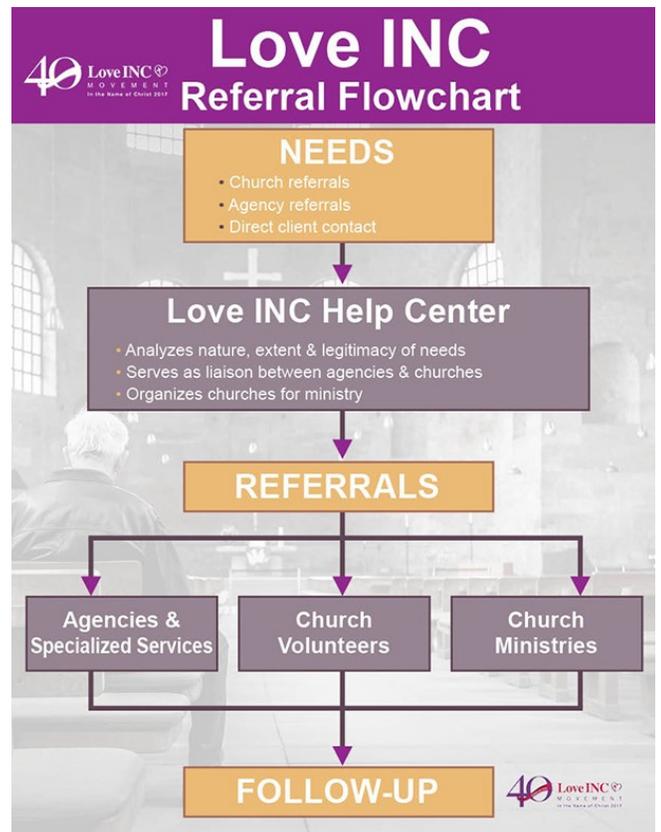
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Volunteer Training

December 1

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

@ The Portico, 1001 N. Florida Ave.,
Tampa, 33602.



What Cherishing Your Spouse Really Means

By Gary Thomas

Wayne Williams grew up a Chicago Cubs fan because that was his father's favorite team, which also meant that for most of Wayne's life he lived as a frustrated sports enthusiast. At the time, the Cubs had the longest World Series drought in the major leagues, but even so, at the start of every season Wayne and his father renewed a promise to each other: When (not *if*, but *when*) the Cubbies made it to the World Series, they would listen to the games together.

Chicago finally made it during the 2016 season, and Wayne resolved to keep the promise he had made as a boy, even though it would be costly. He now lived in North Carolina. His dad was in Indiana. It would have been easy to discard the agreement as sentimental foolishness, but Wayne believes a promise made is a promise kept, so he traveled to Indiana to share the last game of the World Series with his father.

But there was another hitch: Wayne's dad died in 1980. So Wayne put a lawn chair next to his father's grave and watched the game on his iPhone for the next four and a half hours. I love stories of people keeping difficult promises. There's something especially noble about a person being true to his or her word, even at great cost.

Perhaps that's why I was taken aback when God reminded me of a promise I had made on my wedding day: I had vowed to "love and to cherish" my wife until death brought us apart. For more than 20 years, I had focused on love — serving, sacrificing, persevering — but had conveniently forgotten to consider what it meant to *cherish* my wife. God made it clear that it was time to be true to my word. But first, I had to figure out what cherishing even meant.

A new delight

One of the easiest ways for me to discover the difference between loving and cherishing was to compare the famous biblical chapter on love ([1 Corinthians 13](#)) with the Song of Solomon, a book devoted to cherishing. Consider these comparisons:

Love is about being gracious and altruistic. "Love is patient and kind" ([1 Corinthians 13:4](#)). *Cherish* is about being enthusiastic and enthralled. "How much better is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your oils than any spice" ([Song of Solomon 4:10](#)).

Love tends to be quiet and understated. "Love does not envy or boast" ([1 Corinthians 13:4](#)). *Cherish* boasts boldly and loudly. "My beloved is radiant and ruddy, distinguished among ten thousand" ([Song of Solomon 5:10](#)).

Love thinks about others with selflessness. "[Love] is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way" ([1 Corinthians 13:4-5](#)). *Cherish* thinks about its beloved with praise. "Your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely" ([Song of Solomon 2:14](#)).

Love doesn't want the worst for someone. "[Love] does not rejoice at wrongdoing" ([1 Corinthians 13:6](#)). *Cherish* celebrates the best in someone. "Behold, you are beautiful, my love; behold, you are beautiful" ([Song of Solomon 1:15](#)).

Love puts up with a lot. "[Love] hopes all things, endures all things" ([1 Corinthians 13:7](#)). *Cherish* enjoys a lot. "His mouth



is most sweet, and he is altogether desirable" ([Song of Solomon 5:16](#)).

Love and cherish complement each other. Without the bedrock force of love, cherishing won't last. It'll be a sentimental ideal that is lost in the real world. Without cherishing, love feels like a duty more than a delight. I don't want my wife to think I'm with her only because God says I'm not allowed to leave; I want her to think my greatest delight is sharing life with her.

Men, our wives want more than simply to be loved. They want to hear, "You have captivated my heart, my sister, my bride; you have captivated my heart with one glance of your eyes" ([Song of Solomon 4:9](#)). And wives, your husbands want more than to be tolerated. They want to hear, "As an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men" ([Song of Solomon 2:3](#)).

Dave Wilson, co-founder of Kensington Community Church, asked seven male leaders, "How many of you have a wife who loves you?" and every man raised his hand to signify yes. He then asked, "How many of you have a wife who likes you?" and every hand went down.

Every husband felt loved. None felt cherished.

The only one

You are the only person in the world who can make your spouse feel cherished in this way. Others can love, respect, appreciate and praise him or her. But if you don't cherish as a husband or wife should, your spouse will never be a cherished spouse.

I believe God wants to raise the level of Christian marriages so that we're not just gritting our teeth and hanging on but instead learning to celebrate and honor each other.

The good news is that cherishing your spouse is something you can learn. God is more than capable of teaching us and empowering us to cherish our spouse the way He cherishes us. Cherishing is an attitude and an outlook. Since it's not based just on feelings, it can be developed. Committing to the promise to cherish, adopting a cherishing mindset and then putting into practice cherishing actions creates a cherishing heart. These are all things that can be chosen.

The right mindset

I had to adopt what I call an "Adam and Eve" mindset. One thing that kills cherishing is comparing one's spouse with anyone else. The tendency is to compare a spouse's weaknesses with someone else's strengths. In the beginning, Eve was literally the only woman in the world, the one who defined what a woman was to Adam. I began praying for that mindset with my wife. I would not expect her to be anything other than what she is. She would be my Eve, the only woman in the world.

A 1-carat diamond would be the envy of most wives in the town I grew up in. It would pale in comparison to the 6-carat diamond a friend of ours received for her 20th anniversary. Comparison can devalue even things of great worth.

The right actions

After committing to my promise and adopting an Adam and Eve mindset, I set about discovering acts that create a cherishing heart.

One of the most effective things I did was spend 2016 filling in a daily journal. Each morning I'd write something my wife had done the previous day for which I was thankful, or I'd praise a certain quality of hers. When you begin every day thanking your husband or wife and celebrating him or her, it shapes your attitudes and you view your spouse differently (and the journal doubles as a meaningful Christmas gift at the end of the year).

I also decided to marshal the power of biology and make our morning hugs last a little longer. Neurologically, hugging releases oxytocin, a neuropeptide often called the "cuddle chemical" that fosters feelings of closeness and bonding. No more perfunctory good-morning hugs for me. Taking just another 30 to 45 seconds made a difference in how much I cherished my wife.

If a woman cherishes an engagement ring or a man cherishes a new car, what does he or she do? Shows it off! Likewise, I looked for opportunities to showcase my wife's best qualities to others, praising her publicly, bringing her up in conversations and making sure she was noticed in group settings. And sometimes, I just sat back and observed with great joy as I saw God use her to bless others.

The benefits of cherishing

Here's what I've found out about cherishing: The more I deliberately choose actions that cherish my wife, the more I experience positive emotions toward her, which encourages me to cherish her even more. It's like getting a ball rolling downhill; cherishing picks up its own speed. Infatuation is exactly the opposite. It's like a ball rolling on a level surface; it slows down until it completely stops.

The second thing I've found out about cherishing is that life is much more pleasant when you cherish the person you live with. After I had completed the book *Cherish*, I was working in my office when I heard Lisa waking up. The best way to describe what happened next is that my heart leaped. I knew she'd get a drink of water, shuffle down the hall to my office, come up to my chair and give me a hug, and I also knew that more days than not, this would be one of the highlights of my day.

I started cherishing Lisa because God reminded me of a promise and impressed upon me the need to do it. But like so many things in the kingdom of God, obedience brings tremendous blessing. We receive much joy when we are empowered by God to do what He calls us to do.

A tale of two wives

I once met a man who had been married twice — both wives died of illness. His first marriage had been rather traditional. He loved his wife, was committed to her and never mistreated her. He decided to treat his second wife like a "princess," even calling her that. He told me that his second marriage was more fulfilling, more intimate and happier than his first, but it wasn't because his second wife was "better" than his first. In terms of spiritual maturity, relational availability and demeanor, they were, according to him, "about the same." *The difference is that he loved his first wife but sought to cherish his second wife.* Some people think the best way to improve their marriage is to change their spouse. This man field-tested a different theory and found it to be quite effective. Instead of changing your spouse, change your attitude. Raise the bar. Don't just love your spouse. Learn how to cherish your spouse, and you'll enjoy your marriage like never before.

Gary Thomas is the author of Cherish: The one word that changes everything for your marriage.

St. John the Baptist is on Social Media!

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 [StJohnGOCTampa](#).



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.

Pictures

Go to Flickr.com and search "St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church" or go to www.flickr.com/photos/stjohngoctampa





AHEPA FAMILY NEWS – NOVEMBER 2018

ANNOUNCING THE AHEPA FAMILY 2018 SCHOLARSHIPS BECOME A TAMPA AHEPA SCHOLAR

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The *AHEPA FAMILY Scholarship* is intended to promote, encourage, and advance education at the high school, college, university and graduate school level. Scholarships in the amount of \$500 or higher each will be awarded, based on the funds available in the AHEPA/DOP Scholarship funds in the current year.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants must demonstrate that:

1. They are currently seniors in high school and have been accepted at an accredited college or university as degree seeking students for an associates or bachelors degree. Those not accepted at an institution may be eligible to receive an award by providing evidence of acceptance prior to the award being granted.
2. They are currently enrolled in an accredited college or university seeking a associates, bachelors, masters or doctoral degree.
3. They are in good academic standing
4. They have no criminal record
5. The applicant OR his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) are stewards in good standing at St. John's Greek Orthodox Church (Tampa, Florida) **and** are current members in good standing of the AHEPA/DOP Tampa chapters.
6. The applicant must also be a current paid up member of the Maids of Athena or Sons of Pericles

APPLICATIONS

Applications are available via email from the AHEPA scholarship committee at AHEPA President, Gus Paras gus-paras@parasassociates.com, DOP President, Nicole Leontsinis at nicola713@gmail.com, the Scholarship Chairperson, Edie Kavouklis at edie.kavouklis@gmail.com.

FILING THE APPLICATION

All applications must be filed by mail and postmarked not later than November 30, 2018. Please get a copy of the Application for more information.

AHEPA FAMILY "GREEK WILDFIRE RELIEF"

AHEPA is proud to announce that it sent 2 medical containers to the Evangelismos hospital in Athens and another container to the AHEPA hospital in Thessaloniki. The estimated value of both of these containers exceed \$1.5 Million. Supreme President George E. Loucas and Canadian President of AHEPA, Chris Argiriou, visited Greece during September to evaluate the extent of destruction and options for aid with local and federal officials along with community groups and NGOs.

JOIN TODAY – BECOME A MEMBER OF AHEPA OR THE DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE
OR IF YOU ARE 14- 18 YEARS OLD BECOME A MEMBER OF THE
SONS OF PERICLES OR THE MAIDS OF ATHENA

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

Here are some special requests we have:

- Pasta
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Tomato sauce/chopped tomatoes etc.
- All kinds of white flour
- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Gluten Free Foods and Flours
- Cereal
- Whole wheat rice and pasta
- Men's and Women's razors and shaving cream (travel size)
- Toothbrushes
- Gift cards in any amount for Publix, Walmart or Save-a-lot

All food items offered are accepted. Thank you for supporting those who need it the most. For more info and questions about our Food Pantry please contact Anetta Alexander at 813-758-2689 or exchange2861@yahoo.com.

~ November 2018 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Boxes of Hope						
4 Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Youth Sunday AHEPA/Daughters Festival Table	5 Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	6 WBS 10:00 a.m. SBS 7:00 p.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	7 ** Adult Greek Dance 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	8 Archangels Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Greek School 6:00 p.m.	9 ** St. Nectarios Orthros 8:00 a.m. Liturgy 9:00 a.m. Greek Festival	10 Orthros 8:00 a.m. Liturgy 9:00 a.m. Greek Festival
11 Orthros 7:45 a.m. Liturgy 9:00 a.m. Greek Festival 11:00-6:00 p.m.	12 Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	13 St. John Chrysostom Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. WBS (at church) SBS 7:00 p.m. Parish Council Candidate Seminar 7:00-9:00 p.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	14 ** Holy Unction 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	15** Greek School 6:00 p.m.	16 ** St. Matthew Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m.	17** Community Outreach 8 a.m. @ First Presbyterian Downtown Tampa Be the Bee Retreat in Orlando
18 ** Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. GOYA 4:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.	19** No school this week Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	20** Basketball 8:00 p.m.	21 **Entrance of Virgin Mary & Thanksgiving Eve Orthros 5:00 p.m. Liturgy 6:00 p.m. OFFICE Half-Day	22 ** Thanksgiving No Greek School OFFICE CLOSED	23 ** OFFICE CLOSED	24 **
25 **St. Katherine Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. GOYA Cards AHEPA/DOP Scholarship Table YAL 5:00 p.m.	26 ** Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	27 ** WBS 10:00 a.m. No Basketball Come and See Dinner	28 ** Parish Council 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	29 ** Philoptochos Board Meeting Greek School 6:00 p.m.	30 ** St. Andrew Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m.	3 AHEPA/DOP Alzheimer's Walk Wedding rehearsal 3:30 p.m. Pastitso Baking Parca Dance Practice 5-8 p.m.

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

2418 W. Swann Avenue

Tampa, FL 33609-4712

Office: (813) 876-8830 Fax: (813) 443-4899

officestjohngoctampa@gmail.com

www.greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com

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St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

Timetable of Services

Sundays: Orthros 8:45 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, VP 813-340-8737
Gary Ward, Treasurer 813-846-3898
Sandra Pappas, Secretary 813-785-3747
George Chagaris 727-420-1920
Amin Hanhan 813-846-2957
Edie Kavouklis 813-758-0305
Jimmy Konstas 813-220-7352
Ryan Rindone 704-564-2046
Aris Rogers, II 813-309-5525
Dante Skourellos 813-765-9534

Office Staff

Debbie Bowe, Bookkeeper
debstjohntpa@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

Brett Mourer 813-376-9315

Chanter

Charlie Hambos 813-843-8471

Choir

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

Community Outreach

Greg Melton 813-967-2074

Dance Group

H ΧΑΡΑ ΜΑΣ, Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668
Bessie Palios, 813-523-0347
Maraquet Edquid 813-422-8963
Marina Choundas 813-877-6136
Anna Maria Bavaro 732-239-9085
Panigyri, Alexandra De Maio 813-340-9668

Daughters of Penelope

Nicole Leontsinis, President 703-585-7490

Finance Committee

Gary Ward 813-846-3898

Food Pantry

Anetta Alexander 813-758-2689

Gasparilla Parking

John Kokkas 727-992-4615

GOYA

Maria Koutroumanis 813-245-3854

Hope/Joy

Debbie Nicklow 813-690-0671

Junior Olympics

Dwight Forde 727-685-9028

MOMS

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

Parish Nurse

Stavrula Crafa 727-409-0686
Edie Kavouklis 813-758-0305

OCF

Charlie Hambos 813-843-8471

Oratorical Festival

Peggy Bradshaw 727-244-1374

Photography Ministry

Olya Clifton 661-243-9352

Philoptochos

Lisa Alsina 813-728-1094

Small Group Bible Study

South, Bessie Palios 813-523-0347
Women, Debbie Kavouklis 813-258-5571

Strategic Planning

Marc Edquid 813-422-8940
Gary Ward 813-846-3898

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

Welcoming Ministry

Maria Xenick 813-765-3587

Young Adult

Charlie Hambos 813-843-8471

Young at Heart

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

Youth Protection

Catherine Mitseas 813-571-0658

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.