

# 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*

# March 2019

### 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

## Overcoming Our Pathologies

### Introduction

**I** have been thinking for several months about writing an article about pathologies, because in counseling and confession with many of you, we end up discussing your pathologies, and by God's grace, working through them. I wanted to save this article for this March edition of the Messenger, so that you can read it as we are about to enter Great Lent. This edition will be filled with information on Great Lent—the meaning of certain days, explanations of services, our continuing Bible series, etc.

*I hope that you will take advantage of the additional opportunities for spiritual growth that will be presented to us over the next couple of months. However, this isn't just a time of year where we have more services and activities, or where it seems like we jump through more hoops, it is a time of year that the Church calls on us to soberly reflect on our lives.*

*Before we can repent and grow spiritually, we have to look inward at not only our sins, but our pathologies, which in most cases, are the root cause of our sins. In seeking spiritual healing, it is not enough only to treat the symptoms, the sins, but to work on the pathologies that cause the symptoms.*

*Many of us feel stuck. What if you could get unstuck? If you could fix one thing in your life, or if fixing one thing could change your life, what is the one thing you would change? I can almost guarantee you that whatever that one thing is, is rooted in a pathology that is fixable, if only we can muster the courage to examine and treat it. Your Church and your priest are here to help, during Lent, or at any time.*

Also another common theme when I talk to people is that they feel alone, like they are the only ones with a struggle or a pathology. Many people don't know where to even start. You are not alone. If we are honest, we all have things. The best place to start is picking up the phone and calling me, and I will be happy to help you, or help you get to someone else who can help you.

### What is a Pathology?

Are you familiar with the word "pathology?" What does it mean? As with many words in the English language, "pathology" comes from two Greek words, "pathos" and "logos". "Logos" we know, means "the study of." And "pathos" pertains to suffering. For instance, when we arrive at Holy Week and commemorate "the passion of Christ," the Greek word for "passion" is "Pathos," and thus we will commemorate, "ta pathi tou Christou," the sufferings of Christ.

Often we hear the word "pathology" connected to report at a doctor's office. As an example, when someone has a spot removed and biopsied for cancer, the "pathology report" gives a status on how much one's body is suffering. A pathology report could indicate the presence of cancer, that the body is suffering greatly. Or it could be benign and indicate that there is no suffering in the body at present.

Let's leave the medical use of this term for a minute. All of us have emotional and spiritual "pathologies." For instance, the person who was abused as a child may have a pathology of being distrusting of other people. The person who didn't have enough to eat as a child and who now has a great paying job may struggle with eating healthy because as a child they'd eat

whatever they could get their hands on, and now as a successful adult, they habitually overeat. The person who was bullied as a child might have massive insecurities, or be irrationally afraid as a result. They may also go the other way and have too much confidence. The pathology of a bully victim could be either. And the list goes on and on.

Each of us has at least one (and probably several) pathologies, things we suffer with. We may not even think we are suffering, but our behavior towards others would indicate that we are.

What happens to an untreated pathology? In medical terms, if one's pathology report indicates serious illness and this goes untreated, one could have a serious health crisis or even die. However, medical pathologies do not necessarily hinder us every day. They come into play during certain seasons of life.

## Pathologies in Relationships

There are other kinds of pathologies, however, that are part of everyday life, and left untreated, cause destruction of the things we prize most. As people settle into marriages, pathologies grow. What does this mean? Things happen, challenges arise, and force a couple to grow and change in order to stay healthy. When a couple does not grow and change, as well as understand that mistakes are part of change, pain results from mistakes. Forgiveness is the antidote to many pains, and when forgiveness isn't extended as couples go along through life, then unhealthy pathologies grow. This is where the phrase "acts like an old couple" comes from. An "old couple" is the couple who has left pathologies untreated, and a growing gulf divides them. There are two choices, it seems. One is to quit, and many couples take that road. The other choice is to just continue forward, each partner living with some sense of unhappiness. Many take this road as well. There is, however, a third choice, which is to work on pathologies, and treat them, so that healing can take place. Often this requires a therapist or a counselor. A priest can also be helpful. But what is needed first and foremost is a safe environment, a place where it is safe to not only express hurts but to express a desire to move past hurts and move towards healing. If a couple can't seem to make a safe space on their own, going to a professional can be helpful in creating the safe space and then working through the problems and the hurts.

There are pathologies involved in parenting. When our children are born, we focus on two things—exhaustion that a newborn child brings, with frequent feedings, repetitive care cycles, and sleep deprivation for new parents; AND the joy that somehow this will all be worth it. In the meantime, we develop new pathologies as far as patience, balance of new responsibility with the life we had, wisdom in dealing with new challenges and disagreement with a spouse that doesn't come at parenting exactly the same way. As our children grow, and begin to imitate what they see from parents, in addition to picking up habits gleaned from their friends at school and the media, other pathologies develop. Untreated, these pathologies bring friction not only between husbands and wives but in between kids and parents and between siblings. A sibling rivalry is the result of untreated pathology. If siblings have a healthy relationship, there is little rivalry.

There are pathologies involved in friendships. Why? Because no people are the same. Try to mold two different people into one "anything", be it a marriage or a friendship, there are going to be pathologies. Healthy friendships are based in the ability to either overlook differences, or more effectively, to work

around or through them. In this same vein, there are pathologies at work, where co-workers have to work together to produce a product, despite pathologies that lead us to try to get ahead of one another, or which bring us to work for the paycheck rather than the product.

I hope you are getting the idea that there are lots of messed up relationships—marriages, parents with children, children with each other, friendships, and relationships with co-workers—because there are pathologies that we have a hard time moving past or working through. This is why it is essential that we are able to talk to one another and create environments where it is safe to talk about our pathologies and work through them. In fact, this is essential. Not sure how any "normal" person (normal in the sense that we all have some pathologies) can have a happy existence in any relationship without a way to maneuver around and through differences.

I'd like to think that many of us are aware of our shortcomings (even if we're not out in the open about it, we know what they are deep down) and wish we could work through and improve on some of them. Perhaps some of us just don't know how, or lack the safe environment in which to try.

## Spiritual Pathologies

If pathologies are part of life in a fallen world, then our pathologies also extend to our relationship with the Lord. Most of us were baptized as infants. We were brought to church as babies. We went to Sunday school as children. I'd like to think no one was ever taught that God had bad intentions for our lives. In fact, we go out of our way to present God as a good and loving God to our children, even if we don't believe that as adults.

As we grow up and realize that life is not perfect and that we are not perfect, we start to get the idea that God is not perfect either. And this creates a pathology, a spiritual suffering, a disconnect, because God is perfect. We have a hard time reconciling the imperfections and disappointments of life with a God who is loving and giving. What happens when we have a spiritual pathology? Sadly, it is at this point that many people quit on their relationship with God. They either drop out altogether, or they come to God only occasionally, either out of habit or guilt or some sense of nostalgia. (i.e. those who will flock to church only for Christmas and Pascha, or if there is a crisis) At some point in every person's life, there will be a need to reconcile the greatness and mercy of God to a disappointment when it felt like God was absent.

## How the Church Helps Us Overcome Our Pathologies

Fortunately, the Church provides a safe haven to deal with both our social and spiritual pathologies. Counseling (whether with a priest or a therapist) and confession (with a priest) are two excellent ways to deal with our pathologies.

Many of us have heard the term "IEP". That stands for "individualized education program." These are used for children who have special needs in a school classroom setting. Our parish is promoting inclusion of all children with any kind of special need (see related article), and as needed, working to develop IEPs for our students so that they can thrive in our Sunday school and youth programs. It is a fact that many people have developmental delays and other challenges that make traditional learning difficult. This is why an individualized plan is so important. It recognizes that not everyone learns



the same way and gives a path for those with unique gifts and challenges.

What I am proposing in the next paragraphs is not in any way meant to be taken as an affront to those who use IEPs. What I want to say here, and I write this with all seriousness and sincerity, is that our pathologies create special needs (be they emotional or spiritual) for each of us, as it relates to our relationships with one another and our relationships with the Lord. In a social relationship—a marriage, parenting, with a sibling, with a co-worker, there may be need for an “individualized rebuilding plan” (IRP—MY term). If you are suffering from a pathology in a relationship and need to develop a plan to rebuild it, I’d be very happy to assist you with that. There are many qualified therapists in our area who would as well.

What an Orthodox priest is uniquely qualified to do, however, is to help you with building an “individualize spiritual plan” (ISP—my term again). And this is done through counseling and especially confession. If you’ve got a pathology that’s keeping you from Christ, come on in and let’s talk about it. If we’re all honest, we’ve each got one. This is why the Church encourages us to go to confession, to come to a safe environment where we can work productively with our priest to develop a program that will help us with our pathologies.

## The Individual Spiritual Program (ISP)

Not all pathologies are even that serious. Allow me to share a recent conversation I had with our Sunday school teachers at our teacher retreat in January. One of our teachers said in our gathering that every Sunday, her kids get up at 6:30 a.m. and they want to run and play. She gets up with the children, or even a little before, in order to get ready, and then she tends to them for over three hours before they leave the house for the Divine Liturgy. By the time it’s time to leave for Liturgy, she is exhausted and hungry. Yet, the “rules” of the church say that we are not to eat anything before we receive Holy Communion. So now there are some tough choices—she can choose to eat something and abstain from Communion, except there will be a sadness because the Eucharist is so important to our lives as Christians. Or she can choose to eat nothing and receive Holy Communion, except there will be frustration there as she will be hungry and distracted throughout the entire service. Or she can choose to eat something and then receive Holy Communion, except there will be guilt about receiving without having prepared properly. Whatever choice she makes has a negative

consequence. This is where unhealthy pathologies develop—will she begin to see the church as an institution of punishing rules? Will she begin to see Holy Communion and receiving Christ as something to be feared? Or something so “awesome” that she is unworthy? Will she think that by relaxing the rules that she is sinning and will be beset with guilt? Will this create an issue with spiritual self-esteem? You can easily see how a well-intentioned mom might become distant from the Lord because of this circumstance—if only the children woke up later, or if Divine Liturgy was earlier, she wouldn’t have this problem.

I asked her how old she is—let’s say she’s somewhere in her 30s. I asked her how long she would like to live. She said she hopes she reaches age 90. I then asked her if she thought by age 45 her children (the ones she has now and any more she might hope to have) would be grown up enough so that she wouldn’t be chasing them around and could make it to Holy Communion both without eating and without losing energy. She said yes. So I told her, “Your ISP (individualized spiritual program) is to eat a little food on Sundays before Liturgy, and when you turn 45, to come to confession and revisit this “economía” (dispensation) and resume the more proper preparation for Holy Communion which is to not eat breakfast. Again, I said this very seriously and with some reflection. I wouldn’t give this same advice to someone in their 30s who didn’t have children, or someone who had children in their 20s who were already teenagers and who were capable of not eating breakfast before Holy Communion. This program was individualized for this particular person and her unique circumstance.

If someone comes to me, let’s say at age 40, and says that they are struggling in their prayer life and want to do something more challenging, I would advise them based on what they are doing. Let’s say someone says they never pray, I’m not going to tell them to pray the Akathist to the Virgin Mary each night because they would take them 30+ minutes and for someone who has never prayed before ever, this would be daunting and most likely discouraging. For someone who is 40 who says they pray a lot and are looking for a challenge, I might suggest the Akathist. Here we see another instance of an ISP, an individualized spiritual program that is unique even to people of the same age.

One goal each of us should have each year (and Lent is a great time to do it) is to come to confession and speak with our spiritual father about our ISP, an individualized spiritual program designed to help us deal with our unique pathologies, and ulti-



mately to improve our relationship with the Lord, and perhaps even with one another. The Church is a safe environment in which to do this. Our Lord is a merciful and safe Lord with Whom to do this.

## Work on One of Your Pathologies This Lent

The climax of the Lenten season is the Holy Week journey, where we again remember and relive the Passion of Christ, the time when He took on Himself the pathologies of the entire world. Because He has died for our pains and pathologies, it is safe to bring these things to Him through the Church. Because He had died for our pains and pathologies, it should be safe (and we should make it a goal for it to be safe) to be able to deal with our pains and pathologies in our marriages, with our children, with our friends, etc. We should each work to promote safe environments where challenges can be discussed and where healing can occur. And when we have a difficult time either creating the safe space or working through our pathologies, we should have the courage and fortitude to go outside of ourselves and engage the help of a counselor, a therapist or our priest, for an IRP, an individualized rebuilding plan.

Pathologies are not caused in a single moment, they develop over time. They are also not cured in a single moment, this too also happens over time. This Lent, if you really want to grow in your faith and have something to celebrate when Pascha comes, choose ONE pathology that you have, one thing in your life where you are suffering, or one relationship that needs some help, and work on it. Work on it alone—through prayer and reflection. Work on it with the one(s) affected by it—your spouse, your children, your friends, etc. Work on it with some-

one outside of yourself—a therapist or your priest. Bring it to confession—so that you can receive both God's forgiveness and healing, as well as some words of encouragement from your spiritual father.

We can't make a new start if we can't move past our pathologies. Moving forward begins by looking backward and cleaning up issues that have sat unresolved. Because it is these issues that keep us from a full relationship with one another and with the Lord. If Lent is about the journey back to God, so that on Pascha there is a sense of renewal and joy moving forward, then the Lenten journey must include an examination and treatment of our pathologies. The Church Fathers call the Great Lent a time of joyful sadness. The sadness is not only over sin, but over pathologies that keep us from full joy. The joy is that we can overcome these pathologies, first utilizing the mercies of God, second using the safe environment of the church, and third, taking some personal courage to address things that need addressing.

I look forward to making my fifteenth journey of Great Lent with all of you. As I have mentioned in church, please continue to be patient as we continue to grow. Until we can get some additional help, it will take a little longer for Communion on Sundays, and for me to get to everyone outside of Sundays. With God's help and your patience, all will get done.

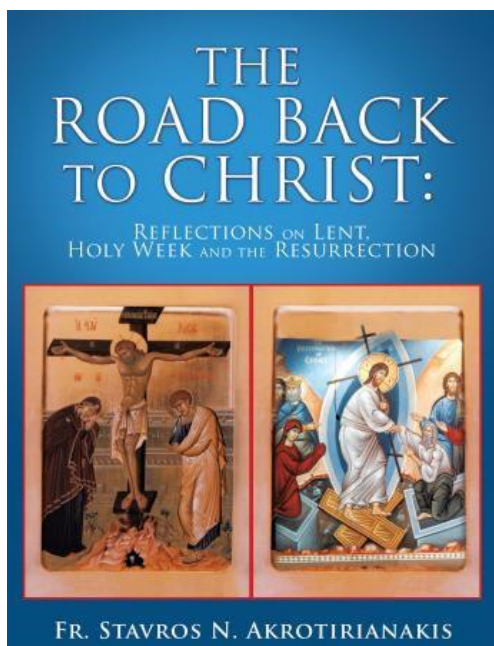
I wish you all a blessed period of Great Lent! Kali Sarakosti!

With love in the Lord,

+Fr. Stavros

## The Prayer Team celebrated its 4<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on February 20!

For four years, Fr. Stavros has been writing a daily reflection. It comes out every morning at 12:30 a.m. via Constant Contact. From Monday-Friday, Father will be writing on the subject of "Commissioned to Be Apostles" and on Saturday - Sunday, Father is writing on the Scriptures of each Sunday of Triodion and Lent. Over 1500 have joined the Prayer Team. Over half our parish receives it daily, as well as many people outside of our parish. Each day, a scripture verse, 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](mailto:charlie.hambos@gmail.com) and ask him to add you.



## The Road Back to Christ: Reflections on Lent, Holy Week and the Resurrection is now on sale!

It is a series of daily reflections to be read from the beginning of Triodion (this year that is February 17) through All Saints Day (this year that is June 23). Pick up your copy today so you can begin reading it on February 17. This book costs \$18.99 and all monies taken in at the bookstore go to the church.

## Interested in Joining the Prayer Team?

Over 1500 people have! The Prayer Team is a daily message that Father Stavros has been writing for more than 4 years! Over half of our parish receives it daily, as well as many people outside of our parish. 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](mailto:charlie.hambos@gmail.com) and ask to add you.

# Fifty-Two Verses in Fifty-Two Weeks: The Bible Project

By Fr. Stavros

In January, we began the “Fifty-Two Verses in Fifty-Two Weeks” Bible Challenge, to memorize one Bible verse per week for fifty two weeks. I will provide a verse per week (four or five per month in *The Messenger* and then repeated weekly in the bulletin). I will choose verses that are meaningful to me. You are welcome to submit verses via email to me as well, as many of you have.

Most of us don’t spend enough time in the Bible. Sadly, some of us don’t spend any time. If you want a challenge, do the following:

- Memorize the verse of the week.
- For a greater challenge, read the entire chapter of the book that the verse comes from.
- For a greater challenge, read the entire book where the verse comes from.

Another challenge to consider is to keep a journal and sit with the verse each week. Read it, memorize it, and then contemplate it. Allow the Holy Spirit to move your mind and your thoughts and then write down those thoughts and keep them in a journal. If you do one reflection on Scripture each week, you will have the best book that could be. A book written by you, for you, guided by the Holy Spirit, who will guide your thoughts as you read the Scriptures.

Below are verses for the month of March. There is one verse for each week. I have written a few comments below each verse to get your mind going. Don’t let my thoughts be your interpretation. Contemplate the Scripture each week and let it speak to you. Let the Holy Spirit speak to you through your reflection on Scripture.

## March 3 - 9

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10*

This week is the week to finalize our plans for Great Lent. And it’s a good time to take stock of your heart—does your heart feel clean or dirty? Does it feel heavy or light? The beginning of Great Lent is a good opportunity to take stock of our hearts and check whether they are beating in sync with God’s heart. If we are honest, none of us are walking in total sync with God. This week is the week to identify what things in your life need changing. Lent is the period where we enact our changes, and over the course of seven weeks we build new habits that we can continue long after Pascha has passed. Having spent seven weeks working to make some better habits, there will be real joy at the Resurrection at the spiritual progress we’ve made.

## March 10-16

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6*

This week we begin the Lenten journey. It takes not only discipline to make it through Lent, it takes faith. It takes some trust in God to add additional things to your schedule and still have confidence that you can cover all the bases in your life. It takes some trust to go with less food and have confidence that you will still have the strength needed to meet your responsibilities of the day. Lent is also an exercise in focus. If we really want

to put more focus on our spiritual journey and on our Lord, we need to lean on Him, rather than on our own insight. Make intentional acknowledgement of the Lord a greater part of your weeks this Lent, and you will see that at the end of Lent, your spiritual path will have become straighter.

## March 17 - 23

*There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. Luke 15:7*

Lent is the season of repentance. While repentance should be on our minds throughout the year, it should especially be during Lent. This is the time when we are supposed to reconcile ourselves to God. When we reconcile our checkbooks at home, we make sure that what we think we have matched up to what we really have—we total up our check and check them against bank records. When we reconcile our souls, we make sure that what we are doing is in line with what God wants us to be doing. We should also be seeking reconciliation with our neighbors, ironing out relationships to make them balanced and loving. When our neighbor comes to us in a spirit of reconciliation and repentance, we should receive him or her with joy. Because we want God to receive us with joy when we repent, and because God does receive us with joy when we repent.

## March 24 - 30

*Behold I am the handmaiden of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word. Luke 1:38*

On March 25, we celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary. The Archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary, a 14 year old unmarried virgin, and told her that God wanted her to bear His Son. What an incredible responsibility! And what incredible request, given her age and life circumstance. Mary said YES, the greatest yes in human history. God had a plan and she was part of the plan. God has a plan for each of our lives. His plans may be simple, or they may be challenging. God’s plan for Mary included risking reputation, scorn from others, and watching her own Son die. And she said YES. Will we say Yes for whatever God’s plans are for us?

## March 31 - April 6

*If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. Mark 8:34*

On the 3rd Sunday of Lent, we celebrate the Veneration of the Holy Cross, by reading this Gospel. Each of us has a cross to carry in life, probably many of them. We each have challenges and burdens that we would not have chosen for ourselves. Do we embrace and carry with dignity whatever crosses life lays upon us? Or do we set them down and quit? Or do we carry them with anger or with a chip on our shoulders? If we would follow after Christ, we have to deny some of the things we want, carry our challenges (crosses) with dignity, with love and with faith, and follow after Him, even when the cross is heavy and the way is hard.

*How did we do last month? Let us know. We want to help. Also, if there are any scriptures that mean the world to you, send them to Fr. Stavros at [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com).*

# Liturgical Schedule for March 2019

**Saturday, March 2**      **1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of Souls**  
 Orthros 8:45 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.  
*Memorial Service to be held at the end of the Divine Liturgy*

**Sunday, March 3**      **Third Sunday of the Triodion - The Last Judgement (Meat-fare Sunday)**  
 Orthros 8:30 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

Altar Boys: Captains and St. John      **Ushers:** Ron Myer, Jim Armstrong, John Alexander  
**Welcoming Ministry:** Greeters: Marenca Patrascioiu, Skip Higdon; Ambassador: Skip Higdon; Caller: Christene Worley  
 Getting Acquainted: Maria and Mike Xenick  
**Coffee Hour:** Choir Luncheon      **Bookstore:** Zhana Temelkova and Elaine Daniels

**Saturday, March 9**      **2nd Saturday of the Souls**  
 Orthros 8:45 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.  
*Memorial Service to be held at the end of the Divine Liturgy*

**Sunday, March 10**      **4th Sunday of Triodion - Forgiveness Sunday (Cheese-fare Sunday)**  
 Orthros 8:30 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.

**Altar Boys:** Captains and St. Matthew  
**Ushers:** Brett Mourer, Michael Bocancollins, Amin Hanhan  
**Welcoming Ministry:** Greeters: Cindy Xenick, Lisa Alsina; Ambassador: Genie Carter; Caller: Julie Palios  
**Coffee Hour:** AHEPA/DOP  
**Bookstore:** Rita Bedran and MaryAnn Rose



**Sunday, March 10**      Forgiveness Vespers 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Monday, March 11**      **Clean Monday - Beginning of Great Lent - Kathara Deftera**  
**Canon of St. Andrew 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.**  
**Sacrament of Holy Unction 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.**

**Wednesday, March 13**      **Reading of the 9th Hour 5:30 p.m.**  
**Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 - 7:15 p.m.**  
 Lenten Dinner hosted by Choir, followed by Beatitudes Presentation

**Friday, March 15**      **Salutations to the Virgin Mary—1<sup>st</sup> Stanza 6:30-7:30 p.m.**

**Saturday, March 16**      **3rd Saturday of the Souls (To be held at Garden of Memories)**  
 Orthros 8:45 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.  
*Memorial Service to be held at the end of the Divine Liturgy*

**Sunday, March 17**      **1st Sunday of Lent - Sunday of Orthodoxy**  
 Orthros 8:30 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 9:45 a.m.  
*Procession of Holy Icons at the Conclusion of the Divine Liturgy*

Altar Boys: Captains and St. Mark      **Ushers:** David Voykin, Ed Gerecke, Pete Trakas  
**Welcoming Ministry:** Greeters: Helen Cauthorn, Axl David; Ambassador: Kalliope Chagaris; Caller: Betty Katsamakos  
**Coffee Hour:** Family Last Names A & B      **Bookstore:** Thom and Angie Bougas

**Sunday, March 17**      **Pan-Orthodox Vespers 5:00 p.m.**

**Monday, March 18**      **Great Compline 5:30 p.m.**

**Wednesday, March 20**      **Reading of the 9th Hour 5:30 p.m.**  
**Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 - 7:15 p.m.**  
 Lenten Dinner hosted by the Philoptochos, followed by Beatitudes Presentation

**Friday, March 22**      **Salutations to the Virgin Mary—2nd Stanza 6:30-7:30 p.m.**

**Sunday, March 24**      **2nd Sunday of Lent - St. Gregory Palamas**  
Orthros 8:30 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 9:45 a.m.

Altar Boys: Captains and St. Luke

**Ushers:** John Christ, Byron Nenos, Chris Kavouklis

**Welcoming Ministry:** Greeters: Dwight Forde, Ewana Forde ; Ambassador: Elaine Halkias ; Caller: Vickie Peckham

**Coffee Hour:** Greek Independence Day Program

**Bookstore:** John and Anetta Alexander

**Monday, March 25**      **Annunciation of the Virgin Mary**  
Orthros 8:45 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.  
Great Compline 5:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, March 27**      **Reading of the 9th Hour 5:30 p.m.**  
**Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 - 7:15 p.m.**  
Lenten Dinner hosted by the Sunday School, followed by Beatitudes Presentation

**Friday, March 29**      **Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 3rd Stanza 6:30-7:30 p.m.**

**Sunday, March 31**      **3rd Sunday of Lent - Veneration of the Holy Cross**  
Orthros 8:30 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 9:45 a.m.  
*Procession of the Holy Cross at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy*

Altar Boys: Captains and St. John

**Ushers:** Tammy Christou, George Mitseas, Florin Patrasciou

**Welcoming Ministry:** Greeters: Carole Fotopoulos, Donna Hambos ; Ambassador: Edie Kavouklis ; Caller: Despina Sibley

**Coffee Hour:** Family Last Names C & D

**Bookstore:** David Voykin and Ruby Rahn

**Monday, April 1**      **Great Compline 5:30 p.m.**

**Wednesday, April 3**      **Reading of the 9th Hour 5:30 p.m.**  
**Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 - 7:15 p.m.**  
Lenten Dinner hosted by the Young Adults followed by Beatitudes Presentation

**Friday, April 5**      **Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 4th Stanza 6:30-7:30 p.m.**

**Sunday, April 7**      **4th Sunday of Lent - St. John of the Ladder**  
Orthros 8:30 a.m.      Divine Liturgy 9:45 a.m.

Altar Boys: GOYAns may serve

**Ushers:** Nick Kavouklis, George Trimikliniotis, Peter Theophanous

**Welcoming Ministry:** Greeters: Skip Higdon, Debbie Kavouklis; Ambassador: Maria Karounos; Caller: Christene Worley

**Coffee Hour:** Family Last Names E, F & G

**Bookstore:** Zhana Temelkova and Elaine Daniels

## Pan-Orthodox Lenten Vespers Services

Sunday of Orthodoxy, March 17	St. Nicholas Cathedral, Tarpon Springs	5:00 p.m.
2nd Sunday of Lent, March 24	St Nicholas Antiochian, Pinellas Park	5:00 p.m.
3rd Sunday of Lent, March 31	St. John the Baptist, Tampa	5:00 p.m.
4th Sunday of Lent, April 7	St. George Serbian, Clearwater	5:00 p.m.
5th Sunday of Lent, April 14	St. Philip in Tampa	5:00 p.m.

## Special Altar Boy Schedule for Lent

Wednesday, March 13	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 5:30 p.m.	Frankie Giallourakis and St. Mark
Friday, March 15	Salutations 6:30 p.m.	St. Luke
Wednesday, March 20	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 5:30 p.m.	Harry Koutroumanis and St. Matthew
Friday, March 22	Salutations 6:30 p.m.	St. John
Wednesday, March 27	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 5:30 p.m.	Nicholas Katzaras and St. Luke
Friday, March 29	Salutations 6:30 p.m.	St. Mark
Wednesday, April 3	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 5:30 p.m.	Frankie Giallourakis and St. John
Friday, April 5	Salutations 6:30 p.m.	Anyone in GOYA may serve
Wednesday, April 10	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 5:30 p.m.	Harry Koutroumanis and St. Matthew
Friday, April 12	Akathist Hymn 6:30 p.m.	Nicholas Katzaras and St. Mark
Wednesday, April 17	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 5:30 p.m.	John Palios and St. Luke



# Liturgical Notes for Great Lent

**Saturday of the Souls – Saturdays, March 2, March 9 and March 16** It is a Tradition in the Orthodox Church to offer prayers for the souls of all of our loved ones who have departed this life, in the hope of the Resurrection to Eternal Life. There are four Saturdays of the year that are dedicated specifically to this purpose. There are three Saturdays at the beginning of Lent and the Saturday before Pentecost. Everyone is encouraged to submit the names of their loved ones to be commemorated at the services. Everyone is encouraged to attend one of these services (and bring Kolyva) if you are able, as a way of honoring the people in your family who have passed away, once a year.



**Saturday, March 16, Liturgy at Garden of Memories** We will hold the Divine Liturgy at the Garden of Memories Cemetery at 4207 E. Lake Avenue in East Tampa. We will have Orthros at 9:00 a.m., Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m., with a memorial service at the end of the Liturgy. After Liturgy is concluded, Father Stavros will visit the graves of the relatives of all attendees of the Liturgy. This is the seventh year that we will be doing this liturgy at the Garden of Memories. Please come and join us praying for the souls of our loved ones, as we also pray for strengthening and inspiration for ourselves.

**Sunday, March 3 – Judgment Sunday (Meatfare)** Judgment Sunday is also called - Meatfare Sunday because it is the last Sunday, according to the fasting canons, that the faithful eat meat before Easter. During the following week, we do **not** fast on Wednesday and Friday (except for meat, of course). On this Sunday, we call to mind something that has not even happened yet: the Second Coming of Christ. Our Lord has promised us that He will come again, “to judge the living and the dead, and His Kingdom will have no end” (*from the Nicene Creed*). We call to mind the “criteria” of our entrance into Paradise, as our Lord said in today’s Gospel: “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.”

**Sunday, March 10 - Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare)** Cheese-Fare Sunday is the last day in which dairy products are allowed. The Monday after Cheese-Fare Sunday is the official beginning of the Great Lent; this Monday is also called *Clean Monday* (*Kathara Deftera*). On Cheese-Fare Sunday the Church commemorates the sending away of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Paradise. Adam and Eve were in complete harmony with God, nature and themselves. They were tempted by the devil and they agreed to eat from the tree of knowledge, in order that they themselves might become gods. The result was fatal; they were cast out of Paradise and sin came into the world. The Holy Fathers selected this event to remind us of our obligations to God and about the laws of fasting and Christian behavior (Matthew 6:14-21).



**Sunday, March 10 - Forgiveness Vespers** Great and Holy Lent begins on Monday, March 11, a day called Clean Monday, or “Kathara Deftera” in Greek. Vespers is the service that ends one day and begins another, so we will celebrate the Vespers of Forgiveness and beginning of Great Lent on Sunday evening, March 10, at 6:00 p.m. This service lasts about an hour and marks the beginning of Great Lent, which is announced during one of the hymns mid-way through the service. During this hymn, the priest changes vestments from white to purple, the lights in the church are dimmed and the mood of the service becomes somber. In fact, it is the opposite of the Resurrection Service on Easter, where everything begins dark and goes to light. The service concludes with a prayer of forgiveness being read over the congregation and the exchange of mutual forgiveness among the members of the congregation. This service is an especially appropriate way to begin the Lenten season, and for those who attended last season, is one of the most moving services of the church year.

**Monday, March 11 - Canon of St. Andrew** The Penitential Canon of St. Andrew will be read from 10:00-11:00 a.m. on Monday, March 11 as we begin Great Lent. The Canon, in its entirety, takes hours to read. We will read and chant an abridged version of this Canon on Clean Monday. Service books for this service will be available in the narthex.

**Monday, March 11 - Holy Unction on Clean Monday** The Sacrament of Holy Unction is always offered during Holy Week on Holy Wednesday. But the sacrament can be done at any time of the year. The emphasis of this sacrament involves, spiritual healing, spiritual cleansing and repentance. What better way to begin Great Lent than the sacrament of Holy Unction. Please bring your Holy Week book to follow along. The service will be held on Monday, March 11, from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

**Divine Liturgy to begin at 9:45 on the six Sundays of Great Lent** - Because the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is offered on each Sunday of Lent, and this Divine Liturgy is slightly longer than the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, the Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:45 a.m. from March 17 - April 21. The Choir will begin the Doxology at 9:40 a.m.

## Mondays of Lent - Great Compline

The service of Great Compline will be read on the following Mondays of Lent—March 18, March 25, April 1, April 8 and April 15. This service lasts about an hour and consists of Psalms and hymns of repentance. Service Books for this service will be available in the Narthex.

## Wednesdays of Lent - 9<sup>th</sup> Hour and Pre-Sanctified Liturgy

The Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts (also called Pre-Sanctified Liturgy) will be held on the Wednesdays during Great Lent. This service consists of Vespers with Holy Communion that was “Pre-Sanctified” the previous Sunday. It is an opportunity to receive Holy Communion frequently during the season of fasting. The Pre-Sanctified Liturgy is preceded by the reading of the 9<sup>th</sup> Hour, a short service with penitential prayers as well as the recitation of the Creed, a pre-requisite for the reception of Holy Communion. Service books for this service will be available in the Narthex.



## Following the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy each week, one of our ministries will host a Lenten Dinner

Wednesday, March 13	Choir
Wednesday, March 20	Philoptochos
Wednesday, March 27	Sunday School
Wednesday, April 3	Young Adults
Wednesday, April 10	AHEPA
Wednesday, April 17	Bible Studies

So, spend the hour you would spend cooking dinner worshipping in church and then stay for a complementary dinner. This is being offered in the hopes that more people will attend this service, and that each member of each ministry will attend at least one of these moving services.

**Fridays of Lent - The Salutations to the Virgin Mary (Heretismoi)** This service also lasts about an hour and is a series of prayers and devotions that invoke the intercessions of the Virgin Mary for our salvation. It will be held on March 15, March 22, March 29, April 5 and April 12. Service Books for this service will be available in the Narthex.



**Sunday, March 17 - Sunday of Orthodoxy** A grand procession with icons took place on March 11, 843 A.D., marking the permanent triumph of icons and their return to the churches after a 150 year absence. From this time, icons were defined as objects to be venerated and not worshipped. They are spiritual mirrors through which we see the heavenly saints. Their restoration in our churches is a rue victory for Orthodoxy. Thus, on the first Sunday of Lent each year, the Orthodox Church celebrates the Triumph of Orthodoxy with a procession of icons, together with the reading of a Synodal Statement, authored in 843, marking their return to the church. *If anyone has new icons that have not been blessed, please bring them to church on Sunday, March 17, the Sunday of Orthodoxy, and place them in the windows of the church. They will be blessed with Holy Water during the service.*

**Sunday, March 24 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent - St. Gregory Palamas** On the 2nd Sunday of Great Lent, which is called the "Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas," we commemorate the memory of St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Salonica. He dedicated his life to Christ, even though he was raised in the royal palace of Constantinople. He withdrew to Mount Athos, where he lived an exemplary life of asceticism and scholarship. He defended the Faith against Garaam the Calabrian (who was against monasticism). He taught that divine grace is not created, but the uncreated energies of God are poured out through creation; otherwise, humanity could never have authentic communication with God. He was appointed Archbishop in 1349 and served with distinction; he died at the age of 63 and his relics rest in Salonica.



**Monday, March 25 - Feast of the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary** The Angel Gabriel came directly to the Virgin Mary and told her that she was going to have a child. Naturally, she was alarmed at first and asked many questions. "Do not be afraid," said Archangel Gabriel, "the Lord is with you because God has chosen you among all the women in the world and in history." The word "Evangelismos" means not only "Annunciation" but "Good News." The Gospel is called in Greek, the "Evangelion," and the authors of the Gospels are called "Evangelists," meaning those who proclaim the Good News of Christ. The announcement of Christ's birth is placed on March 25, 9 months before the feast of the Nativity. We, in turn are told to spread the Good News of Christ as well, imitating the faithful example of the Virgin Mary. Greek Orthodox Christians celebrate March 25 not only because it is the Feast of Annunciation, but also because of its political significance. On this day, March 25, 1821, Bishop Germanos of Patras, Greece, raised the cross of Jesus Christ and proclaimed the freedom of Greeks from the Turkish yoke. March 25, 1821 was declared the beginning of the Greek Revolution against the Turks.

## Sunday, March 31 - Third Sunday of Lent - Veneration of the Holy Cross

On the 3rd Sunday of Great Lent we celebrate the Veneration of the Cross; the Cross helps us to prepare for the Crucifixion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We are not just witnessing from afar the passions of our Lord, but we participate in them. In the Synaxarion we read, "Through the forty-day fast, we too are in a way crucified, dying to the passions." Our efforts to keep up with the Fast, through prayer, fasting and almsgiving, might take a toll over our bodies; we need help and encouragement, and the help and encouragement comes from the power of the Cross. In the middle of Great Lent, the Church gives its faithful a sign of victory, one that can bring strength to them in this time of fasting. The Sunday of the Holy Cross is one that brings everything into perspective, especially with the Gospel reading (Mark 8:34-9:1), the Lord saying to all His disciples: *"If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?"* A special procession of the Holy Cross, on a tray covered with flowers, will be held at the end of the Divine Liturgy.



## Why does Liturgy seem longer on Sundays during Lent?

Because it is. It is the Tradition of the Church to celebrate the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great on the 5 Sundays of Great Lent, Holy Thursday morning, and Holy Saturday morning. St. Basil wrote his liturgy in the middle part of the 4th century. St. John Chrysostom would later edit some of the priestly prayers of St. Basil's liturgy, significantly shortening them. The Anaphora of St. Basil (from the Creed until right before the Lord's Prayer) has the priestly prayers significantly longer. They contain all the theology of the Orthodox Church. A copy of the "Anaphora" of St. Basil's Liturgy has been placed in the pews for you to **use on Sundays.**

**Fr. Stavros will be out of town March 8-9. Fr. John Stefero will celebrate the Liturgy for Saturday of Souls on March 9. Father Stavros will be back in time for Liturgy on Sunday, March 10.**



# Book Review: “Didn’t See It Coming: Overcoming the 7 Greatest Challenges that No One Expects and Everyone Experiences”

by Carey Nieuwhof  
(Reviewed by Fr. Stavros)

I’ve never been great at reading comprehension. Consequently, I don’t read as much as I should. Once in a while, though, I read a book that really grabs my attention, that really speaks to me. And this book “Didn’t See It Coming” really spoke to me. Perhaps it is because I’m nearing what I hope is the half-way point of my career and my life, or because the world looks a lot different than it did when I set out on this career path. This book highlights 7 challenges that no one expects to have and that everyone experiences. I can honestly say that I have faced or am facing all seven. And he’s right, I didn’t think I’d deal with any of these when I was 20 or 25. Each challenge is addressed in a two-chapter unit. One chapter outlines the problem, and the other chapter outlines the solution. Here is a summary of the challenges and how to fix them.

**Cynicism**—We’re not the people we were in our 40s that we were in our 20s. When reality hits idealism, we become cynical. The antidote to cynicism is to dream, and to think ideally once again.

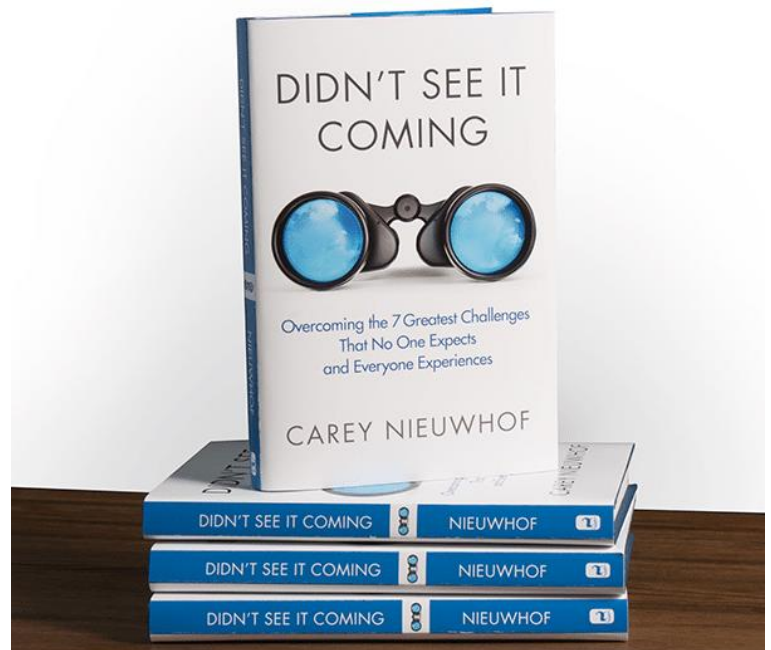
**Compromise**—a person who compromises too much becomes compromised. So when we exaggerate, or are less than truthful, we make a compromise, make enough of them and we become compromised. The antidote is to be more truthful. And one personal truth is that some days I make mistakes, even when I don’t mean to.

**Disconnected**—just look at our phones—we are more connected but more lonely. The antidote is building real relationships.

**Relevance**—when the world outside an organization is moving faster than the organization, the organization become irrelevant. And that’s what’s happening to our church—because we get stuck on traditions (which is not a bad thing, it’s only bad when it’s your only thing) and we don’t get out and help enough. Help is ALWAYS relevant. The antidote is to be a more helping church. Budget reflects that.

**Pride**—At it’s heart, pride is the obsession with self. IT generates the desire you feel to protect, project, manipulate, jockey, advance, pretend, inflate and brag. Pride snuffs out empathy, creates division, suffocates love, fosters jealousy, and deadens the soul. Humility and gratitude are the antidotes to doubt.

**Burnout**—Here are some signs you might be burning out. Your passion fades, you no longer feel the highs or lows, little things



make you disproportionately emotional, everybody drains you, you’re becoming cynical, nothing satisfies you, you can’t think straight, your productivity is dropping, you’re self-medicating, you don’t laugh anymore, and sleep and time off no longer refuel you. If you have more than a few of these signs, you’re headed toward burnout. There are several things to do to reverse burnout—tell someone, develop a circle around you, keep leaning into God, rest, find something to take your attention away from your pain, do what you can, don’t make any big decisions, grieve your losses, reopen your heart, and live today in a way that will help you thrive tomorrow.

**Emptiness**—When you’ve climbed to the top, or are on your way there and everything still feels blah, empty and unsatisfying. The antidote to this is living for a purpose greater than you, living for God.

This book would make a great book study—if anyone read this and would like to discuss further, please let me know, it would make for great discussion.

## Other Opportunities This Lent

### Lenten Covenant

As we have done in years past, we will offer the Lenten Covenant, a “covenant” made between you and God about your plan for spiritual growth this Lent. The Covenant will be available on our website, and as an insert in the weekly bulletin on Sunday, March 3. Please fill out one and put it in the special box in front of the church.

### Sacrament of Confession

Many people have already made appointments for their confessions to be heard, many for the first time in their lives. It is confidential. It helps you reconnect with God and unburden yourself of guilt. It helps you to make a new start in your spiritual journey and is an integral part of any successful Lenten journey. If you have questions about confession, please ask. There is no better way to prepare for Pascha than to receive this sacrament. Confessions will be heard up to April 18, and then again after Pascha. Please make your appointment as soon as possible, because Fr. Stavros likes to give people whatever time they need. As it gets closer to Holy Week and more and more people are coming, He is forced to go quicker, and it is very important not to be rushed in this Sacrament.

### Interested in Reading during Lenten Services?

In years past, we’ve offered the opportunity to parishioners to read during the Lenten services on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. If you are interested, you can sign up by calling the office and Father will tell you the times and dates that are available or email Father at [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com) or Charlie at [Charlie.hambos@gmail.com](mailto:Charlie.hambos@gmail.com).

# **Blessed are You...**

## **Becoming the *Light* of the World**

A SIX-WEEK LENTEN STUDY TO HELP US  
Apply the Beatitudes to our lives

---

*Join us to better understand the call to becoming the Light of the World  
as Christians with more engagement.*

### Weekly Topics:

<b>Wednesday, March 13</b>	Blessed are You: It starts with humility
<b>Wednesday, March 20</b>	Seeking comfort in God's strength
<b>Wednesday, March 27</b>	A hunger for righteousness and mercy
<b>Wednesday, April 3</b>	Purity and peace bring us closer to God
<b>Wednesday, April 10</b>	Blessed even on the worst day
<b>Wednesday, April 17</b>	YOU are the Light of the World

### Each Wednesday evening schedule:

6:00 p.m.	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy
7:15 p.m.	Lenten Dinner (provided by one of our ministries)
7:45 p.m.	Presentation by Fr. Stavros
8:15 p.m.	Small group discussion
8:45 p.m.	Concluding Remarks and Closing Prayer

*\*Childcare will be provided at no cost. Please contact the church office with the name and age of each child by March 1 so we can properly plan.*

# St. John the Baptist Community News

## Parish Registry

**Wedding** - Eugene Freeman III and Jacqueline Freeman were married on Saturday, February 9. Nicholas Freeman was the Koumbaro. Congratulations!

**Funeral** - Andrew Fellios passed away on January 30. The Funeral service was held on Saturday, February 9, with Fr. Stavros and Fr. Jim Paris officiating. May his memory be eternal!

**Funeral** - Dee (Demetra) Liakos passed away on February 5. The Funeral service was held on Monday, February 9. May her memory be eternal!

**Condolences** to George and Cheryl Nolas, on the passing of George's mother, Helen. May her memory be eternal!

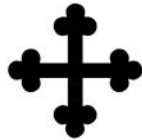
**Condolences** to the family of Mary Pechinis, on her recent passing. May her memory be eternal!

**Congratulations** to Wayne and Sia Blankenship on their 50th Wedding Anniversary! Many more happy and healthy years to you both!

**New Policy—no passing of trays** —As of January 1, there will no longer be a tray passed at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. It is our hope that everyone will increase their stewardship in order to bridge this gap. Increased stewardship and less nickel-and-diming (trays) are the mark of a strong parish. This new policy is in line with our desire to be a strong parish. There will be a tray in the narthex. You can deposit your stewardship checks in that tray, give additional donations in that tray or ignore the tray. There is no charge for the small candles. The large candles (the red 7-day ones) will still cost \$5.

**NEW PROCEDURE FOR UNCLAIMED COFFEE HOURS** - We are excited to present a NEW procedure for hosting our weekly parish coffee hour for the weeks where no ministry has signed up for coffee hour. Certain letters of the alphabet according to last name, have been assigned to each open date. We will be emailing a link to a Sign-Up Genius. Please sign up for those Sundays which correspond to your last name. You may sign up for one or more items which include, set-up, serving, bringing items or clean up on any particular date. Please see the dates and suggested items below. We would like to see as many different people as possible sign up, so that the burden will not fall on anyone repeatedly. It is also important that our worship experience not be compromised by putting on the coffee hour. Finally, if a family would like to pool together to go a coffee hour, to honor a loved one who has passed, or mark another occasion, please let us know and we'll reserve that date for your family. If there are any questions, don't hesitate to call the church office at 813-876-8830. Thank you for helping us to create an environment that encourages fellowship and community. On March 17, last names starting with A and B will host. On March 31, last names starting with C and D will host. On April 7, last names starting with E, F & G will host.

**Get Acquainted Sunday, March 3** 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.



The St. John Choir invites everyone to

*Sunday Brunch*  
**Sunday, March 3, 2019**

Immediately following the Divine Liturgy  
in the Kourmolis Center

**\$5 per person donation**

## Photo Ministry Meeting - March 3

There will be a meeting of the photography ministry on Sunday, March 3, following the Divine Liturgy in the Parish Council Administration Room in the Admin Building. Karina Findlay is the new head of the ministry, which documents the activities of our parish. We are looking for new photographers, especially to help in documenting the upcoming Holy Week Services. If you are interested in participating, please contact Karina Findlay at 813-476-9632.



**Community Outreach - Saturday, March 16** 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. 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!**

**Young Adult Ministry - Sunday, March 17** - The YAL fellowship dinner will be on Sunday, March 17. We will be going to the Pan-Orthodox Vespers at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Tarpon Springs. The service starts at 5:00 p.m. We can carpool from our church and leave by 4:00 p.m. After the Vespers we will head down to the Sponge Docks for dinner and discussion. Please RSVP to Charlie if you are going to attend. Dates may change. Charlie will send an email.



**SAVE THE DATE: Orthodoxy on Tap** @ Hackett's Causeway Cafey and Creamery, 901 Curlew Road, Dunedin, FL 34698

**Hosting Lenten Meal after the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy on, Wednesday, April 3**



# Ζήτω η Ελλάδα!

**Sunday, March 24**

## Greek Independence Day Luncheon

We will be hosting our annual Greek Independence Day Luncheon and program on Sunday, March 25, following the Divine Liturgy, in the Kourmolis Center. There will be several performances by our dance groups, singing of some folk songs, Greek poems from our Adult Greek School and a tasty lunch. All proceeds will go to our church. Thank you to the Kalojiannis family for again sponsoring and donating this luncheon.

**Brief GOYA Meeting on March 3 after the Divine Liturgy** - There will be a brief GOYA Meeting on Sunday, March 3 after the Divine Liturgy in the Zaharias Room. We will be discussing the Upcoming Lenten retreat and collecting forms and payment from those who will be participating.

**GOYA Meeting - March 24** - There will be a GOYA meeting on Sunday, March 24. The meeting will be from 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. Dinner, as always, will be provided.

## Our Annual Church St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival will be on March 31

All students from grades 7 - 12 are encouraged to participate. Preparation for the Festival will be done during Sunday School in the Media Center, but your child may just go to class, and will be guided down to the Center. We hope to see your children participate in this opportunity to gain spiritual, historical, liturgical, and scriptural knowledge and courage through preparation and deliverance of their personal reflective speech. This can be life changing; so please promote and encourage your children to participate! For more information, please contact Peggy Bradshaw at (727) 244-1374. The actual competition will be held inside the church sanctuary, and anyone is welcome to attend



## Ye Holy Krewe Had Another Great Gasparilla Celebration

And no, they didn't go to the parade! John Kokkas has captained our Krewe of volunteers who park cars and make money for our parish for TWELVE years! This year, they made a total of \$6,207 from both weekends. Our Krewe for the children's parade included John, Isabella Kokkas, Mary Maas, Brett Mourer, Charlie Hambos, Kevin Fentress, Jim Valaes, Lisa Alsina and Despina Sibley. The Krewe for the adult parade included John, Kevin Fentress, Charlie Hambos, John Alexander, Brett Mourer, George Chagaris, Dwight and Ewana Forde and Mike Xenick. Thank you to Captain John and the Krewe for a job well done!

## Philoptochos raised \$878 for the Orthodox Christian Mission Center on Feb. 3

A big thank you to Elaine Halkias and JoAnn Hartung for donating all the food so that all the proceeds went to OCMC. Combined with money in our budget, over \$2,000 was sent from our parish to help missions overseas.

**St. John's is proud to offer a new ministry for families with special needs:**

## ***Connect Through Christ***

According to the US Census, 18.5% of American Children under age 18 are Special Needs Children. That doesn't mean that they aren't smart, talented or capable. Just that they have specific challenges that a "typical" student would not face.

There are four major types of special needs children:

Physical – muscular dystrophy, chronic asthma, epilepsy, etc.

Developmental – down syndrome, autism, dyslexia, speech delays, processing disorders

Behavioral/Emotional – ADD, bi-polar, oppositional defiance disorder, etc.

Sensory Impaired – Blind, visually impaired, deaf, limited hearing

Our mission is to break down barriers that keep children with disabilities and their families from being able to participate in the Church community. By discretely identifying families that Connect Through Christ can serve we hope to assist in providing a life long relationship with Christ. For more information please contact Lindsey Skourellos at 813-503-7845 and [lskourellos@yahoo.com](mailto:lskourellos@yahoo.com) or Dante Skourellos 813-765-9534 and [d\\_skourellos@yahoo.com](mailto:d_skourellos@yahoo.com)

### **Metropolis of Atlanta's St. Stephen's Summer Camp Registration OPENS in March!**



**Week #1** June 23 - June 29

**Week #2** June 30 - July 6

**Week #3** July 7 - July 13

**Week #4** July 14 - July 20

**Week #5** July 21 - July 27

**For teens entering 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> Grades in the Fall.**

**Registration Cost \$425.00 (\$200.00 Deposit)**

**Call Monica at the Metropolis for more details 404-634-9345!**

## **We Went Red for Healthy Hearts on February 10**



# Stewardship Update March 2019

*What do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? 1 Corinthians 4:7*

## *Please give back your Time, Talents and Treasure in 2019*

*We humbly thank our faithful Stewards of St. John and your continued support of our Church Mission and Ministries. We are blessed with a diverse blend of individuals & families that makeup our church - founding members, decade old members (or somewhere in between) and many, many new members! You may have noticed our expanded Stewardship Committee Members hard at work making personal thank you calls and serving on Sundays to answer questions related to the importance of Stewardship. These efforts have made a difference helping to kick off a very good start to this new Stewardship Year!*

Stewardship is one of the primary ways God calls us to live our Christian life. Every gift comes from HIM. Your life is on loan from God, regardless if you acknowledge this or not, and God calls you to steward everything about your life for his glory and the good of others. Your giving at St. John is our foundation for supporting our church mission and vision to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ as one, Holy and Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Look for a renewed focus on Ministry Time and Talents this year as Ewana Forde and Julie Palios help connect our many parishioners and new families with ministries and uncover talents that can benefit the church and community. The dedication of our parishioner time, talent and treasure is critical to help sustain our church for present and future generations!

### ~Stewardship .....Good to Know~

- ♦ You may have noticed, we stopped passing trays on Sundays and humbly ask that you take this into consideration when making or increasing your Stewardship Pledges

- ♦ *We lovingly remind everyone to review & fulfill your Stewardship Commitment for 2018. We remain with many unfulfilled pledges for last year. If you need to modify or adjust this previous commitment*

Year to Year Comparison ~		2019*	2018*
Pledged Year to Date		\$430,138	\$358,442
Received Year to Date		\$93,150	\$105,339
Average Pledge		\$1,660	\$1,675
Median Pledge		\$1,000	\$1,000
#of Individual/Families Giving	Pledged/	271	237
*YTD as of 2/12/19 & 2/8/18			

please contact Fr. Stavros, Charlie Hambos or a member of the Stewardship Committee.

- ♦ We have families that attend our church regularly yet don't participate or perhaps understand the importance of Stewardship in our lives or have not renewed their pledges for 2019. Help us help one another by encouraging your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to become Stewards of our beloved Community.

**Please feel free to share your thoughts to the office email - [officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com](mailto:officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com) or speak directly with Fr. Stavros, Sandra Pappas at [spappas11@gmail.com](mailto:spappas11@gmail.com) or Pete Trakas at [ptrakas@gmail.com](mailto:ptrakas@gmail.com) Stewardship Co-Chairs. We have pledge forms available online and in the Church Narthex and Office. When you give to God, you discover what God gives to you.**

*We are here for YOU!*

# Donations Needed for Great Lent and Holy Week

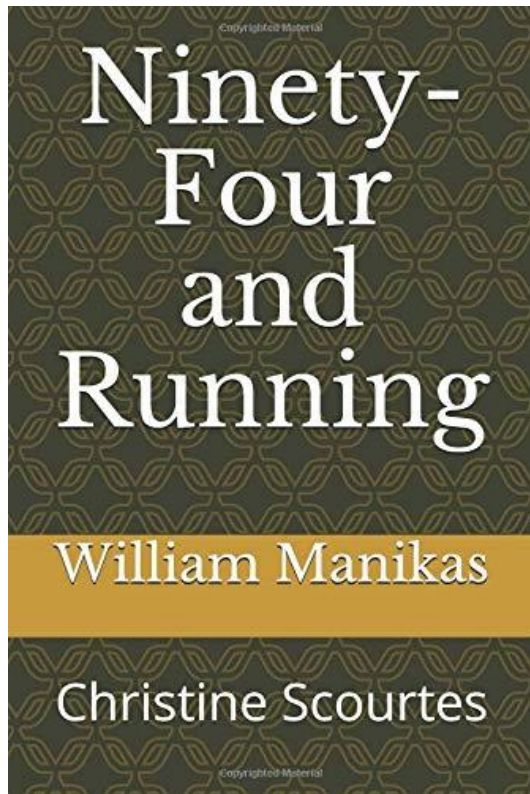
Great Lent begins March 11. We have many special celebrations during these weeks. We know that many of you would like to contribute to the decorating of our church and icons during this period. For your convenience, below is a list of items needed for the celebration of the Sacred Services of Lent and Holy Week. Please contact the church office to reserve your desired offering for the health of your loved ones or in memory of a deceased loved one.

Payment may be sent to the church office. Checks should be made payable to “St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church” with “Lenten Flower Donation” on the memo line. Online donations are also accepted, be sure to specify.

<b>Lent</b>	Wireless Microphones in the Church	Duracell or Energizer AA Batteries	Many
<b>March 15</b>	Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 1 <sup>st</sup> Stanza	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$100
<b>March 22</b>	Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Stanza	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$100
<b>March 29</b>	Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Stanza	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$100
<b>March 31</b>	Veneration of the Holy Cross	Flowers for Tray for Procession	\$400
<b>April 5</b>	Salutations to the Virgin Mary - 4 <sup>th</sup> Stanza	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$100
<b>April 12</b>	Akathist Hymn	Flowers for Icon of Panagia	\$100
<b>April 21</b>	<b>Palm Sunday</b>	Flowers for Icon of Palm Sunday	\$100
		Palms Strips & Branches	\$250 total
<b>Holy Week</b>		Pillar Candles for Windows (20)	\$15 each
<b>April 22</b>	<b>Holy Monday</b>	Flowers for Icon of Bridegroom in Narthex	\$100
	Bridegroom Service	Flowers for Icon of Bridegroom on Solea (2)	\$100 each
<b>April 24</b>	<b>Holy Wednesday</b>	Flowers for Icon of Last Supper	\$100
	Holy Unction	Olive Oil, Flour, Prosphora (2)	See Fr. Stavros
<b>April 25</b>	<b>Holy Thursday</b>	Flowers for Icon of Crucifixion	\$100
		Wreath for Top of Cross	\$250
		Wreaths for Bottom of Cross (2)	\$150 each
		Scattered flowers at base of cross	\$50
		Candles for Top of Cross (3)	\$15 each
<b>April 26</b>	<b>Good Friday</b>	8 Bags of Rose Petals for Myrrh-bearers	\$50
		Flowers for Epitaphios	Several
		Candles for Top of Cross (3)-Apokathelosis	\$15 each
		Candles for Top of Cross (3)-Lamentations	\$15 each
		Icon of Extreme Humility	\$100
<b>April 28</b>	<b>Pascha</b>	Flowers for Icon of Resurrection	\$100
		Flowers for Icon of Empty Tomb	\$100
		Silk Flower for Royal Doors	\$100
		Easter Lilies	\$25 per Lily



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



### **"Ninety-Four and Running—A Biography of Christine Scourtes"**

**by William "Bill" Manikas, Ed.D.**

Christine Kavakos Scourtes is the oldest member of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church. She is loved by all and a dear friend to many who attend our beautiful church. She personifies love to everyone. She has not had an easy life, but never dwells on the negative. She is always positive and optimistic in spite of the challenges she has faced in life. She is an inspiration to all who know her.

Her varied and interesting life story is also the story of the Tampa Greek community and of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church.

This book is available in the bookstore. We know you will thoroughly enjoy reading her biography.

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 6:45–8:15 p.m.

**Meeting Dates:** March 4, (Tuesday, March 12), 18 and 25

### **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:** March 5, 12 and 26

### **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:** March 5

For Great Lent, this Bible study group will be meeting after Pre-Sanctified Liturgy on Wednesday evenings as part of the "Blessed Are You. . . Becoming the Light of the World" series. They will resume on Tuesdays after Pascha.

# Philoptochos 2019 Membership Drive

**We are on the MOVE for a Great New Year!**

We invite all women ages 18 to 118 to join the St. John the Baptist Philoptochos Annunciation Chapter!

Membership Drive: January thru April, Suggested Stewardship is \$35.00.

However, we accept whatever you have in your heart to give.

Your donation makes you a member of the National, The Metropolis and our Local Chapters of Philoptochos.

**Members 80 years of age or older are honorary members- NO DUES NECESSARY.**

**THANK YOU SO MUCH AND HAVE A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR 2019**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle which number is the preferred contact: **HOME/ CELL**

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

*The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc., is the duly accredited women's philanthropic society of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of the Society shall be:*

*To aid the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church through fund raising efforts; and*

*To promote the charitable, benevolent, and philanthropic purposes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, through instructional programs, presentations, lectures, seminars and other educational resources;*

*To preserve and perpetuate Orthodox Christian concepts and the Orthodox Christian Family, and through them, to promote the Greek Orthodox Faith and traditions, in accordance with its doctrines, canons, discipline, divine worship, usages and customs;*

*To promote participation in the activities of the Greek Orthodox community, with the cooperation of the Parish Priest and the Parish Council.*

Please return form to: Jeanie Nenos, 14506 Nettle Creek Rd, Tampa, FL 33624

Or the Philoptochos mailbox in the church office.

# March is National Colorectal Cancer Month

**C**olorectal cancer, also known as bowel cancer, colon cancer, or rectal cancer, is any cancer that affects the colon and the rectum.

The American Cancer Society estimate that about 1 in 21 men and 1 in 23 women in the United States will develop colorectal cancer during their lifetime. It is the second leading cause of cancer death in women, and the third for men. However, due to advances in screening techniques and improvements in treatments, the death rate from colorectal cancer has been falling.

## Signs and Symptoms:

- changes in bowel habits
- diarrhea or constipation
- a feeling that the bowel does not empty properly after a bowel movement
- blood in feces that makes stools look black
- bright red blood coming from the rectum
- pain and bloating in the abdomen
- a feeling of fullness in the abdomen, even after not eating for a while.
- fatigue or tiredness
- unexplained weight loss

This is a disease that is totally preventable by simply following the recommended guidelines of getting an initial colonoscopy at age 50. If you have a family history of colon cancer, then it should be done much earlier. If they don't find anything, you probably won't need to do it again for 10 years. If they find polyps that have no cancer, then 5 years is recommended. Family history will also be a factor in how often your doctor will recommend that the test be done. The worst part of this test is the liquid you must drink the day before to clean you out. You are put to sleep and by the time you wake up, you will be in recovery.

If you are 50 + and have not had a colonoscopy, don't delay. Talk with your doctor and get a colonoscopy scheduled ASAP.

Stavrula Crafa, RNC, Parish Nursing



## 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.



## Hope/Joy Cared about the “Souper Bowl” and Continued to “Wonder”



The annual Souper Bowl of Caring was held on February 3. Our kindergarten kids did a great job cheering on the teams and collecting the contributions. The Patriots' pot raised \$249 and the Rams' pot raised \$488! The Patriots won the Super Bowl but the Hope Children's Home was the Big Winner with a total of \$737 and about 50 pounds of food donated to the home. Thank you to all our parishioners who give hope to the children at Hope Children's Home through your generous donations! THANK YOU!!

On January 25 Hope / Joy hosted their 3rd Movie and Pizza night. Thank you to all the families that came and enjoyed a fun night of fellowship, pizza, popcorn, candy and the movie WONDER!



## Great and Holy Friday Youth Retreat

**Friday, April 26, 2019 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

*\*Service of Royal Hours - 9:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.\**

Our retreat will begin in church at 10:00 a.m. for the last part of the Service of Royal Hours.

**Please join us for a day filled with crafts, activities, reflection, and worship with your Sunday School friends.**

The retreat will end with The Apokathelosis Service -- Descent from the Cross Service at 3:00 p.m.

All Parents are encouraged to attend!

**\*Lunch and snacks included\* Please r.s.v.p. for your child by Friday, April 19, 2019 \*Parent volunteers are needed\***

Call or email Debbie Nicklow at [Debbienicklow@hotmail.com](mailto:Debbienicklow@hotmail.com) or 813-920-0892.

Students should dress appropriately for Church and for comfort during the retreat.

**Come spend a wonderful day at Church preparing for the Triumphant Resurrection!**



# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

## IN PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION

**I am the Lord your God, and you shall have no other gods before me.** Has God been the source, center and hope of my life? Have I put myself, others or things before God? Have I failed to trust in God's existence, love and mercy? Have I failed to pray to God, to worship Him and to thank Him for His blessings? Have I tried to serve God and keep His commandments faithfully? Have I murmured or complained against God in adversity? Have I praised and glorified God through my words and deeds?

**You shall not make for yourself a graven image in order to worship it.** Have I valued anyone or anything above God? Have I given to anyone or anything the love, honor and worship that belongs to God alone? Have I made a idol of any person, idea, occupation, or thing?

**You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.** Have I blasphemed God's holy name in any way? Have I sworn a false oath? Have I broken any solemn vow or promise? Have I entered into an agreement, promise or contract against God's law? Have I cursed or used foul language? Do I speak of God to other people? Have I spoken negatively about the church or the clergy with others?

**Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.** Have I worshiped regularly on Sundays and major feast days and have I helped others to do the same? Do I come regularly late to the holy services? Does my attention wander during church? Have I worked unnecessarily on Sundays or major feast days or caused others to do so? Have I spent the Lord's Days in a wholesome and edifying ways? Do I use my time wisely or do I waste a lot of it? Have I contributed a sacrificial share of my time, talent and treasure to the church? Have I discouraged others from attending church or participating in the sacraments? Have I kept the prescribed fasts of the church?

**Honor your father and mother.** Have I loved and respected my parents as I should? Have I neglected them or failed to help them? Have I disobeyed them, deceived them or caused them pain by my words or deeds? Have I treated all my family members with patience and love? Have I neglected my children? Have I disrespected any member of the clergy?

**Thou shall not kill.** Have I caused the harm, injury or death of anyone? Have I wished my own or anyone's harm or death? Have I been cruel to animals or destroyed any life unnecessarily? Have I spoke badly about other people or harmed the self-esteem of others? Have I done things that are harmful to my own body such as excessive eating, drinking, smoking, drug abuse? Have I tried to prematurely end my life? Have I had an abortion?

**You shall not commit adultery.** Have I committed any immoral acts alone or with others? Have I caused others to commit immoral acts? Have I committed immoral acts in my heart? Have I honored my spouse? Have I been faithful to my spouse? Have I read or viewed inappropriate materials?

**You shall not steal.** Have I taken anything that was not mine from anyone or from anywhere? Have I cheated anyone? Have I caused others to steal or cheat? Have I tried to find the owners of lost things I have found? Have I damaged or destroyed anything that belonged to another? Have I defrauded anyone of rightful wages? Have I paid my debts? Have I given to the poor and to philanthropic causes in proportion to my means?

**You shall not bear false witness.** Have I given false testimony against anyone? Have I spoken evil, told lies or spread rumors about anyone? Have I disclosed to anyone the sins and faults of another? Have I made careless statements or done anything else to harm the name and reputation of another? Have I engaged in idle gossip?

**You shall not covet.** Have I looked with envy jealousy or hatred toward the possession talents or achievements of others? Have I desired the downfall or loss of others out of evil intent that I might benefit? Have I grieved that God has bestowed greater blessings on others than on me?

\*Please highlight the ones you have done and make a list of the issues that need discussion.

# As We Begin the Fast

## FAST FROM

Fast from judging others  
Fast from emphasis on differences  
Fast from despair  
Fast from thoughts of illness  
Fast from words that destroy and pollute  
Fast from discontent  
Fast from anger  
Fast from being negative  
Fast from pessimism  
Fast from worry  
Fast from complaining  
Fast from hostility  
Fast from bitterness  
Fast from constant activity  
Fast from disrespect  
Fast from lethargy and boredom

## FEAST ON

Feast on seeing the best in people  
Feast on the unity of life  
Feast on hope  
Feast on the healing power of God  
Feast on words that build and encourage  
Feast on gratitude  
Feast on patience  
Feast on being positive  
Feast on optimism  
Feast on trust  
Feast on appreciation  
Feast on peacemaking and non-violence  
Feast on forgiveness  
Feast on slowing down  
Feast on recognizing Jesus in others  
Feast on enthusiasm

## 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.



Like

### 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](http://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](http://www.flickr.com/photos/stjohngoctampa)



# A Prayer in Honor of St. Patrick's Day - St. Patrick's breastplate

I arise today

Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,  
Through belief in the Threeness,  
Through confession of the Oneness  
of the Creator of creation.

I arise today

Through the strength of Christ's birth with His baptism,  
Through the strength of His crucifixion with His burial,  
Through the strength of His resurrection with His ascension,  
Through the strength of His descent for the judgment of  
doom.

I arise today

Through the strength of the love of cherubim,  
In the obedience of angels,  
In the service of archangels,  
In the hope of resurrection to meet with reward,  
In the prayers of patriarchs,  
In the predictions of prophets,  
In the preaching of apostles,  
In the faith of confessors,  
In the innocence of holy virgins,  
In the deeds of righteous men.

I arise today, through

The strength of heaven,  
The light of the sun,  
The radiance of the moon,  
The splendor of fire,  
The speed of lightning,  
The swiftness of wind,  
The depth of the sea,  
The stability of the earth,  
The firmness of rock.

I arise today, through

God's strength to pilot me,  
God's might to uphold me,  
God's wisdom to guide me,  
God's eye to look before me,  
God's ear to hear me,

God's word to speak for me,

God's hand to guard me,  
God's shield to protect me,  
God's host to save me

From snares of devils,

From temptation of vices,

From everyone who shall wish me ill,  
afar and near.

I summon today

All these powers between me and those evils,

Against every cruel and merciless power  
that may oppose my body and soul,

Against incantations of false prophets,

Against black laws of pagandom,

Against false laws of heretics,

Against craft of idolatry,

Against spells of witches and smiths and wizards,

Against every knowledge that corrupts man's body and soul;

Christ to shield me today

Against poison, against burning,

Against drowning, against wounding,

So that there may come to me an abundance of reward.

Christ with me,

Christ before me,

Christ behind me,

Christ in me,

Christ beneath me,

Christ above me,

Christ on my right,

Christ on my left,

Christ when I lie down,

Christ when I sit down,

Christ when I arise,

Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,

Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,

Christ in every eye that sees me,

Christ in every ear that hears me.

**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](mailto:exchange2861@yahoo.com).

# Our One Word for 2019

*Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from Above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

James 1:17

*Blessed is everyone who fears  
the Lord, who walks in His  
ways!*

*Psalm 128:1*

*And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work.*

*2 Corinthians 9:8*





# My One Word for 2019 – BOLD!

By Mike Xenick

*As we make our way through 2019, anyone who has chosen a word for this year is welcome to submit a testimonial for the Messenger each month. If you'd like to share your word and how it's shaping your year, please email Fr. Stavros at [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com). This month's testimonial is from Mike Xenick.*

**B**OLD! It is a word that has been reaching out to me for a few months now. Leading into the new year, as I contemplated other words and looked back at my one word for 2018 – “Finish” – I kept coming back to the word “Bold”. It was actually more of a concept – that I wanted to boldly pursue both the things I am lacking in my life and the things that are there, just not at the level of intensity or completeness that I want them to be at, and where I hear God keep telling me He wants me to be. I kept trying to fit other words to fully capture that concept, however none of them fit like the word BOLD did.

I am using this word to inspire bold growth in some key areas of my life – my relationship with Christ, my service to His church, using the gifts He has blessed me with to help others, to guide my family to a closer relationship with Him, to push my amazing marriage to even higher levels, to improve my fitness and health, and to guide my company in the new partnership that I am currently forming with another company. This ambitious growth will challenge me in many ways and will require me to do things that take me out of my comfort zone.

Since I've chosen this new word, I am using it to move me to adjust my mindset and approach to overcome these challenges and realize these bold achievements. When I find myself rationalizing why I don't need to do something I know I should do, I see my word on my computer screen and attached to Bible verses I've printed out that hang in my office, on my notebooks and the mirror of my bathroom, and it inspires me to follow through. These are the verses of Scripture that help me:

*Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold.*  
2 Corinthians 3:12

*Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting.* Philemon 1:8

*The wicked flee though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.* Proverbs 28:1

It is amazing how much this one word can do if you let it penetrate your every day life and inspire you to see and do everything through the lens of that one word. It is not easy, and it takes a conscientious effort, and I fall short every day, however it can be very powerful if that focus can be achieved.

One example of a bold change I am making to my life is to completely change my weekday morning routine. Until now, on weekdays, the time I get up is dictated by what I have on my calendar. If it's a school day, I get up just in time to make sure my kids are up for school, and work with my wife on our school day morning routine. If there isn't school, well, who knows when I'll wake up! Hopefully, it will be in time for a conference call or meeting. My new BOLD morning routine has me waking up at 5:30 am. For those that know me, let's just say that's not in my DNA, at least for the last 53 years. My new BOLD morning routine includes time to pray, read the Bible, read Father's Prayer Team message, meditate, journal my thoughts and ideas, stretch and read – almost two hours before the school day routine begins. So far, I've not done this with any consistency, however I'm making progress, and as I write this article, I had my best morning of this yet. I humbly ask for your prayers that I can continue to boldly pursue this and other bold new areas. I pray that you can find a word that speaks to you and helps you on your journey to Him and to His heavenly kingdom.

*Mike Xenick has served as the vice-president of the Parish Council for the past six years. He sings in the choir. He is married to Maria Xenick and they are parents of Artemis, Elizabeth and George.*

**PLEASE COMMEMORATE THE NAMES OF MY DEPARTED FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE  
SATURDAY OF THE SOULS MEMORIAL SERVICES - March 2, March 9, March 16**

**In Memory of**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**\*\*You only need to write the first name of each person. Please mail to the church office by Friday, March 1.**

You may also email the names to [officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com](mailto:officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com).

# Where Am I?

By Peter Marinelli

I've learned from past experiences that staying current with my relationship with God and spiritual practices were and are vital to not only sobriety but to my life. The tendency for so many is to rely on old experiences to be current. Our big book states to "grow in understanding and effectiveness", so it begs the question, what am I doing currently to enhance this relationship with God to continue, to seek God without expectations?

What many folks fall into is – a life of faith without works. We become hearers only and not hearers and doers.

Do I practice fidelity to my worship of God, prayer and meditations? Do I practice fidelity to spiritual practices in general or have I found other activates to turn to when life seems to come at me unfairly? What I like to call these other practices are the "mistresses of life". Things are not going the way I had expected or perhaps have run dry, so I turn to something that gives me what I want and not necessarily what I need. My wants can get dressed up as needs, and if that happens, I'm heading for trouble.

Life is, when we think about it, about relationships. The ones that we love and the ones we try to avoid. The people who smile when they see us the ones who don't. It's life!

The ego will insist that everyone must like us and do as we ask. We want to be the landlords of our own little kingdom and let only those who endorse what we want in. God is on the outer fringes of life, and life and the current moment is always in the way. We have family members, co-workers, neighbors etc., who do what they do based on how they see life and react as such. How am I doing in the mist of this? We can claim a Godly path yet character assassinate anyone who gives us a challenge. We practice judgment without mercy only to find that we are the ones who receive no mercy.

So my relationship, my current relationship with God as you can see is vital to walk through life gracefully with a spirit of gratitude. Not oblivious to what is around me and looking at life through rose-colored glasses, yet to see life as it is. A journey and my works as I go through it-doing His will and not mine. To do this, I need to be "awake" and not sound asleep to the God of my understanding. How can I seek God, how can I



meet God, how can I hear God. when I am playing God?

A good spot check that always gets me centered is looking at the "bedevilments" on page 52 in the big book. How am I doing with life, with relationships?

It is somewhat remarkable that when I feel the nearness of my Creator, how the world is worn like a loose garment and I am in the world not of the world.

It's the chopping of wood and carrying of water, the spiritual progress, and ploughing the field, seeking God and making it the most important event of my day.

Blessings,  
Peter Marinelli  
"Chop wood, Carry water."

*Peter Marinelli is the Director of Sober Residences, and has dedicated his life to helping others recover from alcoholism and drug addiction.*

## Continue Supporting Our Beloved St. John After Your Lifetime Join the St. John Legacy Society Today!

*Benjamin Franklin once wrote, "In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."*

Want to learn more about making tax-wise gifts? Passionate about supporting St. John Greek Orthodox Church even after your lifetime? It's not only possible; it's easy to do with a beneficiary designation. Just name our church as a beneficiary to receive assets such as retirement plans and life insurance policies after you're gone. You simply fill out a form that is entirely separate from your will—which makes this approach an easy way to give.

Not only is it an easy way to give, but it's also flexible—you aren't locked into the choices you make today. You can review and adjust beneficiary designations anytime you want.

Please be sure to seek advice from your financial and legal advisors, and discuss your charitable plans with your family.

Please contact Fr. Stavros at 813-876-8830 ext. 103, (email [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com)) so that we may include you as a member of the St. John Legacy Society.

# The Most Powerful Thing You Can Do For Your Kids

By Jeannie Cunnion, Fox News

When praying for my kids, I have always used the words, “my boys” or “my sons.” There is, of course, nothing wrong with praying this way. God entrusted four boys to my husband and me to raise to His glory. But on one particular and unforgettable night, while crying out to God about a painful hardship one of my boys was facing and feeling completely incompetent to help him navigate it, I felt the Holy Spirit remind me that these boys are first and foremost sons of God. That as much as I love them and long for them, they were “perfectly and wonderfully” made by God (Psalm 139), they belong to God, and God’s love and desire for them is infinitely more profound and pure than even mine.

In light of this truth, I began to pray “Your sons,” rather than “my sons” to be reminded that God is their all-knowing, all-powerful Father, and because God is sovereign and full of grace, He can be trusted with the children He has entrusted to me.

This is the truth we have to remember when our children are bullied or rejected by their peers, when they are battling sin and temptation, when their feelings get hurt or their hearts get broken, when they struggle with substance abuse or eating disorders, when they make wrong choices, or when they simply don’t feel lovable or valuable. When our hearts break for our kids and we long to right every wrong in their lives, we have to remember they have a sovereign and good heavenly Father. Then we are free to pray, “Lord, they are yours. They belong to you.”

There has been something incredibly freeing about praying for my children this way. It has opened my clenched fists that are trying to control outcomes and allowed me to surrender them back to God with open hands and a trusting heart. To say that God is sovereign is not to say that our children don’t have free will. Indeed, God has given all of us free will. We are all responsible for the choices we make, and our choices matter. However, God is not limited by our choices. He is continually working everything together “for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them” (Romans 8:28).

Remembering our good Father’s sovereignty relieves so much of the pressure we experience in motherhood. It’s not all up to you, and it’s not all up to me – and praise Him for that!

If we want more peace and less worry in our parenting, we are wise to heed the wisdom we read in Isaiah 26:3, “You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!”

The most powerful thing we can do for our kids is pray. Our prayers have a profound impact on our kids’ lives. In fact, I think it’s fair to say we do our best parenting through prayer!

Now maybe you already know that. Maybe you already know how powerful prayer is, and yet, like me, your prayer life doesn’t always reflect that truth. So nobody needs to be reminded of this more than I do, because too often my life suggests that we do our best parenting – not through prayer – but



through worry.

All the while, the peace our hearts crave in the midst of all the pressure we experience as parents – the peace that “exceeds anything we can understand” – can be found in only one place. And it isn’t in problem-solving. It’s in prayer.

Prayer is not only the antidote to finding peace amidst all of the pressure, but it is our most powerful weapon against the enemy who, like it or not, is working against us. He “prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8 NIV). I don’t say this to scare us. I say this to encourage us to get on our knees and fight for our kids in prayer.

Our prayers for our children (and with our children!) are unimaginably significant. Through prayer, we get to partner with God in the work He is doing in the lives of our kids, all the while remembering that “It won’t be long before this generous God who has great plans for us in Christ – eternal and glorious plans they are! – will have you put together and on your feet for good. He gets the last word; yes, He does!” (1 Peter 5:11 MSG).

In other words, as we pray for our kids, we can trust that God – who is abundantly generous – has great plans for our kids in Christ. And not just temporal plans, but eternal plans. And He gets the last word – yes, He does! We are free to rest in His sovereignty and surrender to His will.

*Jeannie Cunnion is the author of "Mom Set Free: Find Relief From The Pressure To Get It All Right," and she holds a Masters Degree in Social Work. Jeannie and her husband are the proud parents of four boys who range in age from toddler to teenager.*

# 6 Problems when You're Standing on the Sin Line

By Chuck Lawless

**L**et me get right to the point: sometimes we put ourselves directly on the “sin line”—that metaphorical line between obedience and disobedience—and then wonder why we so easily fall into sin. Here are some thoughts I hope will help you avoid the line:

1. **It's arrogance that puts us on the line.** We get that close to the line because we're convinced we can handle it; that is, we're sure we'll never cross the line. That's nothing less than pride—which means, by the way, that we've already crossed another line of sin in the process.
2. **It's the lure of idolatry that pulls us toward the line.** I doubt we ever pray this way, but our thinking at the line is, “Lord, I don't want to sin, but I don't want to miss anything, either.” When we seek to wring out of a temptation every ounce of fun we can get without “really sinning,” we've still chased the fun of sin. That's idolatry.
3. **We tend to deceive ourselves into moving the line as we get closer to it.** Here's the way the conversations often go in our head: “Well, this really isn't so bad after all”; “God understands what I'm dealing with”; “I'm not feeling any conviction, so it must be okay”; “Maybe that line is just legalism anyway.” Moving the line is a sure sign of lurking disaster.
4. **The walk toward the line is seldom marked by times of deep devotions.** In fact, I've *never* seen someone spending regular, consistent, and focused time with God walk easily in the

wrong direction. Time with God has a way of building a wall at the line.

5. **Accountability partners and small groups don't usually walk toward the line together.** That is, we get into trouble at the line when we're (a) walking alone or (b) walking with a partner in sin. That's not usually an accountability partner, and it's not a small group. The more believers we have walking with us, the less likely it is we'll get to the line.

**The line is so thin that none of us is strong enough to walk away in our own power.** It takes just one more step. Only one minute alone. One more glance. One additional key stroke on the computer. One more excuse, one more lie. Not one of us can successfully fight this battle alone while standing on the line. That's why it's not very smart to go there in the first place. **What's the point?**

- “Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of the evil. Avoid it; do not go on it; turn away from it and pass on.” (Proverbs 4:14-15)
  - “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” (Luke 22:41)
- “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7)

# 15 Ways to Pray Like Jesus Prayed

By Chuck Lawless

**M**ost of us struggle with prayer. Even when we know we should pray, it's not always easy to do it. Maybe one way to start praying more fervently is to pray like Jesus did as recorded in the Gospel of Luke:

1. **Pray as you commit yourself to God's work:** “when Jesus also was baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened” (3:21).
2. **Start the day with prayer:** “And when it was day, he departed and went to a desolate place” (4:42). Mark 1:35 tells us that Jesus went to this place to pray.
3. **Push away from the crowds to pray:** “Great crowds gathered to hear him . . . but he would withdraw to desolate places and pray” (5:15-16).
4. **Pray for people to invest in, just as Jesus did before calling His disciples:** “he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God” (6:12).
5. **Pray thanksgiving for food:** “And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing over them” (9:16).
6. **Spend time praying alone:** “Now it happened that as he was praying alone. . .” (9:18).
7. **Take others to pray with you on a prayer retreat:** “he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray” (9:28).
8. **Just rejoice in prayer:** “In that same hour he rejoiced in

the Holy Spirit and said, ‘I thank you, Father’ (10:21).

9. **Pray, and then teach others how to pray:** “Now Jesus was praying in a certain place . . . And he said to them, ‘When you pray, say . . .’” (11:1-2).

10. **Pray for others under spiritual attack:** “Simon, Simon, Satan demanded to have you . . . but I have prayed for you” (22:31-32).

11. **Cry out to God in your grief:** “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me” (22:42).

12. **Pray for God's will to be done:** “Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done” (22:42).

13. **Pray for your enemies:** “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (23:34).

14. **Pray when you face death:** “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” (23:46).

15. **Pray blessings over Jesus' followers:** “Then he led them as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them” (24:50).

Why not use this list to focus your prayer life today? We can't go wrong when we pray like Jesus prayed.

“Be ashamed when you sin. Do not be ashamed when you repent. Pay attention to what the devil did to you. These are two things: sin & repentance. Sin is a wound; repentance is a medicine.”

-St. John Chrysostom





## AHEPA FAMILY NEWS – MARCH 2018

### THE CREATION OF TAMPA-HERAKLION SISTER CITIES

Thursday, January 31, 2019

OFFICIAL SISTER CITIES SIGNING CEREMONY AT OLD TAMPA CITY HALL IN THE SISTER CITIES ROOM



In an impressive and emotional ceremony, Mayor Bob Buckhorn of Tampa and Mayor Vasilis Lambrinos of Heraklion, Crete signed the Declaration, written both in English and Greek, officially making Tampa and Heraklion - Sister Cities. Also present from Heraklion were Deputy-Mayor Gian Andrea P. Garancini; Mr. Artemis Saitakis, Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas; Mrs. Evelyn Bakinta, Cretan Business Women's Association; Mrs. Pelagia Veligradi, Heraklion Chief Medical Officer; and Mr. Leonidas Zampetakis, City Councilman. Participating in the Ceremony were the three founding members of the Tampa-Heraklion Sister Cities Committee, Chairman Gus Paras, Dimitri Sparos, Greek General Council, and Elena Paras Ketchum, Attorney. An audience of over fifty people, including Congressman Gus Bilirakis, former Congressman Mike Bilirakis, Judge E.J. Salcines and members of the Tampa Sister Cities Inc., as well as several Hellenic Associations and the Ahepa Family of Tampa, including Nicole Leontsinis, President of the Daughters of Penelope, were present to witness the signing.

In the evening, a **Celebration Dinner** was held at the Floridan Palace Hotel, attended by over 150 guests who celebrated the signing of the Declaration. They enjoyed a traditional Greek meal and were treated to music by a group of musicians from Crete who played the instruments which are traditional in Crete. The Cretan guests were so enthused that they performed a dance to the exciting music which was enjoyed by all.

### UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA MEDICAL SCHOOL ANNOUNCES EXCHANGE PROGRAM AND "HIPPOCRATES TREE"

As part of the Sister Cities Celebration, at lunch held on Friday, February 1 at CAMLS – the Center For Advanced Medical Learning And Simulation, the University of South Florida Medical School announced two significant future events. The first is the acceptance of a seedling from the original tree in Kos, under which Hippocrates taught, which is being donated by Prof. Zannis from Boston University. In addition, the University of South Florida Medical School and the University of Crete Medical School are in discussions to institute a medical student exchange program. Charles J. Lockwood, MD, Senior Vice President of USF Health, Dean of the Morsani College of Medicine, spoke about the significance of each of those events. He thanked Dr. Santo Nicosia for his part in making each of these events happen and expressed his pleasure, being a history buff, that the University of South Florida will be one of the few medical schools in the United States to have a seedling from the original one in Kos.



## 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>.**

# Family Calendar for Great Lent 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>March 10</b> <b>Cheesefare</b> <b>Sunday of Forgiveness</b> Come to church and ask forgiveness <b>Sunday School Retreat</b>	<b>11</b> <b>Clean Monday</b> <b>Great Lent Begins</b> <b>Canon of St. Andrew</b> <b>Holy Unction Service</b> No electronics today	<b>12</b> Call and wish your Godparents a "Blessed Lent/Kali Sarakosti"	<b>13</b> <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for sick children	<b>14</b> Make a prosforo (bread) with your family to bring to church	<b>15</b> <b>Salutations to the Virgin Mary</b> Make a list of 5 things you are thankful for	<b>16</b> <b>Saturday of the Souls</b> <i>*At Garden of Memories</i> Make a prayer list of those who have died and bring to church
<b>17</b> <b>Sunday of Orthodoxy</b> Bring an icon from home for procession Sing Kyrie Eleisons	<b>18</b> <b>Great Compline</b> Help make your bed, clean up and dust your room	<b>19</b> Do something helpful for your mother	<b>20</b> <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for your priest	<b>21</b> Collect some clothing or shoes to donate to a charity special to you	<b>22</b> <b>Salutations to the Virgin Mary</b> Read a favorite Bible story with your family	<b>23</b> Help your parents in the yard/garden
<b>24</b> <b>St. Gregory of Palamas</b> Say a special prayer for your grandparents	<b>25</b> <b>Annunciation</b> <b>Great Compline</b> Help set the table and clean up after dinner	<b>26</b> Do something helpful for your father	<b>27</b> <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Receive Holy Communion /Sunday School Family dinner	<b>28</b> Collect some coins to bring to church on Sunday	<b>29</b> <b>Salutations to the Virgin Mary</b> Pray the Lenten prayer of St. Ephraim together with your family	<b>30</b> Read about the life of a Saint with your family
<b>31</b> <b>Holy Cross</b> Take home a flower from the cross	<b>April 1</b> <b>Great Compline</b> Forgive someone who hurt you	<b>2</b> Do something helpful for your teacher	<b>3</b> <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for your Sunday School teachers	<b>4</b> Buy and donate a food item for our St. John food pantry	<b>5</b> <b>Salutations to the Virgin Mary</b> Come Bless the icon of Panagia <b>GOYA Lenten Retreat</b>	<b>6</b> Tell someone you hurt that you are sorry
<b>7</b> <b>St. John of the Ladder</b> Take 5 minutes of silence to pray about how much God loves you	<b>8</b> <b>Great Compline</b> Play with someone who feels left out	<b>9</b> Draw a picture of your saint or feast day by looking at an icon	<b>10</b> <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for your neighbors	<b>11</b> Choose a toy you don't play with and donate it	<b>12</b> <b>Akathist Hymn/Divine Liturgy</b> Sing Victorious Lady in your prayers one last time	<b>13</b> Ask for God to protect your house
<b>14</b> <b>St. Mary of Egypt</b> Sing Agios O Theos in Church today <b>Youth Sunday</b>	<b>15</b> <b>Great Compline</b> Be kind to someone who needs your kindness	<b>16</b> Mail a card to your Godparents wishing them a Blessed Holy Week and Kalo Pascha	<b>17</b> <b>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</b> Say a special prayer for your friends	<b>18</b> Make and bake some Lenten cookies with your family	<b>19</b> Make a list of all living and dead loved ones and bring it to church for the Proskomide	<b>20</b> <b>Saturday of Lazarus</b> <b>Divine Liturgy</b> Receive Holy Communion Make palm crosses
<b>21</b> <b>Palm Sunday</b> <b>Service of Bridgroom</b> Replace your old palm crosses and have your parents burn any old palm crosses	<b>22</b> <b>Holy Monday</b> <b>Bridgroom Service</b> Read the story about the prophet Joseph	<b>23</b> <b>Holy Tuesday</b> <b>Bridgroom Service</b> Read the story of Kassiani the Hymnographer	<b>24</b> <b>Holy Wednesday</b> Come and receive Holy Unction	<b>25</b> <b>Holy Thursday</b> <b>Divine Liturgy</b> <b>12 Gospels Service</b> Color eggs red for Pascha, think about Jesus on the cross	<b>26</b> <b>Holy Friday</b> <b>Royal Hours</b> <b>Unnailing from the Cross</b> <b>Lamentations</b> Attend Sunday School retreat	<b>27</b> <b>Holy Saturday</b> <b>Liturgy of St. Basil</b> <b>Resurrection Service</b> Come to the early Liturgy to see scattering of bay leaves
<b>April 28</b> <b>PASCHA!!</b> <b>Christ is Risen!</b> You have completed Great Lent! Attend Agape vespers to light your candle						

~ March 2019 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<b>1**</b>	<b>2</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday of Souls Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
<b>3**</b> Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Youth Sunday Photography Meeting Brief GOYA Meeting Zaharias Room Choir Brunch <b>Sunday school CF</b>	<b>4**</b> Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	<b>5**</b> WBS 10:00 a.m. SBS 7:00 p.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	<b>6**</b> Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	<b>7**</b> Young at Heart 11:30 a.m.  Greek School 6:00 p.m.	<b>8**</b> <b>Fr. Stavros out of town March 8-9</b>	<b>9**</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of Souls</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Fr. John Stefero, guest celebrant
<b>10**</b> Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Forgiveness Vespers 6:00 p.m.	<b>11** Clean Monday</b> Canon of St. Andrew 10:00 a.m. Holy Uction 6:00 p.m. No Bible Study	<b>12** WBS</b> 10:00 a.m. Monday Night Bible Study 6:45 p.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	<b>13**</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> Hour 5:30 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner/Lecture series	<b>14**</b>  Greek School 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	<b>15**</b>  Salutations to the Virgin Mary 6:30 p.m.	<b>16** 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of Souls</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Community Outreach (At Garden of Memories)
<b>17**</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Liturgy 9:45 a.m. AHEPA/Daughters Pan-Orthodox Vespers @ Tarpon Springs	<b>18**</b> Compline 5:30 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	<b>19**</b> Basketball 8:00 p.m.	<b>20**</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> Hour 5:30 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner/Lecture series	<b>21**</b>  Greek School 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	<b>22**</b> Salutations to the Virgin Mary 6:30 p.m.	<b>23**</b>
<b>24**</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Liturgy 9:45 a.m. Greek Independence Day Program GOYA 5:00 p.m.	<b>25**</b> <b>Annunciation</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Compline 5:30 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	<b>26**</b> WBS 10:00 a.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	<b>27**</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> Hour 5:30 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner/Lecture series	<b>28**</b> Philoptochos Board Meeting Greek School 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	<b>29**</b> Salutations to the Virgin Mary 6:30 p.m.	<b>30**</b>
<b>31**</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Liturgy 9:45 a.m. Parish Oratorical						

~ March 2019 ~						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<b>1**</b>	<b>2</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday of Souls Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
<b>3**</b> Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Youth Sunday Photography Meeting Brief GOYA Meeting Zaharias Room Choir Brunch <b>Sunday school CF</b>	<b>4 **</b> Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	<b>5 **</b> WBS 10:00 a.m. SBS 7:00 p.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	<b>6**</b> Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	<b>7**</b> Young at Heart 11:30 a.m.  Greek School 6:00 p.m.	<b>8**</b> <b>Fr. Stavros out of town March 8-9</b>	<b>9 **</b> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of Souls</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Fr. John Stefero, guest celebrant
<b>10**</b> Orthros 8:45 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Forgiveness Vespers 6:00 p.m.	<b>11** Clean Monday</b> Canon of St. Andrew 10:00 a.m. Holy Uction 6:00 p.m. No Bible Study	<b>12** WBS</b> 10:00 a.m. Monday Night Bible Study 6:45 p.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	<b>13**</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> Hour 5:30 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner/Lecture series	<b>14**</b>  Greek School 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	<b>15 **</b>  Salutations to the Virgin Mary 6:30 p.m.	<b>16**3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of Souls</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Community Outreach (At Garden of Memories)
<b>17**</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Liturgy 9:45 a.m. AHEPA/Daughters Pan-Orthodox Vespers @ Tarpon Springs	<b>18**</b> Compline 5:30 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	<b>19**</b> Basketball 8:00 p.m.	<b>20 **</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> Hour 5:30 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner/Lecture series	<b>21 **</b>  Greek School 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	<b>22 **</b> Salutations to the Virgin Mary 6:30 p.m.	<b>23**</b>
<b>24**</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Liturgy 9:45 a.m. Greek Independence Day Program GOYA 5:00 p.m.	<b>25**</b> <b>Annunciation</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m. Liturgy 10:00 a.m. Compline 5:30 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	<b>26**</b> WBS 10:00 a.m. Basketball 8:00 p.m.	<b>27**</b> 9 <sup>th</sup> Hour 5:30 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 p.m. Lenten Dinner/Lecture series	<b>28**</b> Philoptochos Board Meeting Greek School 6:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:15 p.m.	<b>29 **</b> Salutations to the Virgin Mary 6:30 p.m.	<b>30**</b>
<b>31**</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Liturgy 9:45 a.m. Parish Oratorical						

## St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

2418 W. Swann Avenue

Tampa, FL 33609-4712

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

officestjohnngoctampa@gmail.com

www.greekorthodoxchurchtampa.com

NONPROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

TAMPA, FL

PERMIT NO. 461

## 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
Ryan Rindone, Secretary	704-564-2046
Sandra Pappas	813-785-3747
Jim Armstrong	954-295-6665
George Chagaris	727-420-1920
Amin Hanhan	813-846-2957
Nick Katzaras	863-581-2430
Edie Kavouklis	813-758-0305
Jimmy Konstas	813-220-7352

#### **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

#### **Connect Through Christ -**

#### **Special Needs Ministry for Children**

Dante and Lindsey Skourellos 813-765-9534

#### **Dance Groups**

H XAPA MAΣ,	Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668
	Bessie Palios,	813-523-0347
	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
Parea,	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**

Karina Findlay 813-476-9632

#### **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 10<sup>th</sup> 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.