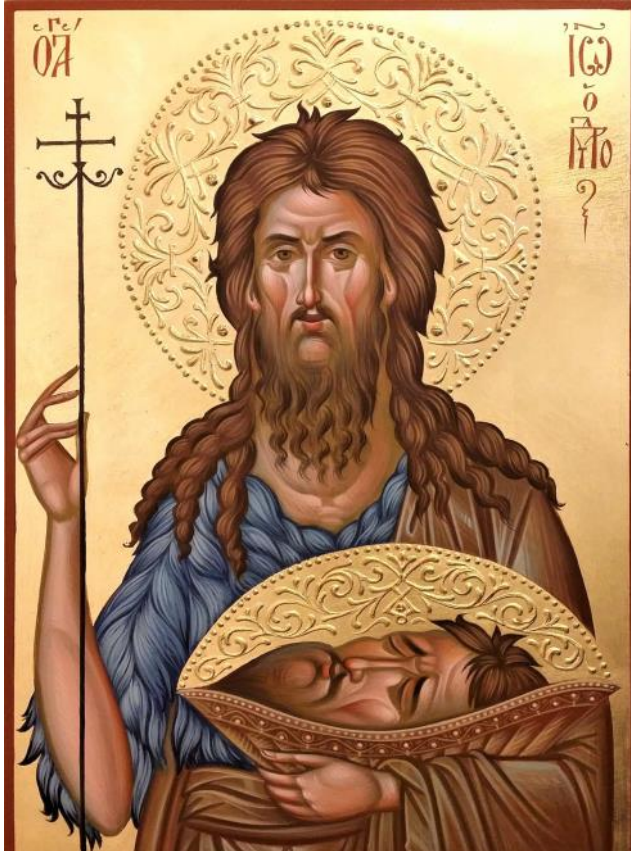


# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

2418 Swann Avenue – Tampa, FL 33609 – 813-876-8830 (office) - [office@stjohntpa.org](mailto:office@stjohntpa.org)



~St. John the Baptist & Forerunner- January 7~

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2025

*Sunday after Epiphany –  
Afterfeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ;  
Tatiana the Martyr of Rome*

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

**VISION:**

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

**MISSION:**

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

**CORE VALUES:**

Love, Worship, Community, Learning, Service

**SYNAXARION:**

*Sunday after Epiphany –  
Afterfeast of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ;  
Tatiana the Martyr of Rome*

**Apolytikion of Theophany:**

*When You O Christ were baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was revealed to all. For the Father's voice bore witness unto You, calling You the beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed His word as the truth. O revealed Christ, our God: the world gives glory to You!*

**Apolytikion of the Resurrection:**

*When the tidings of the Resurrection from the angel was proclaimed unto the women disciples, and our ancestral sentence also had been abolished, to the apostles, with boasting did they proclaim: that death is vanquished evermore and Christ our God is risen from the dead, granting to the world His great mercy.*

**Apolytikion of St. John the Baptist:**

*The memory of the just is observed with hymns of praise; for you O Forerunner the witness of the Lord is sufficient. You have proved to be truly more venerable than the prophets. Since*

*you were granted to baptize in the river, the One Whom they proclaimed. Therefore, you strove for truth, proclaiming with joy the Good News, even to those in Hades: that God was manifested in the flesh, and takes away the sins of the world, and grants to us His great mercy.*

**Kontakion:**

*From Above You appeared today, to all the world, and Your Light, O our Lord, has been marked upon us, who in true knowledge sing to You: You came, You appeared, O Light unapproachable.*

**Trisagion Hymn:**

*All those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia. (Three times)*

**Communion Hymn:**

*The memory of the righteous will endure forever. Alleluia.*

**Welcome to all of our Visitors** “Welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” Romans 15:7 We pray that your worship experience with us today will be inspirational and uplifting. Please introduce yourself to an usher or a member of the Welcoming Ministry and pick-up a “welcome packet” as you exit the church. We are happy that you are with us today!

**Holy Communion** is offered only to Orthodox Christians who are in good canonical standing with the church and who have prepared through prayer and fasting. Everyone is invited to receive the Antidoron (Blessed Bread) at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

**Order for Holy Communion**—With Sunday School in session the order for Holy Communion will be as follows:

1. Choir
2. Altar boys
3. Sunday school teachers (who will line up in middle aisle (right) before Communion).
4. Sunday school students (who will line up in the middle aisle (left) before Communion)
5. Then the rest of the congregation ( side areas then the main section).
6. Parents with recently Baptized children can line up before the Sunday School Teachers.

## READINGS FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 12

### **EPISTLE LESSON:**

LET YOUR MERCY, O LORD, BE UPON US.

VERSE: REJOICE IN THE LORD, O YE RIGHTEOUS.

### **THE READING IS FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS 4:7-13**

BRETHREN, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (in saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

### **GOSPEL LESSON: MATTHEW 4:12-17**

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

### **STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE**

*"You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God"*  
**2 Corinthians 9-11**

The 2025 Stewardship campaign is off and running. We are grateful for the 100 Parishioners who have completed a Pledge Form and encourage you to complete yours today! Look for our Stewardship Table in the Hall after Liturgy to address any questions.

#### **Remember**

Offering your Time and Talent is an important part of Stewardship. Please carefully review the Time and Talent section of this year's form. There is a true need in our church community. Are you new to St. John's? Are you looking for a way to be more involved and make some new friends? Sharing your gifts will make a difference for you and our beloved church!

### **ST. JOHN'S BOOKSTORE**

*What are your resolutions for the New Year? Do they center on prayer, Scripture reading, and learning more about your Orthodox faith?*

*If so, our bookstore is a great place to begin. From Orthodox study Bibles, Scripture commentaries, books on prayer and spirituality etc., we have what you need to fulfill that resolution. Stop in any Sunday following Divine Liturgy and make this New Year a Christ-centered one!*



### **PARISH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

 BayCare  
Behavioral Health

PAP provides free and confidential counseling services when life's challenges become overwhelming. The PAP utilizes a network of faith-based providers that are sensitive to the values and beliefs of those they serve and provides compassionate care to children, adults, parents, and seniors.

Parishioners can confidentially contact BayCare directly to request up to three free counseling sessions by a licensed mental health professional. BayCare helpline, 800-878-5470, is answered **24/7 by mental health professionals.**

## MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

### DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN EASILY MAKE DONATIONS ONLINE???

Simply scan the following QR Code with your phone's camera and select your fund of choice, Stewardship, General, Memorial etc. You can include notes to provide more detail.

Thank you for your Generosity and Support!



### WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

If you are new to the Tampa Bay area or just visiting, we would love to get to know you better.

PLEASE TEXT THE WORD

"WELCOME" TO 813-790-5950

FOLLOW THE PROMPTS TO GIVE US  
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION AND FROM THERE  
YOU WILL BE DIRECTED TO OUR ONLINE CONNECTION CARD

DO NOT NEGLECT TO SHOW *hospitality* TO STRANGERS.  
FOR THEREBY SOME HAVE ENTERTAINED *angels in unwares*.

### YOUNG AT HEART

*Our first gathering of the New Year was held yesterday afternoon in the Kourmolis Center. We ushered in the New Year with a presentation on St Basil and cutting of the Vasilopita. We also enjoyed refreshments and a fun game reflecting changes in the cost of living over the last 50 years. Please look for upcoming announcements for our next gathering on **February 1st** and plan to join us.*

### VISITATION MINISTRY

The **Philoptochos** encourages parishioners to visit our homebound seniors from St. John's. If you are interested in visiting and/or know of one of our seniors who would like some company, please e-mail Vickie Peckham at [vickiepeckham@gmail.com](mailto:vickiepeckham@gmail.com)

### ORTHODOXY 101

Begins in January & offered by Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis, Parish Priest

#### When will the classes be held?

Monday, January 20—A tour of the Orthodox Church, what we see and what it means.

Monday, January 27—Introduction to the Sacraments.  
Baptism, Chrismation, Confession, Marriage, Unction

Monday, February 3—The Divine Liturgy— A "teaching" Liturgy

Monday, February 10—Orthodox Traditions—fasting, icons, prayer and living an Orthodox Christian life

#### Why should I attend Orthodoxy 101?

- Interfaith couples. This will help the non-Orthodox person understand more about what is going on in our church.
- Anyone who is considering joining our church. Going forward, this class will be a requirement for those who wish to join our Orthodox faith.
- New converts to Orthodoxy. For those who recently joined our church and who want to know a little bit more.  
·Anyone who wants to know more about the basics of our faith, or who wants a refresher

#### What format can I expect?

A relaxed atmosphere with presentations, interactive discussions, and lots of time for questions and answers. Classes will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Church Sanctuary.  
Please sign up with Fr. Stavros at [frstav@gmail.com](mailto:frstav@gmail.com), so he has enough materials for everyone. There is no charge for this class.

## MORE MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

**Bible Study**—Women's Bible Study with Fr. Stavros will take place on most Tuesdays from 10:00-11:30a.m. either in person (in Father's office) or zoom. For January the dates are Tuesday January 21 & Monday January 27.

**Tuesday night Bible study with Fr. John** will continue meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Zaharias Room. Join us in person or via zoom for some very informative, lively and interactive discussions on how we apply Biblical principles in our everyday lives. For January, the dates are Tuesday January 14, Tuesday January 21 & Tuesday January 28.

### **Food Pantry Update**

We are grateful for your support the past year and turn the page to a New Year of helping others! We have targeted January as a month to rebuild our inventory and invite you to bring in donations every Sunday this month. We ended the year preparing over 50 'Snack Bags' for the residents of Tampa Hope. We welcome donations anytime and have a dedicated drop-off, to the left, inside the church hall entrance. You can also see a full list of items we need in the Messenger and inside the Hall. If you know of someone in need or wish to take a bag of groceries to go, we can make that happen! Please call or text Sandra Pappas at 813-785-3747

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

**Meeting of Ministry Heads, Monday, January 13**—On Monday, January 13, there will be a meeting of ministry heads from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Each ministry head is requested to attend and other members of each ministry are invited to attend. If the ministry head cannot attend, please ask someone else in your ministry to attend, so that all ministries are represented.

**Philoptochos Vasilopita Sunday January 19**—We will cut the Vasilopita for our various ministries at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 19. The Philoptochos will also be offering pieces of Vasilopita as part of coffee hour. Any proceeds from this day will be going to St. Basil's Academy in New York.

**Men's Group**—Our men's group will meet on Sunday, January 19 from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Kourmolis Center. Any men of our community are welcome to join us for dinner, discussion. We meet at 5:00 p.m., walk to a local restaurant and get some food, then bring it back to the hall where we eat and have a discussion. Our topic for January will be "Setting Spiritual Goals for the New Year" and we will also discuss the Feast of Theophany and life of St. John the Baptist.

### **St. John needs all hands on deck for Gasparilla on January 25!**

Every year we've opened our parking lot to attendees of the Tampa Bay Gasparilla Festivities. This has been a successful undertaking for years and we are thankful for all who have helped in years past! To run this event, we are asking for your help once more! We are looking for a new person to chair this event, as our past chairperson is unable to fill that role this year. He is, however, willing to help a new chairperson understand what is involved in this. If you are willing to chair this event, please contact Fr. Stavros. As for everyone else, even a few hours of volunteering is a great help to make this a safe, fun and profitable event. A sign-up genius along with details will be forthcoming through email and the bulletin.

### **Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants:**

Athena Felley, Melissa Romero, Sandra Reyes, Miltiadis, Larry Maas; Konstantinos Triantafyllopoulos; Kostadinos Booras; Michael I, Anna Maria & Thomas Reilly, Calliope Herman; Delaney & Alexis Johnson; Ron & Linda Ledet; Helen & Mike Mitchell, Elena, Ricky & Michael Gordenina, Tina Chakonas, Felix R., Ivco; Anna, Stavroula, George, Pam, and Liz; Christopher Labatos; Eva Coppalla; Christopher; Christopher; Peter Nenos; Patrick Carroll; Irina, Marina, Yuri, and Christophoros; Ashley Snyder; Evangelos & Caroline Critkas; Christine Alex, June, Lillian Thomas; Scotty; Desi Serriera; Ashley Kladakis; Kathy & Andrew Bouzinekis; Anastasia; Virginia Georgiou, Toulia Tsaros, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Ann Demas, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, Evangeline Xeroteris, Ashley Henderson, Natalie Henderson, Chris, Debbie, James, Avery, Lily, Jacob, Jesse, Ann, Rosario, Alissa, John, Angela, Joey, Christine Scourtes, Steven, Phyllis, John Zelatis, Reagan, Peter Zaharis, Alexandra Ferrarolis, Leon & Despina Botham, Cindy Xenick, Mary Ellen Evdemon, Marie Sofia Panagopoulos, Maria Hursey, Chris Vamvakias, Mike Trimis, Michael Romero, George Hambos, Dean Kondilis and Family, Bill and Nancy Manikas, Patricia Costello, Ekaterina & Anna S. Dora K., Debbie P., Mary V., David V., Don Payne, Valery, Jimmy, Timoleon, Elias, Anna, Damynos, Anna C., Anthony Welker, John Bella, Michele Blanckebaker, Jonah, George Voulgaris, Carol Cretekos, Tina, Bob, Bonnie and all victims of war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, and all of whom we are unaware.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS & TOPICS

**January 12th**  
Vasilopita—St. Basil



**January 19th**  
Salvation (Story of Zacchaeus)  
YOUTH SUNDAY

*If you do not receive our weekly Sunday School Constant Contact every Friday afternoon, please email Vickie Peckham at [vickiepeckham@gmail.com](mailto:vickiepeckham@gmail.com) to let her know.*

## UPCOMING SERVICES & EVENTS

<b>SUNDAY, JANUARY 12</b>	ORTHROS 8:45A.M. ( <b>ALTAR BOYS TODAY— ST. JOHN</b> ) GOYA	DIVINE LITURGY	10:00A.M.  5:00P.M.
<b>MONDAY, JANUARY 13</b>	MEETING OF MINISTRY HEADS		6:30P.M.
<b>TUESDAY, JANUARY 14</b>	BIBLE STUDY		6:30P.M.
<b>WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15</b>	PARAKLESIS CHOIR		6:00P.M. 7:15P.M.
<b>FRIDAY, JANUARY 17</b>	<b>ST. ANTHONY</b> ORTHROS 9:00A.M.	DIVINE LITURGY	10:00A.M.
<b>SUNDAY, JANUARY 19</b>	ORTHROS 8:45A.M. ( <b>ALTAR BOYS— ST. MATTHEW</b> ) YOUTH SUNDAY VASILOPITA SUNDAY MEN'S GROUP	DIVINE LITURGY	10:00A.M.    5:00P.M.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST. JOHN

**Women's Bible Study**  
Leader: Fr. Stavros  
January 14: **Bible Study**

**Tuesday Night Bible Study**  
Leader: Fr. John  
January 14: **Bible Study**

In our effort to support efforts for improved mental health, our parish is proud to support the 988 suicide hotline. Spread the word and you might help save a life!



## MEMORIAL SERVICE

Matthew Balasis(1 year)

Taylor Ann Koulouris(3 years)

# Philoptochos 2025 Membership Drive

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

We invite all women ages 18 plus 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 can give to support our mission.

Your donation makes you a member of the National, Metropolis and Local Chapters of Philoptochos. **We invite all women age 80 and above to join us as honorary members with no dues required.**

**“Truly I tell you, whatever you do for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you do for me.” (Matt 24:25)**

Name _____	Date _____	
Street Address _____		
City _____	State _____	Zip _____
Home Phone _____	Cell _____	
E-mail address _____		

Main areas of interest (check all that apply): Visiting the Sick \_\_\_\_\_, Fundraising \_\_\_\_\_, Spiritual Retreats \_\_\_\_\_,

Communication (Messenger-Sunday Bulletin) \_\_\_\_\_, Baking \_\_\_\_\_, Social Gatherings \_\_\_\_\_, Decorating \_\_\_\_\_

Koliva \_\_\_\_\_ Other (write in) \_\_\_\_\_

***Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America – Ladies Philoptochos Society. 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: Presvytera Denise Stefero, 11209 Lark Landing Ct., Riverview, FL 33569 or

Drop off on any Sunday in St. John's Bookstore. Questions: denises54@hotmail.com

Please make checks payable to: St. John Philoptochos or pay online <https://square.link/u/l23vm6lr>

<b>Parish Priest:</b>	Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (frstav@gmail.com)	813-394-1038
<b>Retired Priest in Residence:</b>	Rev. Fr. Stratton Dorozenski	813-876-8830
<b>Retired Priest in Residence:</b>	Rev. Fr. John Stefero (jwstefero50@hotmail.com)	678-637-4425
<b>Ministry Coordinator/Chanter:</b>	Maria Xenick (Mariapxenick@stjohntpa.org)	813-765-3587
<b>Bookkeeper:</b>	Debbie Bowe (debbie!@stjohntpa.org)	813-876-8830
<b>Administrative Assistant :</b>	Elli Kehagias (office@stjohntpa.org)	813-876-8830
<b>Parish Council:</b>	Euripides Panos, President	813-352-3972
	John Zelatis, Vice President	813-727-2271
	Marilyn Sandborn, Secretary	813-760-6289
	Alexis Scarfogliero, Treasurer	813-892-1599
	George Ameres	941-720-3494
	Peggy George	813-727-5587
	Peter George	781-910-9971
	Amin Hanhan	813-846-2957
	Tony Magos	813-957-3206
	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855
	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
<b>AHEPA:</b>	James Sakaris	301-529-8857
<b>Altar Angels:</b>	Kalliope Chagaris	813-789-4134
<b>Bible Study:</b>	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
<b>Bookstore:</b>	Pres. Denise Stefero	678-464-4833
<b>Choir:</b>	Tara Swartzbaugh, Director	813-313-0439
	Ruth Losoviz, Organist	727-688-2782
<b>Community Outreach:</b>	Greg Melton	813-967-2074
<b>Dance Groups:</b>	Η ΧΑΡΑ ΜΑΣ, Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668
	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
	ΠΑΡΕΑ, Marina Choundas	813-877-6136
	Genie Carter	813-363-2362
	ΠΑΝΗΓΥΡΙ, Alexandra De Maio	813-340-9668
<b>Daughters of Penelope:</b>	Ourania Stephanides	813-546-4711
<b>Festival:</b>	Mike Xenick	813-340-8737
<b>Finance Committee:</b>	Gary Ward	813-846-3898
<b>Food Pantry:</b>	Sandra Pappas	813-785-3747
<b>GOYA:</b>	Michael & Bessie Palios	813-523-0346
<b>Hope/Joy:</b>	George & Zackie Ameres	813-245-3813
<b>Joy Tweens</b>	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
<b>Men's Fellowship:</b>	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-394-1038
<b>Nursing Ministry:</b>	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
<b>Photography Ministry:</b>	Karina Findlay	813-476-9632
<b>Philoptochos:</b>	Katherine Sakkis	813-309-1073
<b>Stewardship:</b>	Chris Kyros	757-672-1920
	George Mitseas	813-748-1220
<b>Sunday School:</b>	Vickie Peckham	813-758-3102
<b>Ushers</b>	Pete Trakas	813-505-2193
<b>Veterans/1st Responders</b>	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
<b>Welcoming Ministry:</b>	Maria Xenick	813-765-3587
<b>Women's Bible Study:</b>	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-876-8830
<b>Young Adults</b>	Aris Rogers	813-309-5525
<b>Young at Heart:</b>	Dora Morgan	813-613-3738
<b>Youth Protection:</b>	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855