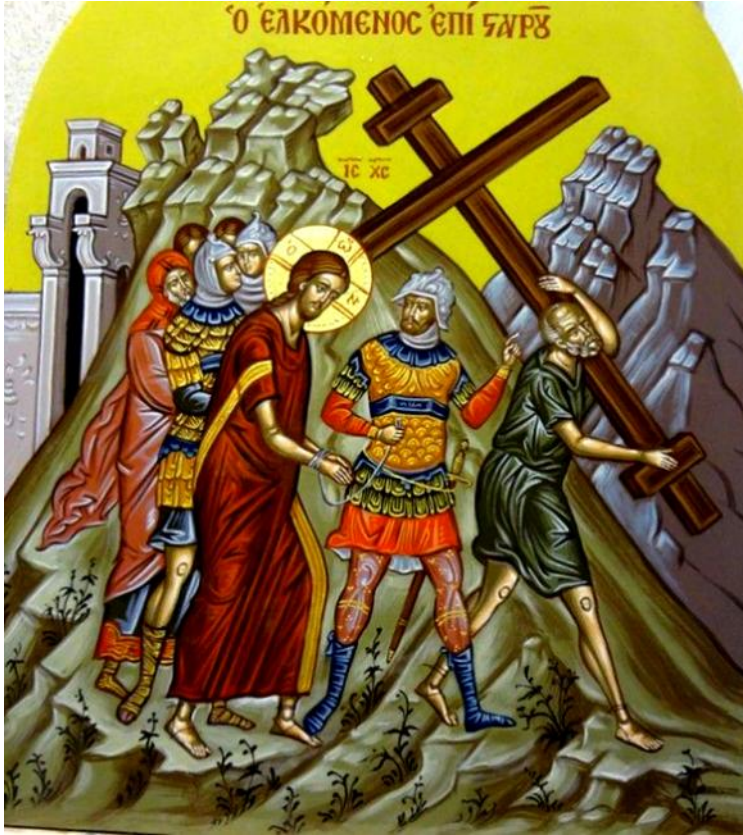


ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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



~Sunday of The Holy Cross- Sunday, March 23~

SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 2025

*Sunday of the Holy Cross; The Holy Righteous Martyr Nicon and His 199
Disciples; Luke the New Martyr of Mytilene*

Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (Proistamenos)
Fr. John Stefero (Associate Priest)
Fr. Stratton Dorozenski (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 of the Holy Cross; The Holy Righteous Martyr Nicon and His 199 Disciples; Luke the New Martyr of Mytilene

Apolytikion for the Holy Cross:

Save O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Give victory to those who battle evil and protect us all by Your Holy Cross.

Entrance Hymn:

Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His footstool, for Holy is He. Save us O Son of God, Who rose from the dead, to Thee we sing: Alleluia.

Apolytikion of the Resurrection:

When the angelic powers appeared at the tomb and soldiers guarding You became as though dead and standing by Your sepulchre was Mary seeking Your pure and sacred Body. For You did vanquish Hades and uncorrupted by its touch, You came unto the virgin woman bestowing the gift of Life. O You who rose from the dead, Lord, we give glory to You.

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:

Victorious Lady, mighty champion, defending us, we your servants, now inscribe to you this hymn of thanks, for you rescued us from suffering and tribulation. Theotokos, with your power that can never fail, keep us safe from every danger our whole life long. That we may cry to you: Rejoice, O Bride unwedded.

Trisagion Hymn:

Your Cross we Venerate O Master and Your Holy Resurrection we glorify.

Communion Hymn: (Psalm 4:6)

Let the Light of Your face shine on us, O Lord. Alleluia.

The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is celebrated on the five Sundays of Lent. After the Great Entrance, p.30 in the Liturgy Book, turn to p.63 for the parts unique to the Liturgy of St. Basil.

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.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, a procession is made around the interior of the Church and concludes on the Solea. It can be found on p.152.

READINGS FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 23

EPISTLE LESSON:

O LORD, SAVE YOUR PEOPLE AND BLESS YOUR INHERITANCE.

VERSE: TO YOU, O LORD, I HAVE CRIED, O MY GOD.

THE READING IS FROM ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 4:14-16; 5:1-6

BRETHREN, since we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since He Himself is beset with weakness. Because of this He is bound to offer sacrifice for His own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon Himself, but He is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt Himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by Him who said to Him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as He says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

GOSPEL LESSON: MARK 8:34-38; 9:1

The Lord said: "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? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

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

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 ENTERAINED *angels in unwares*.

HEBREWS 13:2

MINISTRY NEWS & UPDATES

UPCOMING COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE

Today's Coffee Hour Sponsored by the Choir.

MARCH 30

Greek Independence Day Program

APRIL 6

Community Outreach/Food Pantry

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!



PARISH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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.**



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!



STEWARDSHIP REPORT

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

***Thank You to every family and individual who has made their Stewardship Pledge for 2025.
Your support makes everything here, possible.***

Please let us hear from you today, if you haven't submitted your pledge form.

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 March the date is: Monday, March 24.**

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 March the dates are: Tuesday, March 25 & Monday, March 31.**

Men’s Group Today- Our men’s group will meet **today** 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 March be “Getting the most out of Holy Week”. Please mark down our date for men’s group for this academic year – Sunday, May 4.

Food Pantry Update

Jesus said, ‘They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.’ Matthew 14:16
We are grateful for your donations to the Food Pantry! Keep in mind, the First Sunday of Each Month is our main donation day, although we welcome your gifts anytime! Please mark your calendar for April 6th when Community Outreach will partner with the Food Pantry to offer Coffee Hour. Look for our dedicated drop-off, to the left, inside the church hall entrance. If you know of someone in need or wish to take a bag of groceries to go, we can make that happen! If you have ideas to share or wish to get involved, please call or text Sandra Pappas at 813-785-3747

Divine Liturgy to begin at 9:45 a.m. during Great Lent-

Because we celebrate the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great on the Sundays of Great Lent, which is slightly longer than the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:45 a.m. beginning next Sunday, March 9, through Palm Sunday.

Fr. Stavros to be out of town-Fr. Stavros has been invited to be the retreat leader for the National Archon Retreats that are being held the last weekend of March and the first weekend of April. Fr. Stavros will be out of town March 27-30 and again April 3-6. Fr. John will preside over the services in his absence.

Prayer List: Lord Jesus Christ, Physician of our Souls and Bodies, visit and heal your servants: Athena Felley, Melissa Romero, Sandra Reyes, Miltiadis, Konstantinos Triantafyllopoulos; Kostadinos Booras; Michael I, 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, Toula Tsaros, Nellie Pringle, Yolanda Webb, Angela Bougas, Ron, Jason Vickers, Rex Garrison, Ann Demas, Christina Noel Kouzes Houck, 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 Blankebaker, 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

March 23
Holy Cross
(All 9th-12th boys should stay in church)



March 30
St. John of the Ladder - Faith

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

UPCOMING SERVICES & EVENTS

SUNDAY, MARCH 23	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS</u> ORTHROS 8:30A.M. DIVINE LITURGY (ALTAR BOYS TODAY- GOYANS ONLY) MEN'S GROUP</p>	<p>9:45A.M. 5:00P.M.</p>
MONDAY, MARCH 24	WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY	10:00A.M.
TUESDAY, MARCH 25	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS</u> ORTHROS 8:45A.M. DIVINE LITURGY GREAT COMPLINE BIBLE STUDY</p>	<p>10:00A.M. 5:30P.M. 6:30P.M.</p>
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26	<p>9TH HOUR PRE- SANCTIFIED LITURGY LENTEN DINNER/DISCUSSION (<i>Philoptochos</i>)</p>	<p>5:30P.M. 6:00P.M. 7:15P.M.</p>
THURSDAY, MARCH 27	CHOIR	7:15P.M.
FRIDAY, MARCH 28	<p>9TH HOUR PRE- SANCTIFIED LITURGY SALUTATIONS TO THE VIRGIN MARY 4TH STANZA</p>	<p>9:30A.M. 10:00A.M. 6:30P.M.</p>
SATURDAY, MARCH 29	<p>ADULT GREEK SCHOOL CHILDREN'S GREEK SCHOOL YOUNG AT HEART</p>	1:00-3:00P.M.
SUNDAY, MARCH 30	<p>ORTHROS 8:30A.M. DIVINE LITURGY (ALTAR BOYS - ST. MARK) GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY PROGRAM</p>	9:45A.M.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT ST. JOHN

Women's Bible Study
 Leader: Fr. Stavros
Monday, March 24 at 10:00am

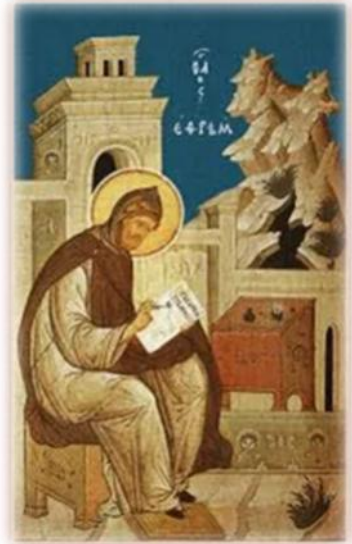
Tuesday Night Bible Study
 Leader: Fr. John
Tuesday, March 25 at 6:30pm

YOUNG AT HEART MARCH GATHERING

Saturday, March 29th
1pm-3pm

Lenten Potluck Luncheon
Presentation:
The Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

Contact Presvytera Denise no later than **March 23rd** with number attending and dish you will bring to share at the potluck.



Arise & Build
"LET US ARISE AND BUILD"
A SIX-WEEK LENTEN STUDY
JOIN US WEDNESDAY EVENINGS DURING GREAT LENT

MARCH 5
"LET US"

"O come, let us worship
and bow down, let us
kneel before the Lord, our
Maker."

Psalm 96:6

DINNER SPONSORED BY
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

MARCH 12
"ARISE"

"Arise, shine; for your
light has come, and the
glory of the Lord has
risen upon you."

Isaiah 60:1

DINNER SPONSORED BY
THE CHOIR

MARCH 19
"BUILD"

"Unless the Lord builds
the house, those who
build it labor in vain."

Psalms 127:1

DINNER SPONSORED BY THE BIBLE
STUDIES, WARDEN MINISTRY AND
THE WELCOME MINISTRY

MARCH 26
"STRENGTHEN"

"But the Lord is faithful;
he will strengthen you
and guard you from evil."

1 Thessalonians 5:1

DINNER SPONSORED BY
THE PHILOTOCHOS

APRIL 2
"THEIR HANDS"

"All these rely upon their
hands, and each is
skillful in his own work."

Isaiah 10:3

DINNER SPONSORED
BY AHEPA/DAUGHTERS

APRIL 9
"GOOD WORK"

"Comfort your hearts and
establish them in every
good work and word."

1 Thessalonians 5:17

DINNER SPONSORED BY THE
YOUNG ADULTS AND THE
YOUNG AT HEART

EACH WEDNESDAY EVENING SCHEDULE:

6:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy
7:15 pm Lenten Dinner provided by one of our ministries
7:45 pm Presentation by Father Stavros
8:05 pm Small group discussion
8:30 pm Concluding remarks and closing prayer



GREAT LENT 2025
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
TAMPA, FL

ST. JOHN'S BOOKSTORE



Throughout Great Lent our bookstore is offering a wide selection of books focused on the many ways we can grow spiritually during the Lenten period. Daily meditations, prayer books, Lives of the Saints, guides to preparation for Confession, Holy Week service books, and Lenten cookbooks are just some of those featured. Our bookstore is open Sundays following Divine Liturgy. Stop in and see the many items available.



~Holy Week
Service Books
Available Now
in our
Bookstore ~

Parish Priest:	Rev. Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis (frstav@gmail.com)	813-394-1038
Associate Priest:	Rev. Fr. John Stefero (jwstefero50@hotmail.com)	678-637-4425
Retired Priest in Residence:	Rev. Fr. Stratton Dorozenski	813-876-8830
Ministry Coordinator/Chanter:	Maria Xenick (Mariapxenick@stjohntpa.org)	813-765-3587
Bookkeeper:	Debbie Bowe (Debbie@stjohntpa.org)	813-876-8830
Administrative Assistant :	Elli Kehagias (office@stjohntpa.org)	813-876-8830
Parish Council:	Parish Council	
	Alexis Scarfogliero, President	813-892-1599
	George Ameres, Vice President	941-720-3494
	Marilyn Sandborn, Secretary	813-760-6289
	George Chagaris, Treasurer	727-420-1920
	John Carter	813-376-9196
	Peggy George	813-727-5587
	Peter George	781-910-9971
	Tony Magos	813-957-3206
	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855
	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
	John Zelatis	813-727-2271
Arise & Build Expansion Project:	Mike Xenick, Chair	813-340-8737
	Euripides Panos, Vice Chair	813-352-3972
Adult Greek School:	Magda Myer	813-523-5771
AHEPA:	James Sakaris	301-529-8857
Altar Angels:	Kalliope Chagaris	813-789-4134
Bible Study:	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
Bookstore:	Pres. Denise Stefero	678-464-4833
Choir:	Tara Swartzbaugh, Director	813-313-0439
	Ruth Losovitz, Organist	727-688-2782
College Outreach:	Kathy Kaburis	813-240-6513
Community Outreach:	Greg Melton	813-967-2074
Dance Groups:	H XAPA 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
Daughters of Penelope:	Ourania Stephanides	813-546-4711
Festival:	Mike Xenick	813-340-8737
Finance Committee:	Gary Ward	813-846-3898
Food Pantry:	Sandra Pappas	813-785-3747
Gasparilla Parking:	Fady Hakim	678-294-7732
GOYA:	Michael & Bessie Palios	813-523-0346
Greek Festival:	Mike Xenick	813-340-8737
Hope/Joy:	George & Zackie Ameres	813-245-3813
Joy Tweens	Maraquet Edquid	813-422-8963
Junior Olympics:	Dwight Forde	727-685-9028
Men's Fellowship:	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-394-1038
Nursing Ministry:	Marcelle Triantafilou	612-396-5026
Oratorical Festival:	Peggy Bradshaw	727-244-1374
Photography Ministry:	Karina Findlay	813-476-9632
Philoptochos:	Katherine Sakkis	813-309-1073
Stewardship:	George Mitseas	813-748-1220
Sunday School:	Vickie Peckham	813-758-3102
12 Disciples:	Theo Panopoulos	248-867-3697
Ushers:	Pete Trakas	813-505-2193
Technology:	Mike Wenditz	813-5503099
Veterans/1st Responders :	Fr. John Stefero	678-637-4425
Website/Social Media/App:	Miguel Piniero Jr	305-632-4871
Welcoming Ministry:	Skip Higdon	813-391-6915
Women's Bible Study:	Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis	813-876-8830
Young Adults:	Aris Rogers	813-309-5525
Young at Heart:	Dora Morgan	813-613-3738
Youth Protection:	Suzanne Pileggi	813-244-5855