

# St. Stefanos Greek Orthodox Church



## The Light



ISSUE 8 AUGUST 2020

### Looking into August

#### August 1st

Food Pantry  
10:00 am - 12:00 pm

#### August 2nd

9:00 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### August 5th

6:30 pm Bible Study

#### August 6th

Holy Transfiguration  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### August 7th

6:30 pm Small Paraklesis

#### August 9th

9:00 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### August 11th

7:00 pm Parish Council Meeting

#### August 12th

6:30 pm Bible study

#### August 14th

6:30 pm Vespers for Dormition

#### August 15th

Dormition of the Theotokos  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### August 16th

9:00 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### August 19th

Bible Study  
6:30 pm

#### August 22nd

Food Pantry  
10:00 am - 12:00 pm

#### August 23rd

9:00 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### August 26th

6:30 Bible Study

#### August 29th

Beheading of St. John the Baptist  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### August 30th

9:00 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

Very Rev. Fr. John W. Stefero, Proistamenos

Cell # 678-637-4425

Email: [jwstefero50@hotmail.com](mailto:jwstefero50@hotmail.com)

Rev. Deacon John Pantelis

3600 76th Street North · St. Petersburg, FL 33710 - [www.ststefanos.org](http://www.ststefanos.org) 727-345-8235 Email: [office@st.stefanos.org](mailto:office@st.stefanos.org)



## FROM THE DESK OF FR. STEFERO

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

CHRIST IS IN OUR MIDST! HE IS AND EVER SHALL BE!

*“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you.”*  
(Deuteronomy 31:6)

Today, due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, we can feel anxious and uncertain about the future. Questions abound. Will students be able to return to school in the fall? When will people be able to return to their jobs? When can we have social gatherings such as our church fellowship hour again? Is a vaccine forthcoming?

We may even feel that God is somehow absent in all of this. But Holy Scripture, such as Deuteronomy 31:6 quoted above, tells us differently.

Throughout the Bible many people heard the reassuring words that “God would never leave you nor forsake you.” First, Joshua heard them when Moses commissioned him to lead Israel across the Jordan to conquer the Promised Land from the pagan nations that dwelt there. Solomon prayed this promise over the people of Israel in his prayer of dedication over the temple. The disciples heard a similar promise when Jesus commissioned them to take the gospel to all nations as He told them, “I am with you always even to the end of the age.”

These uncertain times call for us to trust in the Lord to an even greater extent. We can do this by first *‘keeping the faith.’* God is faithful to us and we now need to be faithful to Him. We can regularly remind ourselves that “faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). God is in charge of every situation and we can rely on Him to take care of this one.

Second, we can *‘exercise courage.’* We can do so because we know that God is with us always. Psalm 46 reminds us that “God is our refuge and power; a help in afflictions that severely befall us; therefore, we will not fear when the earth is troubled.”

Third, we can *‘practice spiritual discipline.’* Keep praying, keep reading Holy Scripture, and return to church to offer worship to our Lord. Uncertain times such as these can bring us closer to God if we take advantage of the opportunity.

All of the current uncertainty will be dealt with *IN GOD’S TIME!* Till then, may we remain faithful, courageous and spiritually disciplined.

With love in Christ,  
Father John

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - NICKY STAMOULIS**

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Dear St. Stefanos Parishioners and Friends,

I hope this message finds you and your family well. Covid-19 has affected all in one way or another. However, together we will stay strong and we will survive. It is times like these that we realize how strong we can truly be. We also need to stay positive. Here are six ways we can do this.

- 1. Have Faith in God's Plans*
- 2. Put it in God's Hands*
- 3. Practice Gratitude Daily*
- 4. Focus on Helping Others*
- 5. Surround Yourself with Laughter*
- 6. Write it Out, Talk it Out*

Some of you feel comfortable to come back to church for Sunday Divine Liturgy. Thank you for remembering to wear your mask and bringing your information. We continue to take temperatures and ask if you not feeling well please stay home. You can also follow the Divine Liturgy on YouTube, St. Stefanos Live Stream.

We continue to make improvements. You may have noticed the carpet in the Altar has been removed in order to make some changes. The parking spaces and curbs have been painted and all the sheds and shelters are repaired and painted.

The organization to the Educational Building continues, thanks to Kathy Foltz and Christine Klimis. Last week the Nursery was painted, thanks to Vicky Anadiotis, JoAnn Diveris and Nancy Kavalierakis.

We continue to help others through our Humanitarian Donations and our very successful Food Pantry which is open twice a month. Thank you to the many people who come to help on Saturdays.

Our Humanitarian donations for August: Beth Dillinger Foundation \$500, Florida Dream Center \$250, Ancient Faith Radio \$1,000, and Ages Initiatives Inc (Orthodox Music & Services) \$500.

We are also updating our stewardship list by making calls to many of our stewards, to make the necessary changes.

Stay healthy and enjoy the summer months.

With Love in Christ,

*Nicky*

## **FROM THE CHURCH FATHERS**

“When you pray to God in time of temptation do not say, ‘Take this or that away from me’, but pray like this: ‘O Jesus Christ, sovereign Master, help me and do not let me sin against You...’”

Abba Isaiah the Solitary

Every affliction tests our will, showing whether it is inclined to good or evil. That is why an unforeseen affliction is called a test, because it enables a man to test his hidden desires”

Saint Mark the Ascetic

### **PRAYER FOR PROTECTION FROM THE CORONAVIRUS**

O God Almighty, Lord of heaven and earth, and of all creation visible and invisible, in Your ineffable goodness, look down upon Your people gathered in Your name.

Be our helper and defender in this day of affliction.

You know our weakness. You hear our cry in repentance and contrition of heart.

O Lord who loves mankind deliver us from the threat of the corona virus.

Send Your Angel to watch over us and protect us.

Grant health and recovery to those suffering from this virus.

Guide the hands of physicians, and preserve those who are healthy

that we may continue to serve You in peace and glorify

Your most honorable and majestic Name,

of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

His Grace, Bishop Alexis of Bethesda



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS <sup>OF</sup> ATLANTA  
ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΑΤΛΑΝΤΑΣ

June 19, 2020

St. Stefanos Greek Orthodox Church  
3600 76th Street North  
St Petersburg, FL 33710

Dear Parish family,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and all your Metropolis family, please allow us to take this opportunity to extend to you our warmest and most heartfelt appreciation for donating to our Diakonia Retreat Center, and putting your spiritual thoughts into practice.

This letter serves to acknowledge the receipt of your check:

**AMOUNT: \$1,000**

**CHECK #9281; dated 6/5/2020**

Thank you again for your support of our Metropolis. It is truly appreciated.

Faithfully,

Nick Kostopoulos  
Correspondence Secretary



July 13, 2020

Saint Stefanos Greek Orthodox Church  
Attn: Very Rev. John W. Stefero  
3600 76th Street North  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710

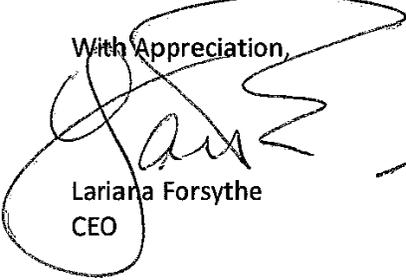
Dear Father Stefero,

Thank you for supporting CASA with your donation of \$250.00. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed many health and economic hardships in our society with one of the most severe impacts found on survivors of domestic violence. You see, in April alone CASA saw a 49% increase in calls to our emergency hotline from victims who were not "safer-at-home". Our team is doing everything possible to remain on the frontlines with this increased need for our services. Your donation ensures we can continue to:

- Maximize the safety of those victimized by the violence
- End community tolerance of domestic violence
- Assist the judicial system in holding abusers accountable for their abuse and promote fair and equitable treatment for persons affected by domestic violence

As we all begin to find our "new normal" we must remain committed to our vision of a society free from domestic violence. Thank you for standing with us as we continue to serve the most vulnerable members of our community. If you have any questions or comments, please feel welcome to contact us at [info@casa-stpete.org](mailto:info@casa-stpete.org) or 727-895-4912.

With Appreciation,

  
Lariana Forsythe  
CEO

*Thank you for  
your support  
of CASA's work!*

NO GOODS OR SERVICES WERE RECEIVED BY THE DONOR IN EXCHANGE FOR THIS GIFT. CASA IS REGISTERED WITH THE STATE UNDER THE SOLICITATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS ACT 1992. CASA'S REGISTRATION NUMBER IS SC-02116. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING 1-800-435-7352 WITHIN FLORIDA. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. 100% OF EACH CONTRIBUTION RECEIVED IS RETAINED BY CASA.

Help end violence: Stand Up To Silence.



Community Action Stops Abuse, P.O. Box 414, St. Petersburg, FL 33731 □ Tax ID: 59-2114359 □ Fax: 727-821-7101 □ [www.casa-stpete.org](http://www.casa-stpete.org)  
Office & 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline: 727-895-4912 / TTY: 727-828-1269



**“For it is in giving that we receive.” – Francis of Assisi**

July 21, 2020

St. Stefanos Greek Orthodox  
Rev. John W. Stefero  
3600 76th St N  
St Petersburg, FL 33710-1262

Dear Rev. Stefero,

Thank you for your gift of **\$500.00** on **6/26/2020**. Generous gifts from friends like you provide the financial and moral support needed to continue our mission of improving lives and changing life stories.

Thanks to your kindness, we are able to provide abused, neglected and abandoned children the therapeutic treatment they need to heal in a structured and nurturing environment. At our campus, the Kids Village and Adolescents in Motherhood cottages serve as a safe haven for sixty-six boys and girls, ages 0-17, allowing them to heal, thrive, and create meaningful childhood memories

Your generosity demonstrates your commitment to our work of making a positive impact in the lives of at-risk children and families through our programs and initiatives. We at the Children's Home Network are continuously inspired by the dedication and generosity of donors like yourself.

Again, thank you so much. There is no way to fully express our gratitude. Without your support, we would not be able to provide these services to our community's most vulnerable children.

Warmest regards,

Frank Massaro  
Chief of Development



Children's Home Network has been awarded GuideStar's Platinum status – the highest level of recognition they offer. As a Platinum Participant, GuideStar has determined that Children's Home Network meets the highest level of accountability and transparency to its donors and is focused on measuring and sharing our progress and results with our donors.

*No goods or services were provided in exchange for this contribution*

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION (#CH894) AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. 100% OF ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE RECEIVED BY THE CHILDREN'S HOME NETWORK. THE CHILDREN'S HOME NETWORK DOES NOT SELL, RENT OR OTHERWISE PROVIDE THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF CONTRIBUTORS TO ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION OR BUSINESS

10909 Memorial Highway | Tampa, FL 33615  
Phone: 813.855.4435 | Fax: 813.855.8640  
[www.childrenshomenetwork.org](http://www.childrenshomenetwork.org)



## GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

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July 8, 2020

Fr. John W. Stefero  
St. Stefanos Greek Orthodox Church  
3600 76th St. N.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710-1262

Dear Fr. John,

On behalf of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros and the entire Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, I would like to thank you and St. Stefanos Greek Orthodox Church for the generous gift of \$250.00 dated June 12, 2020 to support the Covid-19 Relief Fund established to help assist individuals who are experiencing financial hardship as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Your gift is a tangible testament to your faith and devotion and makes our outreach efforts and ministries possible. We truly appreciate your magnanimous generosity.

With your support, the Archdiocese continues to fulfill Her mission to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, guide the life of the faithful in the United States, and advance Orthodoxy throughout the nation and the world. We are truly blessed to have caring people like you support this sacred work, which has been entrusted to us by our Lord.

Again, many thanks for your contribution. May you and all your loved ones enjoy the bountiful blessings of the Almighty.

Faithfully in His Service,

Rev. Fr. Andreas Vithoulkas  
Chancellor

*In accordance with the IRS, we confirm that no goods or services were provided in exchange for this gift. This letter is your official tax receipt please retain it for your records.*

## **FOOD PANTRY**

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Due to the generosity of our parishioners, our Food Pantry will begin serving those in need TWO days a month now, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday. It is not surprising that our church family has rallied around this ministry. Providing for those in need is a primary concern of all Christians and a way of showing gratitude for all the blessings we have been given. That being said, **we need your help!** Our pantry was very busy last week and we are in short supply of everything! Below is a list of our most-needed items.

- **Oatmeal**
- **Coffee**
- **Cereal**
- **Canned beans**
- **Rice - small bags or boxes**
- **Ramen**
- **Soups**
- **Cooking oil**
- **Flour**
- **Sugar**
- **Spaghetti**
- **Spaghetti Sauce**
- **Canned fruit**
- **Macaroni & Cheese**
- **Canned meats: tuna, chicken, Spam, Vienna sausage**
- **Canned veggies: corn, peas, beans, mixed veggies**

No other items are needed at this time. Please no meds, vitamins, baby food, diapers or toothpaste at this time. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sandy Johnson at 727-542-9700 or Maria Alberty at 330-398-0733

## **TREASURER'S MESSAGE - KATHY KOKKINAKOS**

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Dear Cherished Members of the St. Stefanos Family,

Christ is in our midst! He is and ever shall be!

I want to send you my heartfelt "THANK YOU" for your continued donations and stewardship during this pandemic. It's been difficult for some of us in our Parish and I'm deeply touched by your generosity during this unfortunate and very challenging time.

If you, or anyone you know is in need, please contact Father John at our St. Stefanos Office (727) 345-8235 or directly on his cell at (678) 637-4425. He has been in regular contact with parishioners and will continue to provide the pastoral care that is needed.

I pray that you will be able to continue your generosity. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or our Bookkeeper, Alan Field. We will be glad to work with you.

May God's loving mercy, grace and blessings be with all of you during this Paschal season. May you remain safe and we look forward to gathering again as a community.

With all my love,

Kathy Kokkinakos

St. Stefanos Treasurer

# Philoptochos, Choir, Prayer Group

## Philoptochos

Hope you are all doing well, safe at home! Despite being in quarantine, the Executive Board has been having virtual meetings, and planning for when we are all able to be together again. Until a vaccine for Covid 19 is available and people are getting vaccinated, we will probably not be having any get togethers. Meetings are on hold until you are informed; fortunately, our elections fall next spring.

In the meanwhile, Visiting Angels led by Joanna Petsalis are making phone calls instead of home visits. College student and Seminarian letters will restart in the fall when the next school year begins. The Food Pantry is busier than ever. Philoptochos has made a donation to Orthodox Prison Ministry.

National Philoptochos will be hosting the National Convention virtually by Zoom on August 21-22. The registration is \$55. Maria Gregory will be "going"; we are allowed 3 delegates, so if anyone else is interested in participating, please let Maria G know, and she will email you the registration link. We encourage all of our church members to join with us in order to fulfill the mission of the Philoptochos-- to help the poor, promote the charitable purposes of the Church, preserve the Orthodox faith, and promote participation in the activities of the St. Stefanos community. All are welcome!

## Choir

"Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them, those who suffer evil, As though you yourselves were suffering " Hebrews 13:3

Please join our liaison to this wonderful outreach ministry John Arambages as he shared with us last Sunday live the ministry's mission and goals. We are blessed to add another important ministry to our family here at St. Stefanos .

On behalf of myself and the church choir at St. Stefanos we would like to welcome Dr Tori Stein as our librarian for the Tikey Zes project and blessings to her as she celebrates her birthday this year. John Arambages

## Prayer group

Our St. Stefanos Prayer Group meets every Friday at 10:00 am! The group prays for ALL of our St. Stefanos' families as well as individuals with specific intentions. If you would like to submit the name(s) of anyone to the group, please call the Office and give the names to the secretary. This is a vital ministry of our community and we thank the members for dedicated service.

# August, 2020 UPDATES IN THE SUNDAY BULLETIN

									1 Food Pantry 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
2 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	3	4	5 6:30 pm Bible Study	6 10:00 am Divine Lit- urgy Holy Transfiguration	7 6:30 pm Small Paraklesis	8			
9 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy GOYA Advisors' Mtg . ( after Divine Liturgy)	10	11 7:00 pm P.C. Meeting	12 6:30 pm Bible Study	13	14 6:30 pm Vespers for Dormition	15 Dormition of the Theotokos 10:00 am Divine Liturgy			
16 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	17	18 Election Day	19 6:30 pm Bible Study	20	21	22 Food Pantry 10:00 am - 12:00 pm			
23 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	24	25	26 6:30 pm Bible Study	27	28	29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist 10:00 am Divine Liturgy			
30 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	31								

**ST. STEFANOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

3600 76th Street North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33710

[www.ststefanos.org](http://www.ststefanos.org) • E-mail: [office@ststefanos.org](mailto:office@ststefanos.org)