

MAY 2017



# Voice of St. George

SAINT GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
OF THE DESERT

74-109 LARREA ST., PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA



Inside this issue

## THE SACREDNESS OF CHILDHOOD

This is the "Year of the Protection of the Sacredness of Childhood," as proclaimed by His All-Holiness, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople. Among other things, His All-Holiness pointed to the fact that children are gifts from God, not "annoyances," or "things" to be exploited. Christ God embraced the little children.

As we celebrate the **Feast of the Ascension of our Lord on May 25th** this year, we are reminded that Christ our True God sanctified human flesh at every stage of human development and life, clothing it with all that is divine. As Christ took humanity into His own being with His Incarnation, He places humanity in Heaven with His Ascension. "[He took] on the form of a servant, becoming conformed to the fashion of our lowliness, so that He might make us conformable to the

*Image of His glory,*" according to the "Thanksgiving Prayer" from the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil. Ascending into Heaven in His humanity, our Lord becomes the "first-fruit" of human flesh in Paradise, making a way for all of us who bear flesh to enter the Eternal Kingdom of God.

Taking on "the Image of His glory" is the purpose of human life. Fulfilling this purpose is a life-long journey that begins upon birth. Guiding children along this journey requires spiritual efforts on the part of Orthodox Christian parents, grandparents and godparents. They mold the spiritual life of the little children through teaching and, indeed, by way of example.

In dedicating our year to the "sacredness of childhood" we give special thought to our ministry to the youth. Beyond just a year, however, we dedi-

cate our whole lives to Christ our God in our ministry centered in the life of the Orthodox home.

As for *how* to do this, we turn to a recent book by Dr. Philip Mammalakis, entitled, *Parenting Toward the Kingdom*.

The principles that Dr. Mamalakis shares apply to any relationship—be it our relationship with our children and grandchildren; or, our relationship with our spouse and relatives; or, our relationships with friends and parishioners. Given, however, that children are born with total innocence, what they hear and see from us is critical in terms of forming their own way of looking at life. The sacredness of their lives is best preserved through prayer and spiritual life on our part, both as individuals and, collectively, as a church community.

One of Dr. Mamalakis'

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*Golf Tourny & Feast Day Photos, included.*

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key principles is this: **there is joy in the virtue of obedience.** In this world *obedience* is fundamental in terms of nurturing any relationship. When parents are obedient to their own parents; their bosses; their Church's teachings, as well as to the calling of fulfilling their children's needs, they are in a good position to truly teach obedience. Obedience is not a game of "Simon says." Obedience is a form of great respect toward God and others. There are many spiritual and practical rewards to be found in love-based obedience to the needs of others and to the Commandments of God. I like Dr. Mamalakis' words on this point: *"We teach the joy of obedience by helping our children see that obedience is not something just for children. Obedience to God's commandments is the path for all, parents and children alike...[seeing] their parents living in obedience to God, they internalize obedience to God as the path of life."* (pg. 264).

Tied to the joy of obedience, Dr. Mamalakis notes that there is also **joy in repentance.** Our happiness depends on the virtue of correcting our errors and seeking forgiveness for them. We all need many "second chances" in life. Says, Dr. Mamalakis: *"Children learn how to handle their mistakes by watching how we handle our own... When we repent we show our children both the right path and how to get back on the path when we fall off."* (pg. 288).

Dr. Mamalakis' book, *Parenting Toward the Kingdom* is a great book, both for helping parents with their job of parenting, but also for helping every Orthodox Christian live a truly spiritual way of life. For parents specifically, he suggests, *"...[Let] our children experience the love of God in the home and encounter Christ and His Church in the center of it."* (pg. 317).

As Christ carries His human nature into Heaven with His Ascension, His Divine nature is accessible to us through the grace of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord guides us through our prayers asking for Divine guidance. We are then going along the path of a sincere Christian life-style, which in itself is critical in terms of meeting our own needs as well as honoring the sacredness of childhood.

+FR. THEODORE

## METROPOLITAN GERASIMOS: ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS TO ST. GEORGE PARISHIONERS ON APRIL 23, 2017



Marking an anniversary is important in the life of a community. We need moments like these to reflect on what has been accomplished over the years and it is important to remember and thank those who served the community.

Remembering the days when you opened the church edifice and began to worship in your own house of God is significant. That moment over 20 years ago was an important step, demonstrating that the community had matured. It was also a major commitment on your part, especially financially, but even more importantly pastorally, because it meant that you were establishing a permanent Greek Orthodox presence in Palm Desert.

That permanence meant that you would be serving the Greek Orthodox people that lived here year around, as well as the many "snow birds" that spend their winters here. It meant that you would have to develop many programs of education; of philanthropy; of service, and of fellowship to keep the community engaged and thriving. The dedication of the many members of the Parish Council under the guidance of the clergy was essential to that permanence. Importantly, it meant that the community was united and shared the same vision for the parish.

And we can see the many accomplishments on all these fronts: a lovely church temple, providing you with a place of worship; the many outreach programs in the community, such as your work with women to promote life. You have active groups, such as the Coloring Book Group and the Bible Study. And what is impressive is that you continue to add ways to serve, such as the fundraiser for the poor and your partnerships with other religious communities. Both of these tell me that you are creative; have energy; and are willing to work with others to bear wit-

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*METROPOLITAN GERASIMOS' ADDRESS, cont.*

ness to the Gospel. Yes, you are a smaller community in numbers, but what matters most is the quality of the work that you do. And that is what we celebrate today.

But, let me say a little more about the main reason for this anniversary—the construction of your house of worship. As I said before, this was a major step in your maturity as a community, demonstrating permanence and commitment on your part. Building a temple for Orthodox worship is no small accomplishment. It provides the centerpiece of your community life, a place for prayer and worship, such as having a space conducive to Holy Week; a place to mark important transitions in life—from birth to death and events in between. The church temple gives a parish its identity, because we maintain our identity and understand who we are as Greek Orthodox Christians when we gather for prayer and worship; Liturgy and the Sacraments. All the rest that we do in a parish are important, but what keeps us connected is our Faith (and Heritage) that we find and experience within the walls of our church. So, those who made the commitment to open the church 20 years ago made a commitment to maintain your identity as Greek Orthodox Christians. We must remember those individuals in our prayer; salute and congratulate their foresight.

By recognizing them, we will name them as role models for others to follow. While they are not “retiring” from their ministry, one day they probably will and there must be new people to follow in their footsteps to continue the good work that has been done all these years.

And at an anniversary like this, after we remember and thank all the people for their work these years, after all the looking back over the years, we must also take time to look forward. You have a legacy these past 20 years of accomplishments. What will the next 20, 30, or even more years be for the St. George community? This anniversary is the opportunity to set the foundation and the momentum for the generations ahead.

**ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT**

The Annual St. George Golf Tournament was, as always, a great success, grossing \$18,767 and, more importantly, cementing bonds of Christian fellowship and friendship among the many participants. Expenses for the tournament will be finalized over the next few weeks, allowing for a final Golf Tournament financial report, indicating total income, expenses and net totals, which will be reported in June.

The Golf Tournament committee, chaired by **George Argyros**, succeeded in providing a wonderful two-day event.

On Friday, April 21st, golfers teed-off at 12:30 p.m. at Desert Willow Golf Resort in Palm Desert, braving afternoon temperatures closing in on 100 degrees. The Friday tournament was “stroke play,” featuring many skilled golfers. Prior to the Friday night steak dinner, **Christian Jelmborg**, founder of the Street Life Project of Coachella Valley met with **Rhonda Latkovic** and **Fr. Ted**. Christian was presented check of \$725 raised from our First Annual Annunciation Feast Day Luncheon for the Poor, held on Saturday, March 25th.

On Saturday, April 22nd, golfers assembled again at Desert Willow Golf Resort to be ready for the early morning tee-off at 8:00 a.m. Saturday’s tournament was “Scramble.” The winning Women’s foursome was: **Carol Speliopoulos, Penny Swartz, Gayle Verst and Terri Tallen**. The winning Men’s foursome was: **Steve Jaffe, Don Blanchard, James Romanowitz and Bill Stevens**. **His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos** delivered an inspiring address to St. George parishioners at the Saturday night Greek-Style lamb dinner.

**Rhonda Latkovic** headed up the organization and presentation of the raffles and silent auction for both Friday night and Saturday night events.

On Sunday, April 23rd, **His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos** presented **George Argyros** a St. George Appreciation Plaque in recognition of his years of service for the parish.

## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS



Congratulations to our new Board of Directors for 2017 - 2019 elected on Tuesday, April 18 at our General Meeting. The new Board Members are:

Executive Board

President.....Linda Kallis  
 1st Vice-President.....Rhonda Latkovic  
 2nd Vice-President.....Linda Petalas  
 Recording Secretary.....Jean Chronis-Kuhn  
 Correspondence Secretary.....Gloria Lehman  
 Treasurer..... Tina Veroulis

Committees

Welfare and Visitation &

Phone Squad.....Emily Tcharos

Memorials & Baking.....Lula Valissarakos

Programs and Charities.....Pam Zaverdas

Coffee Supplies Coordinator.....Linda Bozigian

The new Board was sworn in by Father Ted at the meeting. Board Members who have retired are Tillie Lockshire, Carol Lyons and Annette Lewis. We thank them for their service.

Tillie Lockshire was honored at the meeting for her many years of service on the Board of Directors as the Assistant Treasurer and Coffee Supplies Coordinator. There was a cake and Tillie was presented with an Icon. We will miss her as she is moving out of the area.

Thank you to the Nominating Committee for researching candidates and running the elections. The committee consisted of Alice Pulos, Pres. Petula and Pam Zaverdas.

Our Easter Bake Sale was a success with us making \$2,202.68. Thank you for your support. **Lula Valissarakos** was in charge of the baking with members preparing, baking and packaging the bread and cookies. **Tina Veroulis** was in charge of the orders, tracking expenses and income. Give a big hand to all our volunteers.

Our 2016 records were audited on April 10 by our Auditing Committee with **Rhonda Latkovic** and **Linda Bozigian**. Condensing the Audit Report: 1) The audit committee would like to thank **Tina Veroulis** for her accurate accounting

for the fiscal year of 2016 and implementing the recommendations from the previous year's audit." 2) "To make receipt verification for the credit & debit card transactions more transparent, please be sure all receipts are turned into and filed for audit purposes." Thank you to our audit committee!

Donations for the months of January through April were: \$4,762.25.

The Knitting Group has completed the headbands, arm warmers and afghans for the City of Hope. The project was started in November and has now been completed. The presentations to the patients will be between now and Mother's Day. This is our second year of support headed by Rhonda Latkovic. Thank you to all our volunteers who knitted and crocheted these many items.

In May we will have a Board Meeting on Monday, May 1 at 11:00 a.m. On Monday, May 8 at 11:30 a.m., we will have our last General Meeting of the season.

See the enclosed Philoptochos photos.

— LINDA KALLIS,  
 Philoptochos President



Newly elected Officers of St. George Philoptochos: (Left-to-right) Linda Kallis, President; Matushka Gloria Lehman, Corresponding Secretary; Linda Petalas, Second Vice-President; Lula Valissarakos, memorials & baking; Emily Tcharos, visitations & phone squad; Tina Veroulis, treasurer; Linda Bozigian, coffee supplies; Rhonda Latkovic, First Vice-President. Not pictured: Joan Fakinis, coffee hour coordinator; Pam Zaverdas, speakers & charities; Jean Chronis-Kuhn, recording secretary;

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*PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS, continued*

Philoptochos President Linda Kallis introduced a new Philoptochos member, Athena Snarknes, to the General Philoptochos membership



From left to right: Tillie Lockshire and Linda Kallis, Philoptochos President. Linda led in honoring Tillie for her service to our Church over the years.



The "Thank You" Cake offered in honor of Tillie Lockshire by Philoptochos

**AHEPA NEWS**

Meetings have been changed back to 2nd Wednesdays, with the next meeting on **Wednesday May 10th**.

Brief agenda items:

- Scholarship promotions
- Nominate Chapter District and Supreme Convention delegates
- Chapter elections
- 2 young ladies from our chapter are attending AHEPA Journey to Greece 2017 program. **Katrina Storton and Elanie Karkaletsis.**
- Chapter dues
- Budget for year
- Focus more on needs of St. George Church and local needs.
- Ladder sponsorship, flower sponsorship  
AHEPA Chapter polo shirts, t-shirts available

Upcoming events:

- May 21st, AHEPA Sunday Fr. Ted recognition and luncheon; we will request a memorial for lost brothers:

2011 -Fr. Theophilos

2016 -Steve Geotas

2016 -Stan Georgalakis & Steve N. Pisanos

2017 -George Tcharos & Bob Maverick



- District Convention June 22 - 25th, Hyatt Hotel in Indian Wells. AHEPA will host coffee hour for AHEPA convention guests
- June 22 Journey to Greece
- Supreme Convention July 24-30, Orlando FL.
- College Student Sunday October 2nd - OCF scholarship kick-off!
- Veterans Day November 12th

Thank you to those who have paid their dues, cards received will be mailed out shortly and reminder billing if not current. Remember...only current paid members may be delegates or participate in the scholarship program.

**MEMORY ETERNAL!**

We pray for the Eternal Rest and Salvation of **Presvytera Catherine Tavlarides**, who departed this life for Christ our God on the day of Pascha (Easter), as we were celebrating the Resurrection from the dead of our Savior. Everyone is asked to sign the special "**Remembrance Card**," for Presvytera Catherine's family. The "Card" is in our parish hall and will be sent to the family on Monday, May 15th. Funeral Services were held in Phoenix, Arizona on April 22, 2017.

We also pray for the Eternal Rest and Salvation of **Mike Ligeros**, who departed this life for Christ our God on April 19, 2017. Funeral Services: in Denver, Colorado on May 2, 2017.

**COLORING BOOK GROUP**

The Coloring Book Group will meet on **Friday, May 5, 2017 at 12:00 noon**. This will be the last Coloring Book meeting until the Fall.

As always, lunch will be provided, as well as coloring books and supplies.

A \$5.00 donation from those planning to participate will be appreciated in order to help defray expenses. Please see the enclosed flier for details.

## PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE



The members of the Parish Council met on Thursday, April 6, 2017 and discussed the following topics and made the following decisions:

1. March Treasurer's Report (Checking, Income, Expenses)
 

Checking account.....	\$90,399
March Income.....	\$23,314
March Expenses.....	\$100,584
2. Stewardship
 

Pledges-To-Date	
March 2017.....	\$100,855
Stewardship-To-Date	
March 2017.....	\$ 41,500
3. Endowment Fund
 

March 2017.....	\$298,488
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4. Festival Report
 

Income.....	\$193,271
Net Profit.....	\$ 57,064
5. By-Laws: to the proposals to amend the Parish By-Laws that were offered by members of the By-Law committee, there were a few additional proposals that members of the Parish Council wanted to consider. Specifically, voting procedures for a General Assembly (one vote per family unit). It was agreed that the members of the By-Law committee be invited to the Parish Council to consider additions or changes to the By-Laws for final approval by the General Assembly.
6. The lease for the rental property occupied by the Desert Cancer Foundation was renewed. It is a 3 year lease with a 3% increase (1 year with 3% increase and with the option of 2 one year consecutive leases).
7. Palm Sunday Luncheon: **Lula Valissarakos** is the chairperson for the Palm Sunday Luncheon. It is a fish luncheon: \$15 per person/ children under 12 – free.
8. Holy Week was discussed. Topics included, a) the Epitaphio (a special tray for Epitaphio

Flowers); b) ushering; c) dying Easter eggs.

10. The Metropolitan's Visit. A special luncheon is provided for parishioners in attendance for the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy officiated by His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos in celebration of the Parish name day – the Feast of St. George. The luncheon is free for all in attendance. Lula Valissarkos and Pat Dalkas are chairing this event.
11. \$2,000 was approved for a detailed analysis to study costs and advantages for the installation of solar panels to help save energy costs for the parish. In addition, analysis is to be provided regarding aspects of borrowing from the Endowment Fund to initially pay for solar installation.
12. While the Philoptochos will offer a special cake for Mother's Day, the Parish Council will provide flowers to honor mothers, grandmothers and Godmothers for that day.
13. A letter was submitted to the Parish Council by a parishioner suggesting that the Appetizer Booth at the Festival be relocated next year to the parking lot area next to the bar.

### SAFE RETURN TO OUR SNOWBIRDS

We bid farewell to our "snowbirds" for the summer, as we pray for their safe return to our parish in the fall. Among those departing for the summer are:

- ◆ From Montana: Tina and Angelo Veroulis; Dorothy and George Lambros
- ◆ From Michigan: Joan and Chris Panopoulos; Nancy Breighner
- ◆ From Utah: Bess Pressett; Billy Poulos
- ◆ From Oregon: Kristi and Chris Maletis; Cindy and Ed Maletis
- ◆ From North Dakota: Bess and Dr. John Manassis

Please let Fr. Ted know if there are any others who should be included on this list.

**HOLY WEEK** – Holy Week 2017 featured our usual beautiful Epitaphio, decorated by the ladies of our parish under the direction of **Lula Valissarakos**.



Pictured above is this year's decorated Epitaphio and those who helped to decorate the Epitaphio. Also, note the decorated wreath at the top of the Cross of our Lord seen at the right.

**George Argyros** organized the procession of the Epitaphio in the Holy Friday Night. **Jim Christopoulos** led the procession as he carried the Cross of our Lord.



Our church interior set to celebrate Great & Holy Pascha-2017

The decorum of our church temple was set up by Fr. Ted, Nicholas Kaperonis, Presvytera Pantels, Krisann Kontaxis, Christian Kontaxis, Spiro Astmos and Steve Banki.

The Holy Friday Retreat, led by **Deacon Euthym Kontaxis**, saw participation from students of our Sunday School, as well as adults from of our parish in general. Deacon Euthym explained the liturgical cycle of the Holy Week Services, emphasizing that references in Church Hymnography to "days" and "nights" are not references limited to worldly understandings of days and nights, according to

the rising and setting of the sun, but have spiritual definitions. Above all, the "Day of the Resurrection of Christ" is the "Eighth Day" - the Day of Eternal Life.

### **FAREWELL TO TILLIE LOCKSHIRE**

The end of this month—May 2017—we say "farewell" to our beloved **Tillie Lockshire**, who has served as Assistant Treasurer for our Philoptochos over these past few years and who has also provided valuable help in the administration of our parish office. She also has served as a member of our Parish Council.

Tillie has served also in the capacity of helping to prepare our weekly bulletins (*The Ladder*), as well as helping to prepare and mail our monthly newsletter (*The Voice of St. George*).

A special coffee hour reception, sponsored by our Parish Council, will be held in appreciation of Tillie Lockshire's loving, patient and dedicated service to our parish for God's glory and in honor of our Patron Saint on Sunday, May 14th following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

Tillie is leaving us to live close to members of her family near the Southern California coast.

### **AMERICAN WRESTLER**

Everyone is invited to a preview of the movie, *The American Wrestler*, starring **George Kosturos**.

The movie is scheduled to be released to movie theaters around the country this summer.

The preview of this movie will be at the **River Century Theaters in Rancho Mirage on Wednesday, May 3, 2017 (two show times: 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.)**.

Those who cannot attend the preview of this movie may want to make special arrangements to see it when it is released this summer.

We wish every blessing for the success of George Kosturos as he begins his career.

### **STREET LIFE PROJECT – The Homelessness Situation in the Coachella Valley and the Need for Philoxenia**

Recently, you may have read or heard in the news the situation with homelessness in the Coachella Valley. The desert communities have only two main centers serving the homeless; in the east valley, Coachella Valley Rescue Mission and in the west valley, Roy's Desert Resource Center. Unfortunately, Roy's Resource Center located in Palm Springs, will be closing by June 1st due to lack of funding. This is a loss of 90-100 beds for the homeless as well as other needed services. It is predicted that the displaced homeless from this facility closing will impact other west valley cities including our own Palm Desert community. Local city committees are scrambling to pass budget funding for the homeless, but funds are inadequate to handle the upcoming need. Palm Desert annual homeless budget is only \$100,000.

So, what can we as Orthodox Christians do to help?

In last months "Voice" we reported on the special luncheon that was held on Annunciation Day that was organized by **Pam Zaverdas** and **Rhonda Latkovic** who invited the founder of "The Street Life Project" to speak to the luncheon attendees about local homelessness. This non-profit organization began as a grass roots effort, founded by Christian Jelmgberg, and became a 501(c)3 charity in 2012. The goal of the organization is to help get the homeless off the street. The group, consisting of volunteers, weekly offers food, clothing, help with hygiene, shelter, job search, and support to the members of the homeless community. And as a Christian-based organization, they transport the homeless to church on Sundays! They have had many successes with helping the homeless to obtain jobs & housing with the ultimate goal to help them become contributing members to society.

As a result of the funds raised because of this luncheon, **Father Theodore** and **Rhonda Latkovic**, presented "The Street Life Project" organization with a **\$725 check!** In addition, two cartons of

toiletries were given to them that were the result of donations from a few parishioners.

This is a great beginning for our community to help the homeless and it is a wonderful expression of "Philoxenia" as first shown by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. *"Inasmuch as you did it for the least of these, my brethren, you did it to Me"*. (Matthew 25:40).

We thank you for the initial support received for this important Outreach and ask you for your continued "Philoxenia". Please note we are continuing the request for toiletry items for the homeless. Place your donations in the plastic containers by the office.

– RHONDA LATKOVIC,  
Homelessness Outreach Coordinator



Pictured above, from left to right: Fr. Ted, Christian Jelmgberg (founder of "The Street Life Project") and Rhonda Latkovic. Fr. Ted presents a check of \$725 - the funds raised at the First Annual Annunciation Feast Day Luncheon on March 25, 2017.

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

We are most grateful to God for the participation of **Melina Hawkins** and **Eleni Castrale** as this year's Myrrh-bearers for the Holy Friday night Church Services. In addition, we are grateful to **Maxim Dunkel** and **Steve Banki, Jr.** for their help during the Holy Friday afternoon Church Services. In addition to participating in the Holy Week Services, our Sunday School children help our Parish Council on Sundays by passing the offering tray.



## THE NATURE OF AN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The word "ecumenical" derives from the Late Latin *oecumenicus* "general, universal," and from Greek *oikoumenikos*, meaning "from the whole world," and from *he oikoumene ge*, meaning, "the inhabited world (as known to the ancient Greeks). The Greeks and their neighbors were considered as developed human society, in later use, "the Roman world." (as opposed to "barbarian lands"). In the Christian sense, in ecclesiastical Greek, the word *oikoumenos*, contains the participle *oikein*, meaning: "inhabit," from the word, *oikos*: "house, habitation." The first 7 Ecumenical Councils were accepted, recognized and upheld by both the eastern and western branches of Chalcedonian Christianity. They were convoked by Christian Roman Emperors, who enforced the decisions of those councils within the state church of the Roman-Byzantine Empire.

Starting with the third ecumenical council, noteworthy schisms led to non-participation by some members of what had previously been considered a single Christian Church. Thus, some parts of Christianity did not attend later councils, or attended but did not accept the results. Bishops belonging to what became known as Oriental Orthodoxy participated in the first four councils, but rejected the decisions of the fourth and did not attend any subsequent ecumenical councils.

Patriarchates of Rome and the East accepted the Seven Councils. However, Papal claims led to the split between Christian East and Christian West. Since then, acceptance of councils as ecumenical and authoritative varies between different Christian denominations. Disputes over Christological and other questions have led certain branches to reject some councils that others accept. (Taken in part from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecumenical\\_council](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecumenical_council)).

The recent Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Christian Church is the means to bring back the "unity of all," according to the prayers that are invoked during the Divine Liturgy.

## SAINT OF THE MONTH- ST. SIMON THE ZEALOT

It is a well-known incident at the Wedding feast in Cana. At the moment when Jesus transformed the water into wine at the request of His Mother, the groom witnessed the miracle take place and it changed his life forever! Converted to Christianity in a flashing instant, the Apostle Simon would leave the wedding feast soon after the miracle...and would also leave behind his parents and his new bride, in order to follow Jesus Christ.

After that amazing night at Cana, the remarkably zealous Simon would go on to help spread the Holy Gospel everywhere...until he was finally martyred by crucifixion in a region of North Africa that is now part of Mauritania, around 65 A.D.

In many ways, that miracle at the Wedding Feast in Cana would shape Simons' vision and also underline the meaning of the Gospel for him. He never forgot the fact that the transformation of the water into wine was the first miracle to be performed by his Savior – and he never stopped venerating the love of mankind by God that was embodied in that extraordinary gift.

According to many historians of the period, Simon the Zealot traveled farther in his preaching than did any of the other Original Apostles. He journeyed from Persia throughout North Africa, Judea and even as far as Britain. Simon did not mind these extensive travels, because his life was entirely devoted to his vocation as an evangelist.

Although Simon's life ended in painful martyrdom in North Africa, he surely went to his Creator with a prayer of joyful thanks for having been allowed to celebrate the Glory of God on earth!

St. Simon the Zealot is commemorated by the Orthodox Christian Church on May 10th every year.

— *The above is comprised of excerpts from the book, A Cloud of Witnesses, by Bishop Demetri Khoury*

## METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO CLERGY-LAITY ASSEMBLY, APRIL 26-27 2017

The Metropolis of San Francisco Clergy-Laity Assembly convened on **Wednesday, April 26, 2017** at the St. Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center near Fresno, California.

The Assembly began with the key-note address delivered by His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos, in which he spoke about two main areas of our spiritual lives: 1) looking inward, and, 2) looking outward. Looking inward requires that we focus on enhancing our personal relationships with our Risen Christ, as well as focusing on the wellbeing of parish lives and the total aspects of our Metropolis administration.

Looking outward requires that we continue to find ways of implementing our Metropolis Strategic Plan in ministering to the needs of our parishioners and the community at large. Part of looking outward includes how we share our Faith with others and on how our churches are engaged in their local communities.

Fr. Nathanael Symeonides, Director of the Office of Inter-Orthodox, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America spoke about the success of the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Christian Church, noting the efforts of our Holy Patriarchate to work according to our prayer "for the stability of the Holy Churches of God and for the unity of all."

Metropolis Committee reports included the following:

-Art and Architecture. Chair: Fr. Peter Salmas. This committee reviews plans for parish iconography and architecture in terms of maintaining Holy Tradition of Orthodox Christian architecture and iconography in our parish churches.

-Metropolis Fundraising. Chair: Isidoros Garifalakis. This committee leads in the efforts for hosting the annual Metropolis Gala and the "Faith Forward" program, which is part of the Metropolis Stewardship efforts.

-Legal. Chair: John Buzos. Parish legal matters



Above: His Grace, Bishop Apostolos and His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos presiding at the Divine Liturgy and memorial services held for the Metropolis of S.F. Clergy-Laity Assembly

can be referred to the Metropolis Legal Committee.

-Development & Communications. Chair: Kristen Bruskas. Website; press releases; Metropolis announcements.

-Education. Chair: Dr. Eve Tibbs. Sunday School materials; webinars for adult education in the Faith; the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival.

-Missions & Evangelism. Director: Thomaida Hudanish. Outreach to Orthodox communicants and the public at large, calling them to learn about Orthodoxy and become members of the Church. Mochas & Mugs is a program to help fund start-up parishes and help form Orthodox Church communities everywhere.

-Family Wellness. Provide materials and support to parishes in the area of family pastoral care.

-Youth & Young Adults. Director: Johanna Duterte. Regional & Metropolis-wide youth retreats; the Greek Folk Dance Festival (chaired by Fr. Gary Kyriacou); campus ministries.

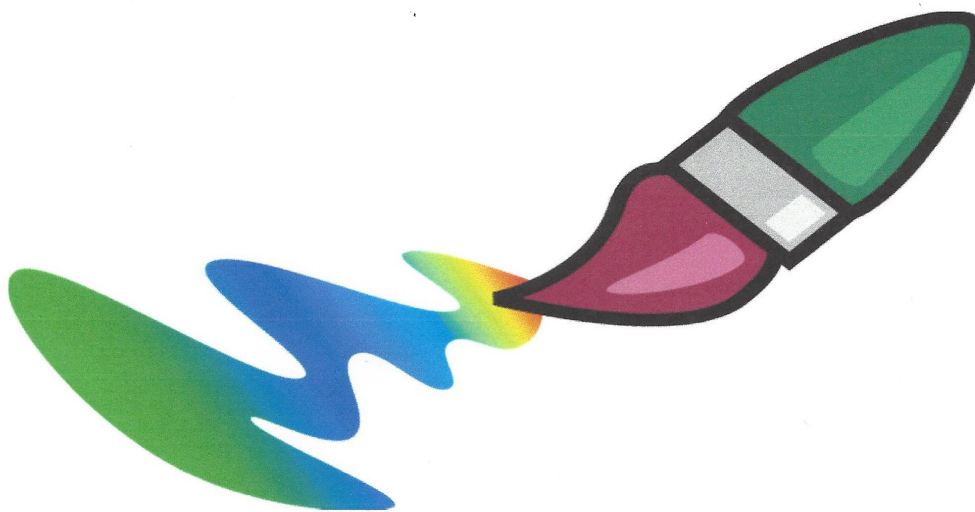
-St. Nicholas Ranch & Retreat Center. Director: Michal Pappas. Facilities for summer camp and youth/adult retreats. The newly built Faith & Heritage Center is a welcome component of the

*Continued on the next page - - - ->*

St. Nicholas Ranch community.

-Real Estate. Chair: George Peter Pshogios. Matters pertaining to buying, selling and usage of parish real estate property are to be reviewed by this committee. Matters such as costs and loans in context of a parish's financial strength and plan are to be reported for the purpose of avoiding financially overburdening situations.

-Financial Committee. Bookkeeper: Pres. Aliki Kyriacou. The Metropolis Council prepares the budgets and the financial statements of the Metropolis throughout their regular deliberations. Copies of the Metropolis Financial Statements are available upon request from Fr. Ted.



## **ADULT COLORING SESSION & LUNCHEON**

**When: Friday, MAY 5<sup>th</sup> @ noon-2pm**

**Where: St. George church hall**

**RSVP: By MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> to Rhonda Latkovic**

**This will be the last coloring session for the first half of the year! Lunch will be served at noon with coloring to follow. A \$5.00 minimum donation is requested. There will also be a raffle. Coloring supplies provided. Please join us!**

**St. George Greek Orthodox Church of the Desert**  
**74-109 Larrea St. / P.O. Box 4755**  
**Palm Desert, California 92261**  
**web: [www.go-stgeorge.org/](http://www.go-stgeorge.org/)**  
**email: [pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com)**  
**Telephone: (760)568-9901 / FAX: 9760) 568-9492**

**MAY 2017**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Schedule of Sunday Services:</b> <b>Orthros-8:30 a.m.</b> <b>Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.</b> <b>Sunday School- 10:30 a.m.</b>	1  Philoptochos Board Meeting—11:00 a.m.	2  Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.  Men's Bible Study— 6:30 p.m.	3  American Wrestler @ River Century Theater: 4 pm/7:30pm	4  Choir Practice-1:00 pm	5  Coloring Book Group—12:00 noon	6  Vespers-5:00
<b>7</b> <b>Sunday of Paralytic Ep.-Acts 9: 32-42</b> <b>Gos.-St. John 5:1-15</b>	8  Philoptochos General Members' Meeting-11:30 a.m.	9  Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.  Men's Bible Study - 6:30 p.m.	<b>10-MID-PENTECOST</b> Orthros-8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy—9:30 a.m.  AHEPA Meeting-6:30 p.m.	11  Choir Practice-1:00 pm  Parish Council- 6:30 p.m.	12	<b>13</b>  Vespers-5:00 p.m.
<b>14</b> <b>Sunday of Samaritan Woman</b> <b>Ep.-Acts 11;19-30</b> <b>Gos.-St. John 4:5-42</b> <b>Mother's Day</b>	15	16  Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.  Men's Bible Study- 6:30 p.m.	17	18  Choir Practice-1:00 p.m.  <b>Street Life Ministry at Palm Springs-6:00p.m. at Sunrise Park.</b>	19	20  Vespers-5:00 p.m.
<b>21</b> <b>Sunday of the Blind Man</b> <b>Ep.-Acts 26:1,12-20</b> <b>Gos.-St. John 9:1-38</b> <b>AHEPA SUNDAY LUNCHEON</b>	22	23  Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.  Men's Bible Study- 6:30 p.m.	24  Vespers-6:30 p.m.	<b>25-ASCENSION OF OUR LORD</b> Orthros-8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.  Choir Practice-1:00 pm	26	27  No Vespers.
<b>28</b> <b>Sunday of the Holy Fathers</b> <b>Ep.-Acts20:16-18, 28-36</b> <b>Gos.-St. John17:1-13</b>	29 Memorial Day	30  Bible Study 10:00 a.m.  Men's Bible Study 6:30 p.m.	31	<u>JUNE 1</u>	<u>JUNE 2</u>	<u>JUNE 3</u> <b>SATURDAY OF SOULS</b> Orthros-8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy-9:30am  Vespers- 5:00 p.m.

# ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT

Friday, April 21, 2017



Pictured above are the members of the cooking crew for Friday night's St. George Golf Tournament (April 21). The Friday night dinner was a steak dinner, served with appetizers and cheese cake for dessert.



Pictured above are golfers and guests attending the Friday Night Golf Tournament steak dinner. Friday's golf tournament was "stroke play," with tee-off at 12:30 p.m. The golfers showed great perseverance, weathering temperatures near 100 degrees.

Participants in the Friday edition of the St. George Golf Tournament pass by the "Silent Auction" table during the dinner. The Silent Auction featured items for grandparents to give to their grandchildren.



Participants of our St. George Golf Tournament from Orange and San Diego Counties...Pictured above: Ted Wilson, Howard Hay, Carri Wilson, Nick Speliopoulos, Carol Speliopoulos, Melinda Kartsonis, Jerry Verst, Chris Louis, Katherine Foster, Gayle Verst, Lyle Adrade & Dr. Tom Foster.



Jim Christodoulelis, Ted Attalla, Ted Vavoulis, Paul Venetos from Pasadena

Saturday, April 22, 2017



Pictured above are participants practicing before teeing off for the Saturday St. George Golf Tournament at Desert Willow Golf Resort. The format for the tournament on Saturday, April 22nd was a "Scramble Format."



Metropolitan Gerasimos pictured with the "Cooking Crew:" John Petalas, George Argyros and Vasili Papadopoulos



First Place (Men's Foursome): Steve Jaffe, Don Blanchard, James Romanowitz, Bill Stevens.



Metropolitan Gerasimos delivering His Address at the Saturday Banquet. Seminarian Ivan Vuksanovic is also pictured.



First Place (Women's Foursome): Gayle Verst, Penny Swartz, Carol Speliopoulos, Terri Allen.



John Rellos (left) won the "Closest-to-the-Pin" honors.



Following the Awards Dinner and Parish Name Day Banquet on Saturday Night, featuring a Greek-Style lamb menu, dancing to live music continued into the night.



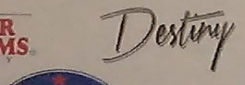
Two pictures to the left show His Eminence imparting Andithoron following the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in celebration of the St. George parish Feast Day on Sunday, April 23, 2017. At the far left, His Eminence gives a blessing to Nicholas Kyriacou (Fr. Gary Kyriacou's uncle), who has been receiving treatment in his fight against cancer. At the near left, His Eminence is pictured with Seminarian Ivan Vuksanovic who accompanied His Eminence on His Pastoral Visit to the parish.



**SLP**  
Homeless Outreach

Join the movement that is changing lives in the Coachella Valley. Volunteer at weekly SLP outreaches or offer your talents or services!

Community Partners



# STREETLIFEPROJECT

Inspiring a life filled with hope that's guided by faith. The Street Life Project is a culture built on a foundation of love. A kind of love that transforms people and unites communities for one cause. That's to go after the broken that are normally disregarded by society and love them back to life. We want the homeless to know that they have value and that no matter what hardship they are going through, life can get better.

- 300 + Meals delivered to homeless camps.
- Guidance - Creating individualized plans to get the homeless off the streets.
- Necessities for health and wellness - Clothing, blankets, supplies and toiletries.
- Rehab and transitional housing referrals along with job search assistance.
- Rides to Church on Sundays with lunch provided.

Meals Provided by:



Call for Volunteer Opportunities

Donate / Connect

**Contact**

Tel. 760 702 4944  
fax. 760 772 6900

Email: [TheStreetLifeProject@Gmail.com](mailto:TheStreetLifeProject@Gmail.com)

**Web Page**

[www.StreetLifeProject.com](http://www.StreetLifeProject.com)

**Facebook**

[Facebook.com/TheStreetLifeProject](http://Facebook.com/TheStreetLifeProject)

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NEWPORT BEACH  
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WINNER  
BEST SCREENPLAY  
BOSTON FILM FESTIVAL

"KARATE KID  
MEETS  
ROCKY."  
- BOSTON FILM FESTIVAL

"INSPIRING, GREAT STORY,  
STRONG PERFORMANCES."  
- BOSTON FILM FESTIVAL

"SUPERB, A  
CROWD PLEASER."  
- BOSTON FILM FESTIVAL

GEORGE KOSTUROS    ALI AFSHAR    WILLIAM FICHTNER    JON VOIGHT

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INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS



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PG-13



**ONE NIGHT EVENT**  
IN SELECT CINEMAS NATIONWIDE **MAY 3**  
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MAY 3<sup>rd</sup>

At the River Century Theatre

Two times: 4:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Order your seats now!



# AHEPA SUNDAY



## SPECIAL RECOGNITION FR. THEODORE PANTELS

HONORING HIS STEADFAST DEVOTION TO THE CHURCH  
AND SUPPORT OF AHEPA AND CHAPTER 528

### WHEN

**May 21st, 2017**

### WHAT

Annual Scholarships and recognitions award ceremony after services, in the church.  
Luncheon following in fellowship hall.

### WHERE

St George  
Greek Orthodox Church  
74-109 Larrea, Palm Desert CA 92260

Wynn Storton  
Chapter 528 President  
[contact@AHEPA528.org](mailto:contact@AHEPA528.org)  
[www.AHEPA528.org](http://www.AHEPA528.org)

## LUNCHEON

### TICKETS

**\$15 General**

**\$10 Children**

### CATERED BY

George Argyros  
Towne Center Cafe

### ALL PROCEEDS BENEFITING Fr Theophilos Memorial Scholarship fund

If you would like to donate to  
the 528 fund please make check  
payable to

AHEPA 528  
Fr. Theophilos Scholarship in  
memo box please  
Mail to:  
AHEPA Chapter 528  
Scholarship Fund  
PO Box 1735  
Palm Desert, CA 92261-1735

\*all donations are tax deductible  
to the letter of the law