

MAY 2018



# Voice of St. George

SAINT GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
OF THE DESERT

74-109 LARREA ST., PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA



Inside this issue

## LANGUAGE & THE CHURCH

On **Sunday, May 26th** we will celebrate **Pentecost Sunday**. We read in the Book of Acts that the Holy Apostles *“were all with one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven...Then there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire and one sat upon each of them and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* (Acts 2: 1-4). Immediately the Apostles began to preach the Gospel to everyone around them speaking in the language of the people who had gathered from other nations. From this Day forward, the life of the Apostolic Church begins Her development into what is our Orthodox Christian Church today. The life of the Church continues governed by the Holy Spirit, Who grants to those who love Christ our God various Gifts in order to accomplish the salva-

tion of souls. In 1 Corinthians 12, St. Paul speaks about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit which are given to various individuals of the Church: *“There are different ways the Spirit works. But the same God is working in all these ways and in all people.”* (vs. 6). The Gifts of the Spirit are: Gifts of Wisdom, Gifts of Knowledge, Gifts of Faith, Gifts of healing, Gifts of miracles, Gifts of prophesy, Gifts of discernment, Gifts of speaking in languages. To each is given Gifts; but, individually, we are all members of the one Body of the Church: *“There is one body, but it has many parts. But all its many parts make up one body. It is the same with Christ. We were all baptized by one Holy Spirit. And so we are formed into one body.”* (vs. 12-13).

The *language* of the Orthodox Church is truly neither Greek, nor Russian, nor English. The *language* is that of Christ-like love. The purpose of language,

therefore, is to *communicate the Faith and the way to Eternal Life with Christ our God*. The struggles over which spoken language to use in worship must take into account the ability of those in attendance to *understand the meaning* of the prayers, because in that meaning, one finds the Truth about his or her relationship with our Risen Lord and Savior.

Let us never forget that the *actual* language of the Church – the language of love for God and for neighbor – is often the *unspoken* language of faith, humility, patience, kindness, etc. This language includes such things as “body language,” moods, attitudes, ideals, priorities, respect, caring concern, among other intangibles. Even the Christian martyrdom of the Saints is a *language* speaking volumes of truth and inspiration to the world. Pentecost Sunday presents us all with the

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opportunity to further develop and perfect our abilities to communicate the truth of our Savior's Gospel to others throughout the world. In this, we seek blessings from our Savior which change our personalities into those which reflect His love and the mentality of His Saints – and which, therefore, serve to inspire others to embrace the life of our Church.

Indeed, Pentecost Sunday calls us to overcome the worldly spirits of ethnic customs, which are not specifically anchored in the theology of the Church as set forth by teaching of the Holy Bible; the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils and the written and oral Tradition of the Saints. Our Faith is not simply a "cultural custom" of the past. Our Faith is a living force to be experienced in the "present" of every generation in the world.

I remember the Harvard theologian in the 1970s when I was at seminary by the name of Krister Stendahl, who would remind us that the Gifts of the Holy Spirit can be compared to the manna which rained down from heaven *each day* for the Chosen People in the wilderness. The people had no choice but to trust in God *each day* that our Savior is true to His promise. (See: *Introducing the Orthodox Church*, by Fr. Anthony Coniaris, pg. 69).

God's Gifts serve to instill in us the "Apostolic mind." The "Apostolic mind" is one of constantly seeking the renewal of Gifts given for the salvation of the world. This demands that we *all* be committed to constantly learning about the true nature of the Church and the spiritual life as lived by the Saints – and to make our Faith a vibrant part of our daily lives. Far from being a "Byzantine museum piece," the Orthodox Church is the Body of Christ in the world and the "workshop" of the Holy Spirit. With this, Henri J.M. Nouwen writes, "*We can invite [Christ] into our inner lives to transform resentments into gratitude...[and then] even the most insignificant event speaks the language of faith, hope and, above all, love.*" (*With Burning Hearts*, pg. 126).

+FR. THEODORE

## PASCHAL ENCYCLICAL - 2018

*"Go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead."*

*Matthew 28:7*



Dearly Beloved, In the Gospel of the Resurrection we hear on Holy Saturday morning, the angel tells the women who have come to the tomb, "Go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead." When the same women encounter the Risen Christ, Jesus repeats the instructions, "Go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me." (Matthew 28:10). This repetition in the text is meant for all of us. Our Paschal celebration finds us at the tomb of the Lord. Like the women so many centuries ago, we are meant to be astonished. And, we are also being instructed to proclaim that the Lord has risen to everyone.

The news of the empty tomb was unbelievable then and still difficult for us to grasp today. Christ had suffered a degrading, painful death at the hands of the Romans; crucifixion was reserved for the lowest of the low. The worst criminals received this kind of punishment as a deterrent to anyone who would challenge the power of Rome. Christ's death upon the cross seemingly ended the hopes of His followers. As we read in the Gospel of Luke, they "had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel." (Luke 24:21)

But the tomb is empty. Angels tell the women, "He is Risen!" And Christ appears to His followers, showing the marks of His Passion, and is very much alive. The Resurrection becomes even more meaningful and significant in light of the Passion. The two go together. As Saint Gregory the Theologian writes, "*He is lifted up and nailed to the tree, but by the tree of life He restores us...He dies, but He gives life, and by His death, He destroys death.*" (Theological Oration 3, *On the Son*).

The message of Pascha fills us with joy and hope because we have seen the power of death destroyed. As we hear in one of the seasonal hymns

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*"Receive from us the joyous good news of Christ's Resurrection. Delight, dance, be glad, Jerusalem, as you behold Christ the king emerging from the grave like a bridegroom."* So tonight we will celebrate with lit candles in our hands. Our Churches will ring their bells and decorate every icon and space with flowers. We will break the fast and prepare the sumptuous feast. We will be dressed in our finest, and sing and dance.

Our first celebration takes place in the Liturgy, where we will chant the victory hymn, "Christ is risen..."; all the hymns will be chanted in a crescendo of joy and hope. Attend to them and absorb their message. Participate in the Liturgy, and partake of the Resurrected Lord's banquet; receive Him in Holy Communion. Greet one another with Christian love because tonight, of all nights, our parishes are filled with the Good News of our Heavenly Father's love for us, of the Resurrection of His Son that gives life to the whole world.

This message is not to be contained or hidden, but to be proclaimed to all. Just as you will carry the light from your Paschal candle home, carry the Good News with you and share it. As the Lord says, *"No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a bushel, but on a stand, that those who enter may see the light."* (Luke 11:33). Dear brothers and sisters, the angel's instructions to the women have become our instructions: Go and tell the world that Christ has risen from the dead!

I wish those who celebrate their Feast Day blessed and healthy years ahead, and pray that the Risen Christ grant all of you and your families His Blessings.

Χριστός Ἀνέστη! Christ is Risen! Ἀληθῶς Ἀνέστη!  
Truly He is Risen!

With Paternal Love in the Resurrection,  
++METROPOLITAN GERASIMOS  
Metropolitan of San Francisco

## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS



### Are you an "I" person or a "we" person?

An "I" person constantly needs recognition and adulation for tasks or jobs they undertake. When recognized they take the bows and say "I did it" without any thought to those whose helped in that same job. They take on tasks even when they are tired, stressed and upset and pass this stress to others who are helping. They bully those around them and dictate tasks to be done. No "please" and "thank you" appear. They will only take on jobs where recognition will be possible and only they can do the job. If everything goes right they take the bows, if something goes wrong, they blame another person. They criticize everything and everyone but do not suggest ideas, nor volunteer to help solve problems they have created or pointed out. Nothing comes up to their standards.

A "we" person rarely wants recognition but will accept a thank you. They do many tasks for the church that are not seen by most of the parishioners. They are pleasant to be around even if they get stressed (i.e. the festival). They have a positive attitude and are patient with others. They do these things for the church and not for themselves. They try not to criticize but give help and ideas to others. They understand people's limitations and accept them. They get along with others. (Didn't we learn this in kindergarten?)

"We" are all working for the Church in many ways including stewardship. "We" need to work together to train new parishioners so "we" can continue to nurture a healthy Church.

### Are you an "I" person or a "we" person?

#### April -Membership

We now have a Junior Philoptochos member. **Eleni Castrale** who is 6 years old. She has worked for the Church since she was 4 as an Usher and passes the tray on most Sundays. She is a good worker and has helped to sell leftover food from the festival, set up tables for various

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*PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS, Continued*

events, and, just recently, helped sell desserts at our **Dessert Bake Sale** on **April 22nd**. She is and will be in the future an asset to the parish and Philoptochos. We currently have 60 members. Our goal is 70 members for 2018. Please renew by seeing **Linda Petalas** or **Linda Kallis**.

Dessert Bake Sale- Our **Dessert Bake Sale** on **April 22** made **\$462**. This event was Co-Chaired by Athena Snarskis, Pat Dalkas and Linda Bozigian. They coordinated and priced the bake goods whether made by our members or purchased. Thank you to everyone who participated. The money will go towards the purchase of an AED Machine for the Church.

Donations-Donations in April included National Philoptochos Sisterhood of St. Basil and the IOCC.

Audit - Our **Audit for 2017** was just completed and our accounts are in order. Thank you **Tina Veroulis** our Treasurer for great bookkeeping. Our **Audit Committee** included **Rhonda Latkovic, Pauline Latkovic and Linda Bozigian**. Thank you, ladies for a job well done.

May-Meetings

In May we have the last meetings of the season. We will have the **Board Meeting** on **Monday, May 7 at 11:00 a.m.** and keeping in tradition we will have the last **General Meeting** on **Monday, May 14 at 11:30 a.m.** at a restaurant. We are going to the **Stuft Pizza** at the **Westfield Mall**. The address is 72840 Hwy 111; the phone number is 760-610-7990. They have lunch specials that include a soft drink. You won't want to miss it.

Donations-Donations in May will include:  
Metropolis - Kid's n' Cancer  
National- 75th Founders Fund and Orthodox Christian Fellowship

Meetings will resume in September. Have a safe trip to our Snow Birds and those who travel in the summer.

--LINDA KALLIS,  
Philoptochos President



Philoptochos President Linda Kallis (right) presents a check to Desert Cancer Foundation director, Sarah Bryant, on behalf of our St. George Philoptochos Chapter, announcing on-going financial support for the Desert Cancer Foundation of Palm Desert.



The Philoptochos General Members' Meeting, held on Monday, April 16th, was well attended, as members heard about the work of the local Desert Cancer Foundation.

**AHEPA NEWS -- At the April 18th Meeting** it was decided that President **Wynn Storton** would represent our AHEPA Chapter at both the **AHEPA Western Regional District Convention in Reno, Nevada** which will take place from **June 21 – June 24th, 2018** and the **AHEPA Supreme Convention**, which will take place in **Atlantic City, New Jersey from July 22-July 28th, 2018**. The AHEPA brothers in attendance voted to pay the registration fees for Wynn to represent our Chapter at both of these events.



AHEPA brothers will help **Nick Krespis** whose **Andy's Restaurant** will be selling food at the **Stagecoach** in Coachella on the weekend of **April 28th and 29th**.

**Sunday, May 13, 2018 is Mothers Day.** The  
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*AHEPA NEWS, Continued*

members at this meeting agreed to sponsor carnations to give to mothers, God-mothers, mothers-in-law, grandmothers, great-grandmothers of our parish.

**Sunday, May 20, 2018 is AHEPA Sunday.** There will be a Memorial Service for AHEPA brothers who have departed this life. In addition, scholarship awards given from the **AHEPA 528 Fr. T.P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship Fund** will be imparted to deserving college students from our St. George parish and community. Applications for consideration for scholarship awards were received by the Scholarship Committee last month (April). To donate to this Scholarship Fund, please contact the AHEPA Chapter 528 website at: [www.ahepa528.org/](http://www.ahepa528.org/)

The members at the meeting asked President Wynn Storton to bid for our Chapter to host the **AHEPA District 20 Mid-Winter Conference** on the weekend of **January 26, 2018**. In addition, inquiry will be made as to the availability for the **AHEPA District 20 delegates** to attend the **St. George Ladies Philoptochos Taverna Night** that usually takes place in January.

In recognition of the **AHEPA Military Award bestowed to AHEPA brother Pete Peterson** last month, Chapter 528 would like him to arrange for a speaker for the **Veterans Day commemoration**, which is scheduled to be held at our St. George parish on **Sunday, November 11, 2018**.

The next **AHEPA Chapter 528 meeting** will be held at our parish hall on the first Wednesday of May – **May 2nd at 6:30 p.m.** Agenda items to be discussed at the AHEPA Western Regional District Convention and the AHEPA Supreme Convention will be presented, as will up-coming plans taking AHEPA through the summer and into the fall.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE**

The **last day of Sunday School** for this 2017-2018 School year is **Sunday, May 20, 2018**. Students, along with their parents are to make every effort to participate in the special Church Services in

celebration of **Pentecost on Sunday May 27, 2018**. This year's **Sunday School curriculum focused on the theme: "Being an Orthodox Christian."** Lessons pertaining to the Sacraments began with the meaning and nature of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism - and with Baptism, the Sacrament of Holy Chrismation, which is regularly performed when one is baptized.

Holy Chrismation is our personal Pentecost. That is, as the Holy Spirit descended upon the Holy Apostles granting them the spiritual gifts needed for them to preach to the world, so also does the Holy Spirit descend upon us with the Sacrament of Holy Chrismation, thereby granting to each of us gifts that help us to live out our lives with obedience and love for God. In living our lives according to our Lord's Commandments, the message of salvation is preached to those around us.

In the prayers read on Pentecost Sunday, we ask for the grace and guidance of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Careful thought given to each word in these prayers serves to help each of us try to live a life that is well pleasing to God.

**HOLY WEEK AT ST. GEORGE**--Holy Week Church services were well-attended. The ladies of our parish, led by **Lula Valissarakos**, decorated the Epitaphio on Holy Friday morning with love and to perfection. The Epitaphio flowers were acquired through the efforts of **Harry Loukatos**.

Those carrying the Epitaphio were led by **George Argyros**, as the chanters, **Kristi Maletis**, **Krisann Kontaxis** and **Angelo Veroulis** accompanied the procession. **Steve Banki** offered needed Altar service. The Choir, led by our parish Choir Director, **Annette Laskaris**, sang the Lamentations with great devotion, while **Melissa Hawkins** coordinated the **Myrrh-bearers**, who graciously showered the Epitaphio with beautiful flower petals. The **Annual Holy Friday Retreat** led by **Deacon Euthym**, was centered on the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ, by which we are granted Eternal Life with Christ Who conquered death. *Continued on the next page ----->*

HOLY WEEK AT ST. GEORGE, Continued



Those who helped decorate the Epitaphio this year: (left to right): Deaconess Krisann Kontaxis, Margarita Pagoulatos, Rhonda Latkovic, Eleni Castrale, Lula Valissarakos, Chris Delaganis, Tina Veroulis and Athena Snarskis

As the faithful re-enter the church following the Holy Friday Night procession with the Epitaphio, they venerated the Holy Gospel Book held by Fr. Ted.

The Choir and the chanters continued to sing and chant the Holy Friday Night hymns throughout the procession.

At the conclusion of the Holy Friday Night services, the faithful received from Fr. Ted the flowers from the Epitaphio as a blessing for their homes and families.



Deacon Euthym leads the traditional St. George Holy Friday Sunday School Retreat.

ANNUAL ST. GEORGE GOLF

**TOURNAMENT** – The Annual St. George of the Desert Golf Tournament held at **Desert Willow Golf Resort** in Palm Desert was a resounding success. We all congratulate Golf Tournament Chairman, **George Argyros** and his entire committee for a job well done.

Not only was it the skill of the many golfers which made for a fine afternoon of fellowship, the weather itself was superb, making it a perfect event.

Following the afternoon of golf, the St. George Golf Tournament Awards Dinner took place at the parish hall, which was well decorated with themes of Greek culture, including the display of the Greek Flag and small figurines representing aspects of life in traditional Greek villages and sea ports.

The nearly one hundred guests in attendance at the Awards Dinner enjoyed a delicious Greek lamb dinner with all the trimmings, including Greek Salad. Dessert included galaktobouriko.



The "Epitaphio Bearers," led by George Argyros, lead the Holy Friday Night procession around the church.

Following dinner, everyone joined in traditional Greek dancing to the music of *The Greeks*.

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*ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT, Continued*



St. George Golf Tournament - posing at the "practice green," from left to right, Fr. David Kruse, pastor of St. Raphael Antiochian Orthodox Church in Thousand Palms; Deacon Euthym and Fr. Ted. They would join together to lead in the opening prayer ceremony.



Vasili Papadopoulos and George Argyros prepare the lamb for the St. George Golf Tournament Awards Dinner.



Left to right: George Argyros, St. George Golf Tournament Chairman, with Committee members, Doug Lyons and Jim Christopoulos at the registration desk.



The winning team among the women golfers. From left to right: Carol Lyons, Linda Petalas and Tina Veroulis (not pictured: Olympia Fick).



The many golfers who participated in this year's St. George Golf Tournament took time to practice before tee-off. The San Jacinto Mountains grace the background.



Pictured above: The winning men's golf foursome—left to right: George Pelebris, Bill Gatsios, Gus Mavrtsakis, George Bris. They all journeyed from Anaheim to participate in our tournament.

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## ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT, *Continued*



Second place winners - left to right: Deacon Euthym, (George Argyros, Chairman [did not play]), Chris Maletis and George Apostolou (Not pictured: George Grerores).



Third place winners –left to right: Fr. David Kruse, pastor of St. Raphael Antiochian Orthodox Church, Thousand Palms, and Matt Holm. (Not pictured: Peter Snarskis and Josh Harigan).



As she carried the Greek Flag in celebration, Paulette Carkonen led the dancing at the St. George Golf Tournament Awards Dinner, closing out a fabulous evening and a highly successful event.

## PARISH COUNCIL NOTES



At the April 11th Parish Council meeting the following topics were discussed:

Repairs over the past month included repairs to one of the air conditioning units. In addition, **Peter Snarskis** is at work to repair the kitchen door leading from the kitchen into the parish hall.

Discussion took place regarding a Master Plan for the parish involving the Desert Cancer Foundation building and future lease arrangements. (This issue had been discussed at an earlier Parish Council meeting, as well.)

Final decisions were made pertaining to the agenda and decorum for the Spring General Assembly. **Lula Valissarakos** offered to help prepare some foods for those planning to attend the General Assembly on **Sunday, April 15th**. Also, Parish Council President, **Nick Krespis**, contacted **Mike Vawter** to continue his report regarding the Parish By-Laws, following up from the Fall General Assembly meeting in **November 2017**.

The St. George Golf Tournament Committee reported that all was set for the golf tournament, the awards dinner and silent auction, which all took place on **Saturday, April 14th**. Thanks is expressed to **Golf Tournament Chairman, George Argyros** and the members of his committee.

The Archdiocese has sent to parishes, including our own, a "Stewardship Banner" which is to be posted reminding one and all to become Stewards of the **Orthodox Christian Church** (under the auspices of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese). This banner will be reproduced as a flier for purposes of enhancing our parish Stewardship efforts.

Finally, the Parish Council voted to give **\$500** to **Philoptochos** in support of the Philoptochos efforts to purchase a AED difibulator machine with which trained parishioners can help anyone in our church who would be suffering a heart attack. Also, the Parish Council opted to entertain discussions in the fall for purchasing an electric knife for the Festival.

## CHURCH AND MENTAL ILLNESS

Only last week gun violence made the news again, extending discussions about addressing the mentally ill people around us and any access that they might have to guns. It's in the news constantly. Those suffering from mental illness live with people both *outside* parish confines, and *inside* the world of worship. Over the past year, our St. George parish has done much to go out and feed the homeless locally. In our efforts, we found that a number of homeless are themselves mentally ill. At the same time, we are encountering mentally ill individuals, as they enter our parish hall usually asking for some financial help. At the same time, let us not pretend that those suffering from PTSD, severe depression, or grave stress are not members of Greek Orthodox parishes, including our own.

In November 2017, David Gushee, in his article, "*Christians, Conflict and Change*," ([www.religionnews.com/2017/07/11](http://www.religionnews.com/2017/07/11)) wrote: "*Imagine you're me, trying to grow our church,...and attract young professionals and young families, and orchestrating a carefully planned worship service. In a room with about 100 people in it, a family with young kids walks in and ends up sitting right behind a reeking man from the street...Not exactly the plan. But should it be?*"

In the United Kingdom this past February 2018, it was reported that the pastors of the Church of England are increasingly dealing with mental health crises among their own parishioners. On this matter, Laura Leatherbarrow noted, "*We're not talking about people who are having major meltdowns, but you're talking about people with depression, anxiety, bipolar. Those type of people...are becoming sicker because there just isn't the care out there so people can journey with them. The church is the 'best place for it,' because they are in every parish.*" ([www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/02/04](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/02/04)).

Back in 2015 in his article "Invisible Illness: Caring for Those with Mental Disorder in the Church," ([www.psychedcatholic.com](http://www.psychedcatholic.com)), Ed Rogers noted that there was a survey of nearly 6,000 individuals in 24 Protestant churches. He reported:

*"About 27% of families state that a member struggles with mental illness. These families believe that they should be able to get help with this mental illness through their church. In fact, helping those with mental illness was SECOND on their priority list of the things they thought the church should be doing. [Sadly] families who did not report mental illness ranked helping with mental illness at FORTY-SECOND out of the 47 listed priorities in the survey."*

We need to accept the fact that within our Orthodox Christian parishes, including our own, some of our parishioners are struggling with some type of mental disorder ranging from mild to wild – that is, from daily anxiety and some depression to the onset of dementia or Parkinson's Disease. Those who knew my mother (of blessed memory) knew that she suffered from Parkinson's and related forms of dementia. Many also know that my brother, George, has suffered all of his life from organic brain damage which has caused him to function at a low level and endure certain seizures. I thank God for Fr. Louis Christopoulos of St. Catherine Greek Orthodox Church in Denver who has faithfully visited him to administer for him the Holy Sacraments.

The point is that my mother and brother were and are *parishioners*. They represent a spectrum of parishioners that are in need of the loving care of the Church. Regardless of the availability of professionals to treat the mentally ill, each of us can help in some way by seeking spiritual virtues of love and patience, as well as the Wisdom of God.

To help, each of us needs to develop the ability to listen to one another rather than trying to "out-talk" each other. By "listening," we mean *comprehending* the issues that are presented by our fellow parishioners as they seek peace and comfort. Ego-based *insensitivity* only yields more pain to those who suffer, contributing more unrest to the parish and the community. In the future, *The Voice of St. George* will include sections entitled "**Church and Mental Illness**" with thoughts about ministering to each other in ways that enhance wellness, along with references to agencies and writings that can offer any specialized help needed.

+FR. THEODORE

## ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT

**1<sup>st</sup> Quarter - March 2018 Endowment Fund Report--The Saint George of the Desert Endowment Fund value is \$330,217.27 at month end March 2018.**

**The fund's value was reduced by \$3,693.66 during the month of March and \$3,556.37 total Year to Date.** This represents a 1.06% decrease YTD in value of the fund against a 1.16% decrease in the Benchmark Return Year to Date.

There were no donations for the month. Our current Asset Allocation follows the Fund's by-laws as shown below:

A. Domestic Equities	\$178,990.43	55%
B. Domestic Fixed Income	\$125,484.66	37%
C. International Equities	\$ 24,953.92	8%
D. Cash & Equivalents	\$ 788.26	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$330,217.27</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Market Observations: Overall, Equities Volatile.**

Our Financial Advisor, Michele Moore Recaps the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter as follows:

"Equities tumbled around the globe during the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter after climbing to record highs in late January. Several partial rebounds had varying degrees of success - the U.S. and China fared better than Europe, the U.K. and Japan - but most stock markets ended March near the low end of their quarterly range. Treasury Yields rose across all maturities (yields move inverse to price). Oil prices fell with the initial stock sell off, but recovered to finish the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter higher than where they began. We see two drivers behind the stock sell off: the upward shift in interest rates expectations and concern of a broader trade war.

Although the ride has turned bumpier, we believe that economic fundamentals justify further gains in the U.S. and global equity prices. The synchronized global expansion is alive and well. Earnings continue to climb briskly around the world. U.S. companies cash flows and earnings, meanwhile, are benefiting mightily from tax re-

form. There really are few signs that a recession will rear its ugly head in the next 12 to 18 months."

This is the investment firm's recap. I feel if a recession does occur, we are cushioned against volatility with our diversification of investments.

**Parishioners are always welcome to donate by check to the Endowment Fund through the St George Parish Office with St George of the Desert Endowment Fund written on the Memo Line of the check. Remember the Church in your estate planning.**

--NICHOLAS M. LATKOVIC,  
Endowment Fund Chairman

### THE MEANING OF CHRIST'S ASCENSION FOR BELIEVERS

The Ascension of Christ is a major feast, which takes place on Thursday, forty days after the Resurrection. This year, the **Feast Day of the Ascension** will be celebrated on **Thursday, May 17, 2018.**

So what is the real meaning of Christ's Ascension? We must look at what happened to the Disciples after the death and Resurrection of the Lord. After the sadness and mourning of the Crucifixion of the Lord, there was hardness of heart for all the Disciples. Indeed, Thomas was not the only disbeliever in the miracle of the Resurrection. The mystery of unbelief affected all. What happened was a change in the role of life when faith in the Lord changed human life.

The mystery of "unbelief" is cleared up by the Gospels. After all, the anticipation was that Christ would succeed here on earth, redeeming Israel and changing the world. Instead, Christ was betrayed and crucified. The news of the Resurrection astonished them; but despite Jesus' own explanation, they did not understand what happened. So, the forty days were now important for Christ's attempt to show how and why things had now changed life for the faithful. The truth is that in the Ascension is the full meaning of Christ's Resurrection.

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*MEANING OF CHRIST'S**ASCENSION FOR BELIEVERS, Continued*

One of the things we need to remember about the Lord's life is how our lives as Christians need to follow in the path of the Lord. We always have faith and belief in the Resurrection. Christ's Rising is the pathway for all of us to dwell in the Eternal Kingdom. But, Christ's Risen Person was miraculous. He appeared to the Apostles despite locked doors. His Person had a spiritual quality. His miraculous Body was received by heaven, just as we shall be received in heaven. So the forty days and the Ascension shows the path that all of us will take. St. John Chrysostom makes this very clear, saying, "*He ascended, and with Him our body ascended, also.*" As firm believers, we know that we also will ascend to the World of Christ as brothers and sisters of the Lord.

Yet, something else took place, as well. The Lord was very plain about this. Those with faith will be received just as the Lord was received. At the same time, with the Ascension of Christ, there follows the *descent* of the Holy Spirit, Who would continue to help change our lives in that we are now the Church. Heaven received the Lord, as Heaven will receive us, as well, but the Holy Spirit is received by us in the mission to change the world. The Ascension of Christ made possible the entrance of the Holy Spirit in the world and through the Church.

It is in the Church that human nature truly ascends to Divine Heights. While we partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, we receive His Holy Spirit. St. John Chrysostom again says, "*He has descended Himself to the lowest depths of humiliation and raised up the human race to the height of exaltation.*"

So, the Ascension is a marvelous gift. It makes our glorification in the Lord a reality. It is the pathway for our personal ascension to God's Kingdom and, as well, it is the way by which the Holy Spirit continues to descend upon all of us.

—MATTHEW DAVIS

**COLORING BOOK**

Please see the "Coloring Book Meeting Flier" enclosed in today's *Voice of St. George*. The deadline for RSVP was this past Sunday; however, those who still want to join for the **Coloring Book** this **Friday, May 4th**, are asked to contact **Rhonda Latkovic** as soon as possible.

The theme for the May Coloring Book meeting will be "Cinco de Mayo," since the following day, May 5th is a holiday for the country of Mexico. A \$5 donation for the luncheon is requested. Also, as usual, a fun-filled raffle will be featured at this gathering.

Coloring book projects include coloring in prints of Church Icons, as well as serene scenery. It provides for loving fellowship and joy among the members and friends of our parish.

The Coloring Book meeting for May 4th will begin at 12:00 noon and continue to 2:00 p.m.

**ST. GEORGE FEAST DAY**

The Feast Day of the Patron Saint of our parish, St. George, was celebrated on **Monday, April 23, 2018**.

Fr. Ted shared the gratitude of all St. George parishioners for the participation in our Feast Day Services of **Fr. David Kruse**, the pastor of **St. Raphael Antiochian Orthodox Church in Thousand Palms** and **Fr. Andrew Lesko**, the pastor of **St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Temecula, California**.

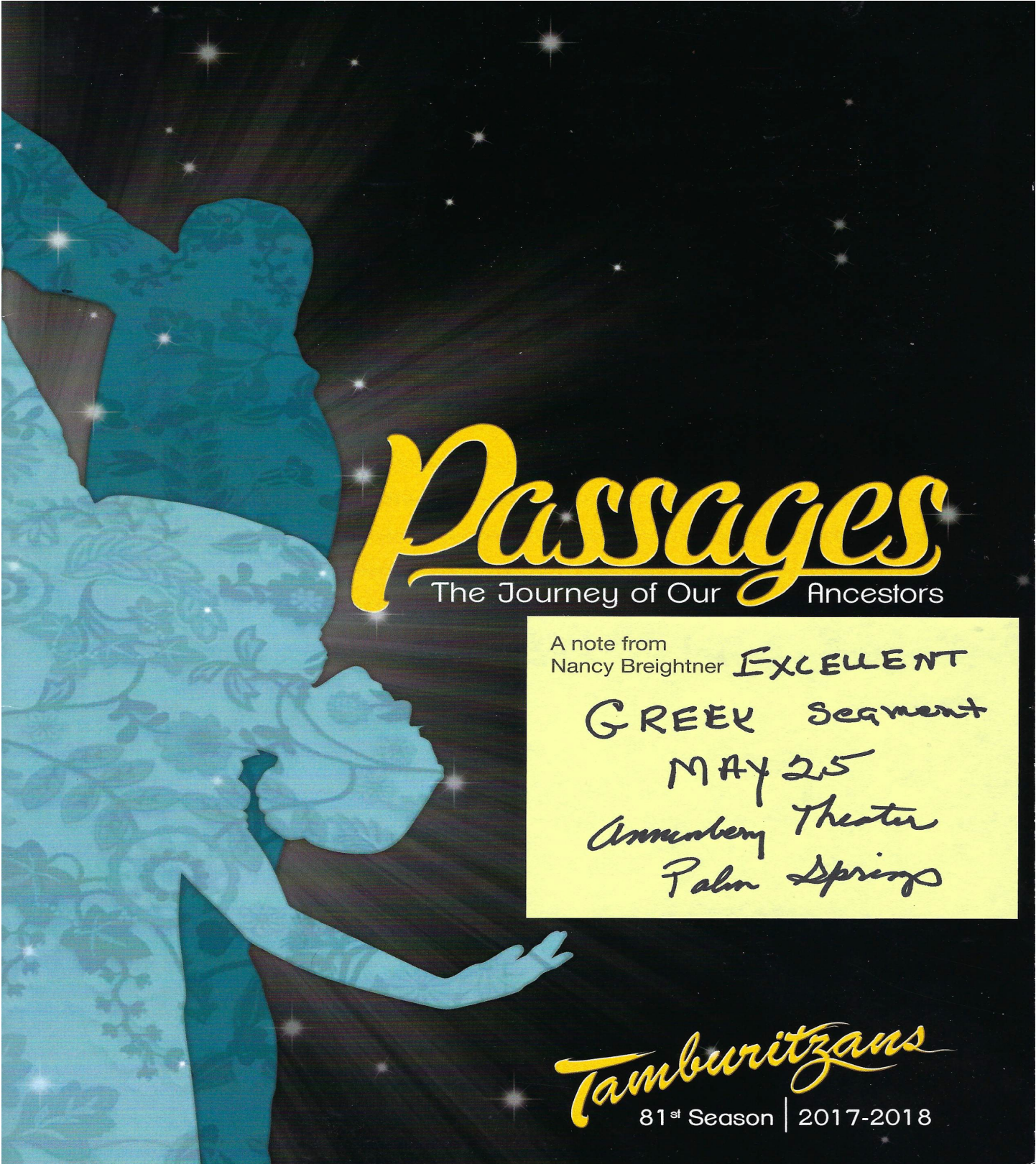
The theme for the day was: "The Martyrdom of 'Unpopularity,'" by which faithful Christians suffer being ostracized by people in the mainstream who follow un-Christian, yet popular teachings of society in general.

Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, a coffee and desert reception was held in our parish hall for those in attendance. Special gratitude is extended to **George Argyros**, who celebrated his Name Day by hosting Fr. David, Fr. Andrew, Fr. Ted and their guests for lunch at his **Towne Center Café** in Palm Desert.

**CULTURAL PERFORMANCE AT ANNENBURG IN PALM SPRINGS**

A special cultural program will be presented on **Friday, May 25, 2018** at the **Annenberg Performing Arts Theater** located at **101 N. Museum Dr., Palm Springs**. The Program is "Passages: The Journey of Our Ancestors" presented by the **Tamburitzans from the Pittsburgh International**

**Folk Arts Institute**. For show times, contact the **Annenberg Performing Arts Theater** at **760-325-4490**. Part 1 of the Program includes cultural performances representing Croatia, Hungary & Romania, Central Europe, and Greece. Part 2 of the Program includes cultural performances representing Serbia, Bulgaria, Mexico, Spain, Cuba, and Eastern Europe.



# Passages

The Journey of Our Ancestors

A note from  
Nancy Brightner **EXCELLENT**  
**GREEK** segment  
**MAY 25**  
**Annenberg Theater**  
**Palm Springs**

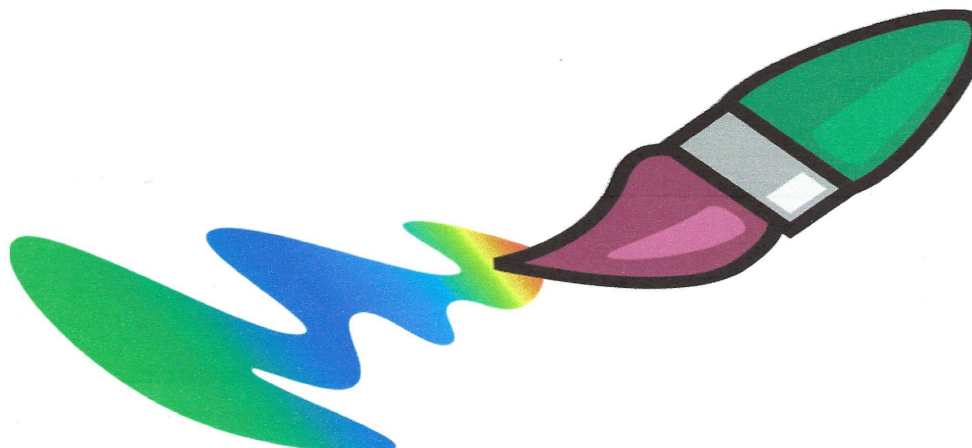
**Tamburitzans**  
81<sup>st</sup> Season | 2017-2018



**THE 4th OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

The 4th of the Ten Commandments is this:  
*"Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy."* When thinking about participating in the Sacrament of Holy Confession, consider such thoughts of soul-searching as:

1. Have I willingly stayed away from Church on Sunday or prevented others from participating in Sunday worship?
2. Have I done unnecessary work on Sundays?
3. Have I spent the Lord's Day in wholesome fashion, or have I profaned it by improper conduct?
4. If I have not been able to participate in worship on Sundays due to illness or grave cause, have I prayed at home?
5. Have I mocked or passed any judgment on those who participate in Sunday worship?
6. Have I tried to maintain the fasting discipline of the Church and observe the Church Feast Days?



# ADULT COLORING SESSION & LUNCHEON

**When: Friday, MAY 4<sup>th</sup> @ 12 PM-2 PM**

**Where: St. George Church Hall**

**RSVP: By APR 29<sup>th</sup> to Rhonda Latkovic**

**We will have a "CINCO DE MAYO" theme for our luncheon & coloring session! Lunch will be served at 12:00 PM with coloring to follow. A raffle will be held. A \$5.00 minimum donation is requested. 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**

**Schedule of Sunday Services: Orthros-8:30 a.m.**  
**Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.**  
**Sunday School-10:30 a.m.**

# MAY 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1  Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.	2- MID-PENTECOST Orthros-8:30 a.m. D. Liturgy-9:30 a.m.  AHEPA Meeting-6:30 p.m.	3  Choir Practice- 1:00 p.m.	4  Coloring Book- 12 noon	5  No Vespers
<b>6- The Samaritan Woman</b> Ep. Acts 11:19-30 Gos. St. John 4:5-42  Kids 'n Cancer Reception	7  Philoptochos Board Meeting- 11:00 a.m.	8  Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.	9	10  Parish Council Meeting - 2:30 p.m.	11	12  No Vespers
<b>13-The Blind Man</b> Ep. Acts 16:16-34 Gos. St. John 9:1-38  Mothers Day	14  Philoptochos General Members' Meeting @ Stuft Pizza/ Westfield Mall- 11:30 a.m.	15  No Bible Study	16	17- ASCENSION OF OUR LORD*  Choir Practice- 1:00 p.m.	18	19  No Vespers
<b>20- Saints of the 1st Ecumenical Council</b> Ep. Acts 20:16-18; 28-36 Gos. St. John 17:1-13 AHEPA Sunday	21- STS. CONSTANTINE AND HELEN Orthros-8:30 a.m. D. Liturgy-9:30 a.m.	22  Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.	23	24  Choir Practice - 1:00 p.m.	25	26-SATURDAY OF SOULS Orthros-8:30 a.m. D. Liturgy-9:30 a.m.  Vespers-5:00 p.m.
<b>27- PENTECOST</b> Orthros-8:15 a.m. D. Liturgy-9:15 a.m. Pentecost Prayers- 10:15 a.m. Ep. Acts 2: 1-11 Gos.St. John 7:37-52; 8:12	28- FEAST OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Orthros-8:30 a.m. D. Liturgy-9:30 a.m.	29  Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.	30	31	* Fr. Ted will need to be away from the 14th to the 19th. Services will be held at St. Raphael Antiochi- an Orthodox Church.	<b>JUNE 2</b>  No Vespers





**Kids 'n' Cancer  
Camp Agape**

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos Kids 'n' Cancer/Camp Agape Ministry is dedicated to providing support for children afflicted with cancer and their families. This beloved ministry offers a compassionate and caring environment, exemplary of Christ's unconditional love, along with an opportunity to shape meaningful friendships and create precious memories.

*"Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me."*  
Matthew 18:5



His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos Board cordially invite you to attend an

*Agape Celebration of Love*  
to benefit the Kids 'n' Cancer Ministry

Sunday May 6, 2018  
Two o'clock

\$75 per person  
Kindly respond by April 20, 2018

Newport Beach Country Club  
1 Clubhouse Drive  
Newport Beach, California



Register online at [sfphiloptochos.org](http://sfphiloptochos.org)  
For more information, please contact the Metropolis Philoptochos office at: 415-431-2600 or via email: [office@sfphiloptochos.org](mailto:office@sfphiloptochos.org).



# 2018 AHEPA SUNDAY



## CHAPTER 528

AHEPA was founded on July 26, 1922 in response to the evils of bigotry and racism that emerged in early 20th century American society. They also assisted Greek immigrants to assimilate into mainstream society.

Today, AHEPA brings the ideals of ancient Greece, which includes philanthropy, education, civic responsibility, and family and individual excellence to the community. Although a majority of the membership is composed of Americans of Greek descent, application for AHEPA membership is open to anyone who believes in the mission of the organization.

## 2018 SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Please go online [ahepa528.org](http://ahepa528.org) for scholarships or see a current AHEPAn or Fr. Ted at Church

### SCHOLARSHIPS PRESENTED AFTER SERVICES

Applicant must be \*active member or son/daughter of an \*active member, in good standing, of AHEPA Chapter 528 and/or St. George Orthodox Church of the Desert steward.

*\*Please read scholarship for eligibility and be aware of all deadlines.*

*Chapter 528 meetings every 2nd Wednesday of the month~6:30pm at St. George Church*

*Chapter President - Wynn Storton PDG --760.832.2825 [Wynn@ahepa528.org](mailto:Wynn@ahepa528.org);*

*Vice President - Nick Krespis*

*Secretary - Gus Kurupas; Treasurer - Harry Loukatos PCP ;*

*Spiritual Advisor - Fr. Ted Pantels ...[Contact@ahepa528.org](mailto:Contact@ahepa528.org)*

## SUNDAY MAY 20, 2018

### MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR FALLEN BROTHERS:

2011— Fr. T. P. Theophilos, 2016—Steve Geotas, 2016—Stan Georgalakis,

2016—Steve N. Pisanos, 2017—Bob Maverick, 2017—George Tcharos

### Fr. Theophilos Theophilos Memorial Scholarship Fund

Donations accepted at [www.ahepa528.org](http://www.ahepa528.org), or mailed to: AHEPA 528 Scholarship fund PO Box 1735  
Palm Desert, CA 92261-1735