

MAY 2019



Voice of St. George

SAINT GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF THE DESERT

74-109 LARREA ST., PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA



Inside this issue

THE EIGHTH DAY

With the celebration of our Lord's Resurrection from the dead, we find ourselves already with Him in His Eternal Kingdom. It is the "Eighth Day." It is life *in* this present world, while not *of* this present world.

In the Book of Genesis, we learn that God created all things in six days. On the seventh day, God rested. This "rest" is the event of Christ our True God bodily *resting* in the tomb, while descending into Hades as God to save His people who lived on earth prior to His Incarnation. His Resurrection on the "Third-Day" of the week is not the beginning of simply another week in terms of temporal time. His Resurrection is the dawn of the *New Day* of life in His Eternal Kingdom. It is the *Eighth Day*.

The liturgical message of the Church is that, while time in this present world is measured in terms of

days, weeks, months and years, the Kingdom of God has no such measurement, since it is Eternal Life, beyond temporal time. Yet, living in this present world, temporal time is part of a reality with which we must deal, while still being alive in God's Eternal Kingdom even from now. Liturgically, the Church takes our temporal sense of time and "Eternalizes" it.

The Third-Day Resurrection of Christ is the Day of Eternal Life with our God. This is the *Sunday* of Pascha. The days following this Sunday are known as "*Bright Week*"--the on-going celebration of Pascha. Liturgically, then, *every Sunday is Pascha* and *every week is "Bright Week," still the on-going celebration of the Sunday Pascha celebration*. Each Sunday throughout the entire year is Pascha and each day of the week that follows is Bright Week, punctuated by the "*today - living*"

of specific events in the life of Christ God—His Incarnation, Baptism, Presentation, Transfiguration —all of which embody His death on the Cross and His Resurrection from the dead, which we live over and over through the Grace of the Holy Spirit as the result of Pentecost.

This is what lies behind the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on week days, when we commemorate the passage of our Church's Saints from this present life to the next life. Even on "week days," Saints enter the "Eighth Day" upon their physical death in this life.

Our life in this present world is not a life apart from our life in the Eternal "Eighth Day." In the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, we understand that we are celebrating the Liturgy at the same time with the Saints and angels in Heaven. On this point,

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we can refer to one of the Theophany Prayers of the Church, noting that, "*The terrestrials celebrate in God's Kingdom along with the celestials.*" The angelic orders join us during the Entrance with the Gospel as we celebrate the Divine Liturgy. They, "*Enter with us so that, together, we can serve and glorify [Christ's] goodness.*" Given this reality, in an empty church edifice, one is not alone: the Saints and angels, though invisible, are still very much present.

To indicate the reality that every Sunday is the Day of Christ's Resurrection from the dead, the priest reads the Sunday Morning Gospel (the Gospel for the Orthros Service) from the right side of the altar table, living in present time the Resurrection event, when the angel, clothed in a white garment, stood at the right side at the empty tomb, saying to the Myrrbearing Women, "*Do not be afraid; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified. He is Risen. He is not here.*" (St. Mark 16: 5-6). This, parenthetically, gives credence to the Tradition of "white" being the liturgical color for celebrating Pascha.

The Apostles lived the Resurrection of Christ as the *new creation*. Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos, in his book, *The Apostolic Gospel*, notes that the Apostles proclaimed Christ's Resurrection as bringing blessings: "*...of cleansing from sin, the gift of new birth from God, and thus participation in the divine life of the Father and the Son...*" (pg. 59). On the liturgical basis, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann states, "*The worship of the Church has at its real center the constant renewal and repetition of time of one unchanging Sacrament...something unrepeatable is recalled and actualized,*" (*Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, pg. 34.). That which is Eternal is actualized for us in the present moment.

Participation in the worship life of our Church is, at the same time, participation in God's Kingdom. Let no one neglect this invitation to participate. It is a genuine gift from God.

+FR. THEODORE

PASCHAL ENCYCLICAL 2019

Beloved in the Lord,



"Come all you faithful, let us worship Christ's Holy Resurrection; for lo, through the Cross, joy has come to the world."

We will hear these powerful words in our Resurrection Matins during the Paschal Vigil Saturday night, just as we do in every Sunday Matins. But on Saturday night, the words will resonate more powerfully. Our Lenten journey, the days of fasting, prayer, and retreat, have culminated in this glorious celebration. Saturday night, when we hear the Gospel of the Resurrection, holding our lighted candles and singing "Christ Is Risen", it will be as if it is the first time. The Tomb is empty. Christ has vanquished death and is risen. Our response to the Good News can only be one of worship and praise of the Almighty God.

Everything we will hear and sing that evening is about the victory of the Cross over death. "*For we know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.*" (Romans 6:9). The pain and tragedy of the Cross has been overcome. As we will hear in the Praises of Matins, "*O Christ, Who destroyed Hades and raised up mankind by Your Resurrection, make us worthy with purity of heart to praise and glorify You.*" Over and over again, we will be invited to enter into that joy, by "*singing the triumphal hymn*", "*drinking a new drink*" and "*offering a hymn to the Master.*"

While we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ, we also celebrate the Resurrection of humanity for we, too, are given the gift of new life. As the opening hymn of the Canon of Pascha states, "*For Christ our God has transported us who sing the triumphal hymn, from death to life, and from earth to heaven.*" Christ's victory over death is a victory for all. Saint Paul writes that death came into the world through the act of one (Romans 5:12) and has held us captive. Christ's death and resurrection have broken the chains of death and instead bound death in chains. In the icon of the

Continued on the next page ----->

PASCHAL ENCYCLICAL 2019, Continued

Resurrection, Christ pulls Adam and Eve out of their tombs. They are "raised up" and through them, all humanity. As Saint Paul writes, "*as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Romans 5:21)

In the Liturgy of Saint Basil we hear, "Rising on the third day, He prepared the way for the resurrection of all flesh from the dead, because it was not possible for the Author of life to be held by it. He thus became the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep, the first-born of the dead, that He might be Himself the first in all things."

Dearly beloved, the Resurrection of Christ is the center and heart of our faith. As Saint Paul also wrote, "*If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.*" (I Corinthians 15:14). Thus, even as we will be celebrating on Saturday night, let us reflect on the significance of the Good News for our life. Let us consider how God's love overpowered hatred, an emotion that permeates our current culture here and abroad. Let us consider how the event of the Resurrection will bring hope to our world. Share the story of the Resurrection of Christ with your children and family. Tell them that this is why we prepared over the days of Great Lent. As you crack your red eggs at the dinner table and for the weeks ahead, share the story of the Resurrection among all members of your family and beyond. Greet everyone you can with the good news, "Christ Is Risen!"

The message of the Resurrection cannot be contained only among us; it has no boundaries. At the Agape Vespers, you will hear the message of the Gospel in many languages, reminding us that the Resurrection is not just news for us, but for all people and for the entire world. Carry the message of God's love for the world with you, and share it whenever you can and wherever you go.

To all that celebrate their Feast Day, I wish de-

votedly many blessings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

With Love in the Risen Lord,
++METROPOLITAN GERASIMOS,
Metropolitan of San Francisco

ST. GEORGE MEMORIAL WALL & GARDEN

Our Saint George Memorial Wall & Garden bronze wall plaque is in production and should be ready for install in early to mid May! We are continuing to place orders for name-plates and have 20 available spaces left (out of 60).

We will begin to prepare the exterior area where the wall is going to be placed by cleaning up the area adjacent to the wall and adding a bench feature along with flowers and lighting.

Name-plate orders can still continue to be placed. Please utilize the order form located in the church hall or see Rhonda Latkovic to place your order. Currently the price is \$175.00 per plaque which can hold one or two names. Please note that the timeline for the next phase of the project (adding another bronze wall) will be in 2020-21, at which time pricing may increase for the nameplates.

--RHONDA LATKOVIC

ST. GEORGE GOLF TOURNAMENT-

Saturday, May 4, 2019 will find St. George parishioners and friends from our general Southern California community teeing off for our annual **St. George Golf Tournament at Desert Falls Country Club in Palm Desert**. Registration will be at **11:00 a.m.**, with the Shot-gun start set for **12 noon**. Following the golf tournament, the tournament **Awards Dinner** will be held at our St. George Greek Orthodox parish hall at **6:00 p.m.**

Enclosed, please find a tournament registration form, which includes a separate section in which to make dinner reservations for those who will not be golfing, but who will be supporting this event with their presence at the Awards Dinner. We are grateful to God for the donation of a Honda for the "Hole-in-One" prize, donated by Unicars Honda at the I-10 Freeway.

CHURCH & WELLNESS

Agape Love and Dispassion

The "Agape Vespers," celebrated as the "culmination" of our formal Paschal celebration offers us these words: *"It is the Day of the Resurrection; let us then...embrace one another. Let us say, brethren, even to those who do not love us: 'Let all be forgiven in the Resurrection...'"*

The love through which all is forgiven is what the Church expresses as "Agape love." It is the love of God for each of us, which we share with others, including those whom we do not know, and/or who do not love us. It is the living expression of St. John's words: *"God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God and God in them."* (1 John 4:16).

Living and expressing Agape Love is key to our Eternal Life with our Lord. Even on the purely mundane level, Agape love is most valuable: *"Agape is universal love, ...More generally, altruism, or agape, helps to build and maintain the psychological, social, and, indeed, environmental fabric that shields, sustains, and enriches us."* ("These Are the 7 Types of Love," by Neel Burton, in *Psychology Today*, June 25, 2016).

Prayer is the means by which we can grow in the virtue of Agape Love, because it is actually the Divine Love of Christ our God. It is the love that is depicted by Him on the Cross. - a truly voluntary, sacrificial love unto salvation. To the core, *it is the force that allows us to forgive ourselves and others.*

The more one loves God and gives himself or herself to living a life-style of expressing God's love, the more one grows in the virtue of *dispassion*. *"Dispassion doesn't mean to no longer feel the passions, but to no longer accept them,"* according to St. Isaac the Syrian, and, St. Maximos the Confessor adds this: *"For the sake of love all the Saints resisted sin, not showing any regard for this present life."* (*Philokalia*, Vol. 2, "Theology, Divine Economy," pg. 677).

Dispassion is the opposite of *acting on the basis of passion* - "passion" being that which involves our pride and appetite for self-gratification. If we

find that we often excuse or justify our "needs" (or passions) in order to continue with habits surrounding, greed, anger, lust, etc. What we really need, then, is spiritual growth by acquiring the virtues of love and dispassion.

In practical terms, dispassion is a quality that allows one to overcome temptations, with the help of Christ our God. St. Evagrius the Solitary uses the word "dispassion," saying in effect, that, by way of good deeds, prayer and fasting, our Lord re-makes us to conform to His Image whereby we dwell in heaven while on earth. This gives way to *"dispassion, [where] there is neither male or female, Greek or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian or Scythian..."* (*Philokalia*, Vol. 1: "Texts on Discernment in Respect of Passions and Thoughts," pg. 26). In essence, dispassion releases us from the thinking that drives dark motives related to jealousy, pride, condemnation of others, gossip, and other such spiritual complications.

Asking our Lord for help for *the purpose of overcoming temptations and doing God's Will* is the heart of the collective teachings of the Saints regarding the essence of prayer. Says St. Maximos the Confessor, *"Our aim is to have our mind stand alone before Christ."* (*Philokalia*, Vol. 2, "Letter to Nicholas the Solitary," pg. 111). According to St. Maximos, dispassion is not a morbid disregard of the human passions. But, he points out that, for one who acquires the virtue of dispassion, *"There is no regard for what is painful in the senses as a privation of pleasure. There is only one pleasure: the marriage of the soul with Christ, the Word of God."* (*Philokalia*, Vol. 2 "On the Lord's Prayer,"). Hence, the freedom from having the need to gratify self-will is the gift of dispassion so as to *share God's love, free from manipulative motives.*

Agape love and dispassion are related virtues. The greater the love for God and neighbor, the more the virtue of dispassion. Let us pray for our Risen Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ to enlighten us accordingly.

+FR. THEODORE

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Parish Council Officers: Chris Maletis, President; Tony Dalkas, Vice-President, Nicholas Kaperonis, Treasurer; Tina Veroulis, Assistant Treasurer & Secretary.



Rhonda Latkovic gave the Stewardship report noting that the *average* family stewardship pledge and offering is very impressive. There are some parishioners who still need to submit their 2019 Stewardship Cards.

A summary of the Festival Review Meeting held on April 1st was provided. Ideas regarding crowd management further maximizing the use of our general facility will be studied.

Currently, efforts continue to be made to encourage people to support our tournament through donations. Unicar Honda is again donating a car for the "Hole-in-One" prize. A special Golf Tournament Committee meeting was scheduled for Monday, April 29th at 4:00 p.m.

The Parish Council voted to upgrade the landscaping around the perimeter of our parish Courtyard for approximately \$600.

The Parish Council formed a committee to pursue the requirements for renting our parish hall and/or our parish courtyard to parishioners, as well as to the public, in general. **Linda Kallis** and **Becky Allen** are spearheading this effort.

Fr. Ted pointed out the need to revisit our Parish By-laws in order to complete the ratification process by addressing items that had been tabled at the November 2017 General Assembly Meeting.

Finally, discussion took place regarding the preparations needed for Holy Week and Easter Church Services.

DESERT PASTORAL CARE SEMINAR

Fr. Ted will be the host pastor for the upcoming Eisenhower Seminar with Desert Pastoral Leaders, which will take place on **Friday, May 10th** at our St. George parish. Topics to be discussed include:

Discussion of why it is important for pastors to strongly encourage parishioners to give consent to the Chaplaincy Office so that they can be contacted:

. For *imminent end-of-life* requests for a patient's personal pastor. **Chaplain Don Craig** will coordinate communication between the Medical Center and the patient's pastor.

. To provide the opportunity for the patient to be visited by clergy and members of their faith community on a regular basis.

Discussion of why it is important for pastors to inform the Chaplaincy that their parishioner was visited. This allows the Chaplains to visit other patients who are not members of parishes or synagogues.

Discussions of working within the HIPAA Laws and Restrictions to protect pastor's/parish and patient's privacy. (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996).

An introduction to the upcoming CPE instructional classes (Clinical Pastoral Education) to be offered at Eisenhower Medical Center.

HOMELESS OUTREACH

Contributed by
Rhonda Latkovic

Our church volunteers made three outings to feed and clothe the homeless of our valley in April.

Working with the Street Life Project Organization we visited Miles Park in Indio and Sunrise Park in Palm Springs on the 11th, 16th, & 18th. In addition, we made several stops in both locations at areas where the homeless congregate to ensure we were able to provide food to as many people as possible.

We wish to express our gratitude to the many volunteers who donated their time to help prepare the food and/or help serve the homeless in the park locations. We could not have done it without you! Our thanks to **Susan Alex, Pat Dalkas, Chris & George Delegans, Louise Dobbs Barringer, Mary Ellen Kassiotakis, Christina Kundanis, Rhonda Latkovic, Father Ted & Presvytera Petula Pantels, Pete & Athena Snarskis, Tina & Angelo Veroulis, Kalista Xitco, and Pam & Larry Zaverdas.** In addition, our thanks to the many parishioners who donated clothing items, shoes & bedding for the homeless. The quantity of donations was so generous that we were able to take several boxes and bags EVERY time we did outreach. All items were needed and were taken and used by the homeless individuals. One touching moment occurred when we were unloading the car to distribute the items at Sunrise Park and a homeless man told us he had been robbed that morning of all his belongings, and the one thing he asked for were sheets. Someone in our parish had donated a set of sheets, which was promptly given to him. Needless to say, he was extremely grateful.

Each outreach we do, our group encounters a new learning experience that equips us to better serve our homeless community in the future. We are already planning ways to streamline our efforts for greater productivity for us and better results for the homeless.



The Street Life Project: Feeding the Homeless - St. George Outreach team at Miles Park in Indio on Tuesday, April 16, 2019. From left to right: Angelo Veroulis, Susan Clark, Fr. Ted Pantels, Pres. Petula Pantels, Athena Snarskis, Pam Zaverdas, Tina Veroulis, Peter Snarskis, Larry Zaverdas, Rhonda Latkovic. Not Pictured: Louise Dobbs Barringer

One of our ideas is to package single meals, both hot or cold to give out to each person, rather than to serve their meal on a plate. We have learned through outreach efforts that many homeless like to have a "to go" container in which uneaten food can be carried. By pre-packaging the meals when we do the food preparation, this streamlines the efforts for all.

We have already created zip-lock plastic bags filled with needed items like a pair of socks, packaged foods, shampoo, toiletries, water, and a county emergency contact information sheet for the homeless. This will be an on-going project of Philoptochos. We prepared the first 150 bags and about 75 have been already handed out. Any donations of these type of new, small or travel size items are greatly appreciated.

We also are going to develop and publish a monthly calendar for the balance of the year so that parishioners can sign-up in advance to assist the homeless. Our plans are to serve one location every month. Any and all volunteer or donation efforts toward this on-going initiative are greatly appreciated.

Your efforts can have positive consequences.
"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."

ST. GEORGE PARISH LENTEN SYMPOSIUM

The St. George Parish Lenten Symposium was held on Saturday, April 6, 2019. We thank our Lord and Savior for the wonderful discussions led by **Fr. John Alexandres**, pastor of St. Prophet Elias Greek Orthodox Church in San Bernardino; **Fr. Andrew Lesko**, pastor of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Temecula; **Fr. David Kruse**, pastor of St. Raphael Antiochian Orthodox Church in Thousand Palms, and **Deacon Euthym Kontaxis, M.D.**, from our own parish of St. George.

Participants were about 40 in number. The morning session began at about 10:30 with Morning Prayers, followed by short presentations from Frs. Andrew Lesko, John Alexandres, David Kruse and Deacon Euthym Kontaxis.

A wonderful luncheon was served at noon, sponsored by our St. George parish Bible Study group.

The afternoon session continued in the parish hall with an open forum featuring questions and concerns from participants, as Frs. Alexandres, Lesko, Kruse, Pantels and Deacon Kontaxis provided answers and insights from our Holy Orthodox Christian point of view. Many of the topics discussed involved the Church's teaching regarding the Nicene Creed and the Final Judgment of our Risen and Ascended Savior at His glorious Second Advent. However, there were also discussions on topics which ranged from the liturgical format of Holy Week Services to issues involving prayer, fasting, Holy Confession, right-to-life, organ donations, marriage, and cremation.

The Symposium concluded with the Evening Vesper Service in preparation for Sunday's Divine Liturgy.

Attached are pictures from this year's Lenten Symposium.



Pictured above - Parish Lenten Symposium Presenters (left to right): Fr. John Alexandres, Fr. Ted Pantels (our host priest), Fr. Andrew Lesko, Fr. David Kruse, Deacon Euthym Kontaxis



Pictured to the left: Parish Lenten Symposium" Top to Bottom:

Fr. Andrew Lesko: "Holy Week: Opportunity to Live With Christ"



Fr. John Alexandres: "The Meaning of Holy Week Services From Personal Experience"



Deacon Euthym Kontaxis: "Briefly: The Orthodox Understanding of Life After Death"



Fr. David Kruse: "How Would We Live Holy Week If We Knew It Were Our Last One?"

SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH

by
Deacon Euthym

"There is nothing better than peace in Christ, for it brings victory over all the evil spirits on earth and in the air. When peace dwells in a man's heart it enables him to contemplate the grace of the Holy Spirit from within. He who dwells in peace collects spiritual gifts as it were with a scoop, and he sheds the light of knowledge on others. All our thoughts, all our desires, all our efforts, and all our actions should make us say constantly with the Church: "O Lord, give us peace!" When a man lives in peace, God reveals mysteries to him.."- St. Seraphim of Sarov

We need to seek the peace from above at all times and at every hour. When we don't have peace, we cannot seek God's will, we cannot have empathy, and we begin to seek alternative temporal solutions to being at peace...alcohol, drugs, amusements, etc. *"Seek ye first as the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be granted unto you"*. The peace from above is paramount and comes to us through the grace of the Holy Spirit which comes to us through the Holy Mysteries, prayer and Scripture. Let us seek peace above all else and open the door for understanding our existence through God's eyes.

"How corrupt I am become through sin! Anything bad, evil, impure immediately enters into my thoughts and is felt in my heart, whilst anything good, right, pure, holy – is often only thought and spoken of, and not felt. Woe unto me! for as yet evil is nearer to my heart than good." Righteous John, Wonderworker of Kronstadt

In the Orthodox life we have a lot of references to sin and how "bad" we are. We often mistake the idea of recognizing our true state (which is that of a sinner) as somehow a self-loathing or self-hate. The opposite is true, by the recognition of our true state, and yes our sinfulness, we see our potential for "Theosis" (sanctification and holiness) through Jesus Christ. Self-awareness along with the reality of God's never ending love for us work together toward our salvation. St. Isaac the Syrian reminds us of the following, **"...seeing ourselves as we really are is a greater miracle than raising**

the dead."

A great book to read concerning this topic is St. Vladimir's professor **Peter Bouteneff's** *How to be a Sinner*. In it he suggests 5 steps toward a healthy identification our true state:

1. **Pray** for self-perception
2. **Examine** ourselves consciously daily.
3. Be **Involved** in the worship life of the Church
4. Put yourself in situations of **Purity**, goodness and holiness
5. Be alert in times of **Crisis** (a ripe time for sin, but an opportunity to see our shortcomings)

STS. CONSTANTINE & HELEN: WERE THEY "EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES?"

We have the opportunity to discuss two Christians who changed the course of Western Civilization. Helen was the wife of the Roman Emperor, Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine, who became Emperor of the Roman Empire by 324 A.D.

Constantine's father was already in charge of the Western portion of the Empire. Of the Emperors prior to Constantine, his father, Constantius, was not among those who persecuted the Christians. However, many of them did persecute Christians. Maxentius was one. Maxentius was unwilling to give up the throne to those who, like Constantine, claimed the right to become Emperor. Just prior to the famous "Battle of the Milvian Bridge," Constantine saw a vision of the Holy Cross in the sky, with the inscription, *"In this Sign Conquer!"* Church historians tell us that Constantine saw this sign as a powerful symbol and considered it to be a sign from our Lord. As a result, Constantine himself and his soldiers would carry the Sign of the Cross with them onto the Milvian Bridge. Constantine later became a believing Christian. However, this did not happen until he was more advanced in age. He was baptized in 337 A.D., after falling seriously ill.

Constantine won "The Battle of the Milvian Bridge" and went on to be proclaimed as the
Continued on the next page ----->

STS. CONSTANTINE & HELEN, continued

rightful Emperor of the Roman Empire. Some of the major accomplishments of Constantine, were: 1) bringing to an end the persecution against Christians by issuing the famous Edict of Milan, granting Christians the right to freely worship; 2) moving the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome (the “West”) to Constantinople (the “East”); 3) convening the First Ecumenical Council of the Church in 325 AD.

His Edict of Milan defied the order of the Emperor Diocletian, who had ordered the legal persecution of Christians throughout the Empire. It is worth noting that one reason for why Constantine’s father did not persecute Christians was that his wife, Helen (Constantine’s mother) was leaning toward Christianity and, later, became a Christian herself.

For Constantine, Rome was losing its luster in comparison to the rich seaport city of Byzantium, located at the Bosphorus. Eying Byzantium as a better place from which to rule, he moved the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to Byzantium – and, in doing so, named the city after himself, calling it Constantinople (“Constantine’s City”). With the relocation of the capital to Constantinople, there was a change from ancient Greek thought to Christian-Greek thought.

Any discussion regarding Constantine’s relationship with the Christians of his time would be grossly incomplete if it did not include thoughts pertaining to his mother, Helen. In Constantine, we see the deep influence of a mother over her son. In her conversion to Christianity, she influenced her son to embrace the Christian Faith. He became the first Roman Emperor in history to convert to Christ. In Helen, we see the impact of a Christian Empress and mother over a reigning Monarch. Helen and her son, Constantine, were oriented toward Christianity and regarded the Christian bishops as leaders of the *Universal* Christian Faith.

With this in mind, Constantine sponsored a Syn-

od of the Church at Nicaea in order that the truth regarding the Person of the Son of God could be proclaimed. This Synod of bishops gave the proclamation that the Eternal Son of God is equal in essence to God the Father. At a later Synod in Constantinople in 389 A.D., the Nicaean Creed was confirmed, proclaiming the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to share in the same substance or essence of Divinity – One God in Three Persons.

Helen’s role shows how we can lead the people we love to the Lord. She did this for Constantine. Mothers and fathers have the ministry of imparting the Faith to their children. Together, Constantine and Helen turned the world on its head, making both Eastern and Western civilization one that is Christian. Therefore, they are known as “Equal to the Apostles.”

–MATTHEW DAVIS

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS



Philoptochos: This will be my last Voice article for Philoptochos. It has been my pleasure serving as Philoptochos President these 2 terms (4 years). It has been gratifying, challenging and I’m thankful to our members for their support.

April

On April 15 we had our General Meeting and Elections for the new Board. Our Nominating Committee did an excellent job finding candidates, signing them up and running the elections. The Committee was chaired by Pres. Petula Pantels and consisted of Terry Ayanopolis, Anne Boukidis-Michas and Bess Heinrich.

Congratulations to the New Board of Directors for 2019 – 2021. The Executive Board: **President- Rhonda Latkovic, First Vice President- Athena Snarskis, Second Vice President- Linda Petalas, Treasurer- Pam Zaverdas, Assistant Treasurer- Tina Veroulis, Recording Secretary- Olympia Pilafidis-Fick, Corresponding Secretary- Gloria Lehman. Board Members are: Pat Dalkas, Alexandra Dymond, Pauline Latkovic, Alice**

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PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS, Continued,

**Poulos and Emily Tcharos. Board Advisor-
Linda Kallis.**

Our Easter Bake Sale was a success. Thank you to all our parishioners purchasing our Easter bread and cookies. Our Baking committee and our members were able to turn out the baked goods in record time. We had music, fun and laughter while in the kitchen.

Palm Sunday, April 21, Philoptochos sponsored the Palm Sunday Luncheon. It was well received. We had 80 reservations. We served spinach salad, baked vegetables, shrimp and rolls. We had Lenten cookies and fruit for dessert. Our food committee did a fantastic job.

Our Outreach Program progresses with feeding the homeless and handing out collected clothing. We fed and clothed the Street Life people on:
April 11 - fed 35 in Palm Springs with our meal packets;

April 16 - fed 45 in Indio with hot food

April 18 - fed 80 in Palm Springs with hot food.
We fed a total of 160 people this month.

May

May 5 is the Agape Celebration of Love Luncheon to raise money for the Kids 'n' Cancer ministry. It will be at the Newport Beach Country Club at 2:00 p.m. You can still make a reservation. See the information in the hall at the coffee bar.

Keeping with our tradition of going to a restaurant for our last meeting, we will be going to Desert Willow Golf Resort. The last General Meeting will be on **Monday, May 13 at 11:30 a.m.** We will be sitting on the Terrace with a beautiful view. You will order off the menu. We need to know if you are coming so we can give an accurate count to management. We want to save a seat for you. Call Rhonda Latkovic or Emily Tcharos to make your reservation.

At this time of year our snowbirds leave. We

wish you all a safe trip back home. And we wish all our members a great summer.

I wish you all many blessings.
--LINDA KALLIS,
Philoptochos President

AHEPA NEWS



We, the members of AHEPA 528 are so proud and amazed at the quality of our annual Scholarship Applicants. In the last 5 years, two of the local High School Valedictorians came from our little church. Several students were Top Ten scholars of the valley. Some had an incredible 4.6 to 5.2 GPA's. Our kids are attending prestigious Universities across the nation, from Dartmouth to Stanford to USC to USD. Others are representing the home state, California and attending top-notch state schools such as UCLA, UC Berkeley, and UC Santa Barbara. Several graduated High School with a year or two, of college, completed. Three are in graduate studies. That's the caliber of applicants we're so very proud of at St. George.

AHEPA 528 is proudly in its 14th year of offering scholarships to students from the St. George and Ahepa 528 community of Palm Desert. Our educational program started with the guidance and inspiration of **Fr. T.P. Theophilos**. To date it has provided over \$39,500 to over three dozen recipients, including STEM majors, and Grad students. Currently, we need your support.

Our biggest annual fundraiser, the Palm Desert Greek Festival did not meet our 2019 fundraising goals. We ask that you consider making a donation, to this worthy cause for our own community's children and the future. Your donation will help fund the Fr. T. P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship program and our newest award, the George Tcharos Memorial Scholarship. We truly appreciate those who donate by monthly subscription and encourage others to participate, for as little as a \$ 25-month commitment. Please, contact me for details.

Continued on the next page ----->

AHEPA NEWS, Continued

AHEPA Sunday is on May 19th. I invite everyone to be present when we award, at least two scholarships as we are using reserves this year. With your generous donations, we may be able to provide three or four students, with funding as we usually do. Please, show these incredible students how proud and supportive their community is of their hard work and dedication to academic excellence. After all, they are the future.

Make all checks payable to: AHEPA CHAPTER 528 P. O. Box 1735 Palm Desert, CA 92261-1735, or make your contribution online at our website: <https://ahepa528.org/scholarship.htm>.

Our chapter 528 meetings are held on the 1st Wednesday of every month at Saint George Church, Palm Desert, unless otherwise notified.

In Christ,
--WYNN STORTON,
Scholarship Committee Chair
Chapter 528 President
Supreme Governor
Region #8

HOLY WEEK 2019

With the guidance from adults, the children of our parish helped in preparing the proper decorum for the celebration of Pascha this year.

To the right: The flower petals used for the Holy Saturday Liturgy are arranged as a beautiful carpet of color to the glory of our Lord in celebration of our Lord's Resurrection from the dead.



The Ladies who decorated the Epitaphio for this year: (From left to right): Athena Snarskis, Ana Doubaratzis, Eva Canakis, Tina Veroulis, Eleni Castrale, Deaconess Krisann Kontaxis, Margarita Pagoulatos, Lula Valissarkos, chairperson, Bess Heinrich and Alice Pulos

As always, this year our parish was blessed with a beautiful Epitaphio, decorated by the dedicated women of our parish who always come together in offering their skills to the glory of our Holy St. George Orthodox Church.

The celebration of Pascha continued into Monday, April 29th with the celebration of St. George, the Patron Saint of our parish. St. George faithful pledged to support the AHEPA 528 efforts to provide service dogs to help our American military veterans. AHEPA 528 President, Wynn Storton, explained the tremendous need for service dogs to assist veterans who suffer from injury or trauma.



AHEPA 528 members stand together in helping provide service dogs for Veterans. Pictured above—left to right: Fr. Ted, Vasili Karalis, Wynn Storton and George Argyros.

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/ email: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com
Telephone: (760)568-9901 / FAX: 9760) 568-9492

MAY 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sunday Schedule Orthros-8:30 a.m. D. Liturgy-9:30 a.m. S.School-10:30 a.m.			1 AHEPA Meeting-6:30 pm	2 Choir Practice - 1:00 p.m.	3 LIFE-GIVING FONT Orthros-8:30 a.m Divine Liturgy- 9:30 a.m.	4 St. George Golf Tournament Desert Falls CC Tee-off-12 noon Awards Dinner-6 pm
5- St. Thomas the Apostle Ep. Acts 5:12-20 Gos.- St. John 20:19-31	6	7 Bible Study- 10:00 a.m. Parish Council- 2:30 a.m.	8	9 Choir Practice- 1:00 p.m. Parish Council- 2:30 p.m.	10 Eisenhower Chaplains' Pastor Seminar 10:00 a.m.	11
12 Myrrhbearing Women Ep. Acts 6: 1-7 Gos. St. Mark 15:43-47; 16:1-8	13 Philoptochos General Meeting and Luncheon-- at Desert Willow C.C. - 11:30 a.m.	14 Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.	15	16 Choir Practice - 1:00 p.m.	17	18
19 Sunday of the Paralytic Ep. Acts 9:32-42 Gos. St. John 5: 1-15 AHEPA Sunday	20	21 SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELEN Orthros-8:30 am. Divine Liturgy- <u>9:30 am.</u> Bible Study- 11:00 a.m.	22 MID- PENTECOST Orthros-8:30 am Divine Liturgy - 9:30 am.	23 Choir Practice- 1:00 p.m.	24	25
26 Sunday of the Samaritan Woman Ep. Acts 11:19-30 Gos. St. John 4: 5-42	27	28 No Bible Study	29	30 Choir Practice- 1:00 p.m.	31	

2019 PHILOPTOCHOS MEMBERSHIP

BECKY ALLEN	EVELYN KARAS
STACY ARGYROS	KRISANN KONTAXIS
TERRY AYANOPOLIS	CHRISTINA KUNDANIS
KAY BELL	ANNETTE LASKARIS
ANNE BOUKIDIS-MICHAS	PAULINE LATKOVIC
LINDA BOZIGIAN	RHONDA LATKOVIC
PAULETTE CARKONEN	NICK LATKOVIC (ASSOC.)
ELENI CASTRALI (ASSOC.)	MARY LEE
PENELOPE CHIOTIS	GLORIA LEHMAN
SUSAN CLARK	ANNETTE LEWIS
PAT DALKAS	DEBBIE LUKATOS
JOSIE DESNOYER	CAROL LYONS
ANN DIXON	BESS MANESIS
LOUISE DOBBS-BARRINGER (ASSOC.)	EVE MEEK
ALEXANDRA DYMOND	MARGARITA PAGOULATOS
JOAN FAKINOS	JOAN PANOPOULOS
ATHENA HARRIGAN	FR. TED PANTELS (ASSOC.)
MELISSA HAWKINS	PRESV. PETULA PANTELS
BESS HEINRICH	LINDA PETALAS
LINDA KALLIS	OLYMPIA PILAFIDIS-FICK
PENNY KARAGIANIS	DEBBIE POUSEN
ANNA PRINNEAS	ALICE PULOS
JEANNIE RANGLAS	VICTORIA REED
ATHENA SNARSKIS	CAROL SPELIOPOULOS
GINNIE STOCKER	EMILY TCHAROS
LULA VALISSARAKOS	TINA VEROULIS
ANGIE WYSUP	KALITSA XITCO
MARY ZACHARIADOU	GABRIELLA ZAHARIA
NELLIE ZAMBRANO	PAM ZAVERDAS



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 5, 2019
Two o'clock



Newport Beach Country Club
1 Clubhouse Drive
Newport Beach, California

\$75 per person
Kindly respond by April 20, 2019

Register online at sfphiloptochos.org
For more information, please contact the Metropolis Philoptochos office at: 415-431-2600 or via email: office@sfphiloptochos.org



SAVE THE DATE!
Monday, May 13th at 11:30 AM

Desert Willow
A Golf Resort
Finchley & Mountain View
One Legendary Location Two Unforgettable Courses

38-995 Desert Willow Drive
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Our last Philoptochos general members meeting before the summer break. More info to follow.

ST. GEORGE OF THE DESERT ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT—SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2019

EVENT REGISTRATION

Name _____
 Company (Organization) _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

PLAYER NAME(S)	INDEX
1 _____	_____
2 _____	_____
3 _____	_____
4 _____	_____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Individual Player(s) _____ (# of players) x \$175 \$ _____
 Tee Sponsorship (s) _____ (# of sponsorships) x \$100 \$ _____
 Traditional Greek Dinner _____ (# of dinners) x \$35 \$ _____
 Donation _____ \$ _____

Total Amount \$ _____

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT
Registration deadline:
 Friday, April 26, 2019
Pay by credit card or make checks payable to:
 St. George Greek Orthodox Church
Send check and registration form to:
 PO Box 4755 Palm Desert, CA 92261