

JULY 2022



# Voice of St. George

**SAINT GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
OF THE DESERT  
74-109 LARREA ST., PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA**



## THE CHERUBIC HYMN

During the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, the hymn that is chanted/sung following the Gospel reading (and the sermon) is known as *The Cherubic Hymn*. The hymn reminds us that we are to praise God "together with the Cherubim." The Cherubim is an order of the Holy Angels, who constantly praise God, with the full knowledge that God is One God in Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit -- the Holy Trinity. We are reminded to praise God like the angels in heaven, who have no *worldly cares*. For us, praise to Christ our God means that we firmly believe that He is our only hope for "every good thing from above."

Laying aside all worldly cares is not easy to do in our age, which is inundated with fears and uncertainties. Hence, *worry* and *anxiety* disturb our peace of soul and mind and distract us from the awareness of God's great love for each of us -- and for others, as well.

The effort to "lay aside all worldly cares" is a matter of spiritual effort, which involves prayer. Here, the Divine Liturgy itself gives us guidance. Following the Great Entrance at the conclusion of which the Holy Gifts are placed on the Altar Table, there is a litany that is intoned by the priest or deacon before we recite the Creed, in which we pray for "all that is good and profitable for our souls

and peace in the world." With this petition, we confess, that, according to our Church's teaching, the soul is intertwined with the body and the mind. Our bodies are vehicles for good deeds, which first take form from within our minds and hearts. Good deeds go far in storing up "treasures for our souls." Ultimately, what is good for our souls is the Wisdom of God so that we can understand the proper uses of our material needs. For example, water is needed for our physical survival; yet, it is also needed as a vehicle for the Holy Spirit in Baptism, and for the blessing of homes.

From this one example, we see that God has given us many "worldly gifts" which are intended to be useful for the health of the soul. How we *use* these gifts makes a difference as to whether we seek to sanctify our lives and the lives of others in order for Godly peace to prevail around us, or whether we seek personal satisfaction regardless of God's Commandment to love one another.

Spiritual life is a matter of praying for enlightenment from our Lord, through which we can know what worldly matters are needful for our salvation and how they are to be used, as opposed to placing all of our hopes on things of the world, rather than on the love of God.

+FR. THEODORE

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**Mailing Address**  
**St. George Church**  
**P.O. Box 4755**  
**Palm Desert, CA 92261**  
**Tel: (760) 568-9901**  
**FAX: (760) 568-9492**  
**Email: [pdsaintgeorge@gmail](mailto:pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com)**  
**Website: [www.go-stgeorge.org](http://www.go-stgeorge.org)**  
**-Fr. Theodore Pantels, Pastor--**  
**-Dcn. Euthym Kontaxis, M.D.**

**SPIRITUAL THOUGHTS by Deacon Euthym**

*"There is some kind of blissful vision reserved for us... the radiant beauty of that beatitude which God stores up for them that fear Him... It is for this that our hearts are being trained through all the hardships and trials of this life. Do not feel surprise at being schooled amid toil: you are being schooled for a wondrous destiny..."* Blessed Augustine

The trials of life are lessons and preparation for the "big reveal" of eternal communion with God who is perfect love. When we suffer persecution, struggles, sufferings or any type of setback, it is like fertilizer for the garden of our souls, which will "bloom" as we draw closer to our God and Creator. As St Paul says, "not I, but Christ in me". God allows trials in the world, often as a result of our free will in choosing to commit sins, therefore separating ourselves from God. Even little sins can have big consequences, requiring repentance and change.

The more we exercise our free will and align it with God's will, the hardships of life, the consequences of the fallen world, have less impact on our souls. We live in communion with God and whatever good we can offer the world is from Him, through us.

*The best prayer is: "Lord you know all things, do with me as you will" ...St Theophan the Recluse*

If we could only pray with all of our hearts this way, then our faith, our lives, our relationships, our self-worth, would not be "outcome-dependent." Rather, we would turn our lives completely over to Christ and accept and give thanks for all things...We become new creations in our baptism. As St. Paul wrote, "As many as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ." We do not lose our identity, rather we find our true identity by becoming united with our Creator. Any other identity is a product of the fallen world, is in-authentic and doomed in terms of our salvation. Let us be our authentic selves, asking for God's will, not ours and glorifying Him no matter our circumstances.

**ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS'  
ENCYCLICAL FOR FATHER'S DAY  
& SUPPORT FOR  
THE CLERGY PENSION FUND**



Sunday of All Saints  
June 19, 2022

Unto the...entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America:

My Beloved Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This Father's Day, I ask for our entire Archdiocese to remember the "fathers" of our communities across the nation – that is, our very own clergy, who serve everyone so selflessly. This is our second year of recognizing the parish clergy of the Church on this special occasion. And the fact that it coincides with the feast of All Saints gives it even greater force, as we ourselves are all "called to be saints" as well (Romans 1:7)

We observe this day for our priestly "fathers in Christ" by asking for special collections to be made for the Clergy Pension Fund. Your generosity will help secure this fund for future generations of clergy, who sacrifice so much for the life of our communities. Such donations can be made either individually – with voluntary, charitable giving – or through parishes, which support this effort by their participation in the Clergy Benefits Program. Either way, every gift has a tremendous impact on the health of the fund, by bringing it to its full potential.

And so, I express to each and every member of our Sacred Archdiocese my profound gratitude for the support – both material and spiritual – that they offer to our priests. Your dedication to the life of our parishes through your sustaining love for the clergy is vital to our progress as a Church. Therefore, as we fulfill the injunction to 'honor our fathers,' let us make of this Father's Day a very special opportunity for true philanthropy and support the Clergy Pension Fund.

With paternal blessings and love in Christ,  
+ELPIDOPHOROS  
Archbishop of America

## PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ICON & BOOK GIVE-A-WAY

In the process of reviewing our St. George parish book store, we find many books and icons that can be given away as a blessing for those who take them. In this way, we can clear out the inventory that exists due to unsold books and icons so that we can make way to order new books, icons, and Orthodox Christian religious items that are newer, up-to-date, and more attractive.

Throughout July, a table in the corner of our parish hall will contain books and icons that are free to anyone who wants them.

**CHANTING**--Those who are interested in learning how to chant the hymns of our Church as we gather for Orthros and/or Vespers, as well as for Feast Days of the Church, please contact Fr. Ted at: **(760) 880-5869** or [frt.j.pantels@gmail.com](mailto:frt.j.pantels@gmail.com). Chanting for our Church Services brings many blessings to all of us.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**--Sunday School classes will resume in September. However, we are in need of Sunday School teachers. This is a precious ministry to help mold the lives of our youth in order for them to experience future blessings. Please contact **Fr. Ted and/or Athena Snarskis** at: [pdssaintgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:pdssaintgeorge@gmail.com), or (760) 568-9901.

**WELCOMING COMMITTEE**--As parish Welcoming Committee is very much needed! Visitors and new parishioners need to be welcomed by one and all when they attend our parish. Those who would like to serve our Lord in this capacity are asked to contact Fr. Ted at (760) 880-5869. An updated "Welcome Brochure" is in the process of being prepared.

**PARISH DIRECTORY**-- One of our summer projects is to present to our St. George parishioners an updated "St. George Parish Directory. Enclosed, please find a pastoral letter, together with a Participation Form to be completed in order to be included in the directory.

## CONGRATULATION TO OUR GRADUATES

Congratulations to **Christian Kontaxis**, who graduated from **Stanford University**, having completed his studies for a Master's Degree in the sciences of **Sustainability and Global Innovations**.

Also, congratulations to **Stephen Hawkins, Jr.**, who graduated from **Rancho Mirage High School**.

Many blessings to Christian and Stephen as they go forward with the Lord along on life's journey.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO... Athena and Josh Harrington**, who became the first husband and wife team to be honored together at **Eisenhower Medical Center**, with the following recognitions:

**Congratulations to Josh Harrigan** for winning "**Nursing Excellence: RN Outpatient/Procedural**" in the **Cardiac Cath Lab**. Josh was also honored as a nominee for **Nurse of the Year**, along with two others.

**Congratulations to Athena Harrigan** for winning "**Innovation and Creativity in Nursing Practice**" in the **Electrophysiology Lab**.

**Josh Harrigan** is the son-in-law of **Athena and Peter Snarskis**, and **Athena Harrigan** is their daughter.

We extend our congratulations and best wishes to the entire family, and we give thanks to God for their wonderful contributions in the ministry of healing the pains and ailments of our fellow Coachella Valley citizens.



Josh and Athena Harrigan receive recognition as top nursing technicians at Eisenhower Medical Center. Many blessings!

## GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE CLERGY-LAITY ASSEMBLY AND NATIONAL PHILOPTOCHOS CONVENTION

We are blessed to have three of our members represent our St. George parish at the **Archdiocese Clergy-Laity Assembly** and the **National Philoptochos Convention** in New York, which will be held from **Sunday, July 3rd to Thursday, July 7th.**

Our Parish Council Treasurer, **Nick Latkovic** will

be our parish delegate at the Archdiocese Clergy-Laity Assembly, and **Rhonda Latkovic** and **Margarita Pagoulatos** will represent our St. George Parish Philoptochos.

We thank God for their efforts in putting our parish "on the map," and we pray that, with their participation at this event, we will be allowed to learn more about strengthening the ministries of our St. George parish.

We look forward to welcoming their safe return!

### WEEKDAY CHURCH SERVICES - JULY 2022

Wednesday, July 20th.....ST. ELIAS THE PROPHET  
Orthros-8:30 a.m / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, July 26th.....ST. PARASKEVI  
Orthros-8:30 a.m./ Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, July 27th.....ST. PANTELEIMON  
Orthros-8:30 a.m./ Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

### SUMMER BIBLE STUDY

Throughout the summer, Fr. Ted will be holding **Bible Study sessions** on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. The Bible Study group has decided that the summer studies will be focused on the **Book of Acts**. This is a great opportunity to become re-acquainted with the Bible from the perspective of understanding the Apostolic nature of our Holy Greek Orthodox Faith.

### 2022-2023 ST. GEORGE MASTER CALENDAR

Our parish 2022-2023 Master Calendar planning is underway. Already, we have a set date for our **St. George Golf Tournament** at Desert Willow Golf Resort for Saturday, April 22, 2023. Save the date! **Great and Holy Pascha** is Sunday, April 16, 2023, with **Great Lent beginning** on Monday, February 27, 2023. Our **Greek Festival for 2023** is in the planning stage, with President's Weekend in mind. Finally, interest has been expressed in having **two** parish **spiritual retreats** -- one in the fall when our "snow birds" return and another as our annual St. George Parish Lenten Retreat in March or April of 2023. Other dates in the planning include our **Fall General Assembly Meeting** in mid-November 2022 and a New Year's Dinner sponsored by our AHEPA Chapter. Please contact our parish office as soon as possible at (760) 568-9901 or [pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com) to schedule baptisms, or weddings, or organizational events in order to avoid conflicts with our calendar events.





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website: [www.go-stgeorge.org/](http://www.go-stgeorge.org/)

TO: All Beloved Faithful of St. George Greek Orthodox Church

June 30, 2022

Dearly Beloved,

This summer we have taken on the project of updating our St. George Parish Directory. Over the past few years, we have seen some of our members move to other locales; we have welcomed others who have chosen to make our Coachella Valley their new home. In addition, over time, we have seen some of our members fall asleep in the Lord.

The format of the new parish directory will be very similar to our Philoptochos Chapter directory, making the cost for publication very reasonable. Those who would like to help underwrite this cost are asked to contact me for details.

On the reverse side of this letter, please find a participation form to be completed and returned to our office by July 20, 2022 so that: 1) Your listing will be accurately printed; or, 2) Without further inquiry, we can respect your wish to not participate in our parish directory.

May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant to you all of His great and rich blessings now and always.

Fr. Ted Pantels,  
Parish Priest



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ST. GEORGE 2022 PARISH DIRECTORY PARTICIPATION FORM

**Do not write on lines for items that you do not want to appear in the directory. Please print out all information as you want it to appear in the directory. Check for spelling errors.**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS:

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_, State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

If you do not want to participate in the St. George 2022 Parish Directory, please indicate below:

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not want to participate in the St. George 2022 Parish Directory.

X \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name