

DECEMBER 11, 2016

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

74-109 Larrea Street  
Palm Desert, California 92260

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# THE LADDER

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS

## Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 4755

Palm Desert, CA.92261

Tel: (760) 568-9901

or: (760) 880-5869

– Fr. Theodore Pantels,  
Proistamenos (Pastor)

– Deacon Euthym Kontaxis,  
M.D.

## Holy Communion Order

1. Please remain standing while following the directions of our ushers.
2. Ladies, kindly remove lipstick before receiving.
3. When receiving Holy Communion, make the Sign of the Cross, state your name (baptismal name), and naturally receive as if being fed.
4. Non-Orthodox Christians may not receive Holy Communion, but they may receive the Holy Bread at the end of the service.
5. All Orthodox Christians must be spiritually prepared to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Please see the priest if you have any questions.

## BECOMING A NEW PERSON

The general teaching of the Saints emphasizes the fact that, by virtue of the Birth of Christ into the world, our very "being" has changed from a "being" of flesh into a "being" of the spirit, joined with Christ, Who is Perfect God and Perfect Man. Thus, we no longer possess basic natural abilities, but we now possess divine abilities. St. Basil explained our "After Christ" "being," saying, "Christ emptied Himself, taking on the form of a servant, and becoming con-

formed to the fashion of our lowliness so that He might make us conformable to the image of His glory." (Divine Liturgy of St. Basil).

However, we have total freedom to choose between God's Will and our own self-centered plans. Through the garment of Baptism and Chrismation we have the grace of the Holy Spirit to vanquish every evil and unclean spirit. For this reason, St. Paul wrote to the Colossians: "Now put off from yourselves everything: anger, malice, evil, blasphemy, unseemly conversations..." (Colossians 4:6). This garment that we need in order to enter the King-

*continued on page 2*

## ST. SPYRIDON THE WONDERWORKER

Tomorrow we commemorate St. Spyridon, known as the God-bearing Father of the Church and the great defender of Corfu and the boast of all the Orthodox. He had Cyprus as his homeland. He was simple in manner and humble of heart, and was a shepherd of sheep. When he was joined to a wife, he begat of her a daughter whom they named Irene. After his wife's departure from this life, he was appointed Bishop of Trimythus, and thus he became also a shepherd of rational sheep.

When the First Ecumenical Council was assembled in Nicaea, he also was present, and by means of his most simple words stopped the mouths of the heretics known as the Arians who were wise in their own conceit. By the divine grace which dwelt in him, he wrought such great wonders that he received the surname "Wonderworker." So it is that, having tended his flock piously and in a manner pleasing to God, he reposed in the Lord about the year 350, leaving to his country his sacred relics as a consolation and source of healing for the faithful.



Η γενική διδασκαλία των αγίων τονίζει την πραγματικότητα ότι, δια της ενσαρκώσεως του Λόγου του Θεού, το <ον> του ανθρώπου άλλαξε από <ον> της σαρκός σε <ον> του πνεύματος ηνωμένος με τον Θεάνθρωπο Χριστόν. Συνεπώς, ο άνθρωπος δεν έχει πλέον μόνον φυσικές δυνάμεις, αλλά θείκες δυνάμεις. Ο Άγιος Βασίλειος εξήγησε το <μετά Χριστόν> <ον> του ανθρώπου, λέγοντας, <Ο Χριστός εκένωσεν εαυτόν μορφήν δούλου λαβών, συμμορφός γενόμενος τῷ σωματί της ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν, ἵνα ἡμᾶς συμμορφούς ποιήσῃ της εἰκόνος της δόξης Αὐτου.> (Θ. Λειτουργία Αγ. Βασιλείου).

Ομως, έχουμε την πᾶσαν εὐλευθερίαν να ἐπιλέξουμεν ἀναμεσα στο θέλημα του Θεού και την δικήν μας ἐγωκεντρική βούληση. Δια της ἐνδυμασίας του Αγ. Βαπτισματος και του Αγ. Χρισματος, έχουμε την χάριν του Αγίου Πνεύματος να κατακτησομεν το καθε πονηρο και ἀκαθρατο πνεύμα. Για αὐτον τον λόγον, ο Αγ. Παῦλος ἐγράψε στους Κολοσσαίς: <Νῦνι δε ἀποσεσθε και υμεις τα παντα: ὀργην, θυμον, κακίαν, βλασφημίαν, αἰσχρολογίαν ἐκ του στοματος υμῶν...> (Κολ. 4: 6). Η ἐνδυμασία μας για να εἰσελθῶμεν στο Δείπνον του Θεού εἶναι ἡ στολή του Βαπτισματος, την ὁποίαν την διατηρομεν συνεχῶς καθαρῇ δια μέσου της συνεχούς μετανοίας.

Η μετανοία εἶναι ἀδύνατον ὅσο ἐπιλεγόμεν να μὴ συντριψόμεν τον πειρασμο και το κακο. Πραγματι, ἡ μετανοία εἶναι το “R.S.V.P.” για να παρακολουθησομεν το Μυστικό Δείπνο του Κυρίου. Οι δικαιολογίες παρεμποδίζουν τις προσπάθειες μας να μετανοήσομεν. +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

dom of God is one that we are to constantly maintain in a condition of cleanliness by virtue of our constant repentance.

Repentance is the “R.S.V.P.” that we need in order to join in the Heavenly Banquet. Excuses hamper our efforts to repent. From today’s Gospel passage, the excuses offered in justification for declining the invitations to the king’s banquet were, in reality, distractions described as “excuses.” However, excuses are not confessions and to seek being excused is much different from seeking forgiveness.

Repentance of sins is the beginning of our path leading to Baptism (or to the “second baptism,” known as Holy Confession) and then on to Holy Communion. A trademark of a repentant life-style is that one is always aware of our Lord’s presence and is therefore always aware of his or her accountability before the Heavenly King. This continuous presence before Christ our God is, at the same time, a life-style consisting of our baptismal vows to reject Satan and all of his demons and to accept Christ our True God. Our participation in the Sacrament of Holy Communion is the on-going reversal of the sin of Adam and Eve. They were commanded not to eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for in so doing, were deceived into thinking they were gods; here, we are commanded to partake of the fruit of the vine and the grain made into bread, so that we can be united to Christ the True God.

We now “wear Christ.” As such, anger, malice, bearing false witness and other sins are replaced with patience, forgiveness, truth and other virtues consistent with the character of one in whose soul Christ abides. Our “new self” in Christ is humble and in humility, we allow ourselves to be aided by the grace of the Holy Spirit, through prayer and worship, acquiring day-by-day the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

This acquisition of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is both a life-time experience, as well as one that is instantaneous. In his book, *Experiences During the Divine Liturgy*, Fr. Stephanos Anagnostopoulos, explains an important detail in the prayer asking for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Precious Gifts—the bread and the wine: “Why do the words said by the priest ask that God first send the Holy Spirit upon us and then upon the Precious Gifts?...We must all first be cleansed of sin, sanctified, transfigured, converted and go through the good transformation of the soul and body.” (pg. 535). Thus, the “old, pre-Christian” person who pretends to be a god is replaced with the “new, after baptism” person who is united to the True God.

+FR. THEODORE

**PRAY FOR THE SICK:** Yvonne Flessas, George Aeder, Adele Gal-lade, Kathy Ligeros, Nicholas Kyriakou, Erika Aguilar (Ana and Wynn Storton’s daughter) (*Many of the faithful on our Prayer List face chronic or serious illness*).

HYMNS AND READINGS FOR TODAY'S CELEBRATION OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

**ANTIPHON I:** *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou..." (By the prayers of the Theotokos...)*

**Verse 1—** Bless the Lord, O my soul, and everything within me, bless His Holy Name.

**Refrain:** *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou, soter, soston imas."*

**Verse 2—:** Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His rewards.

**Refrain:** *"By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, save us."*

**Verse 3—:** The Lord prepared His throne in heaven and His Kingdom rules over all.

**Refrain:** *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou, soter, soston imas."*

**Chanter(s):** *Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.*

**Refrain:** *"By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, save us."*

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**ANTIPHON II:** *"Soston imas Ie Theou..." (Save us, O Son of God...)*

**Verse 1—** Praise the Lord, O my soul! I shall praise the Lord while I live; I shall sing to my God as long as I exist.

**Refrain:** *"Soston imas, Yie Theou, O Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si alleluia."*

**Verse 2 –** Blessed is He whose help is the God of Jacob; his hope is in the Lord his God.

**Refrain:** *"Save us, O Son of God, Who arose from the dead, we sing to You, Alleluia."*

**Verse 3 –** The Lord shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, to all generations.

**Refrain:** *"Soston imas Ie Theou, O Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si alleluia."*

**Doxa Patri ke Io ke Aghio Pnevmati ke nin ke aei ke eis tous eonas ton eonon.**

**People:** *"O Monogenis Ios ke Logos tou Theou..." (O Only-Begotten Son and Word of God...)*

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**HYMNS FOR THE ENTRANCE WITH THE HOLY GOSPEL: ANTIPHON III—** *This is the day the Lord made; let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein. Let heaven and earth praise Him the seas and everything that moves in them.*

**Sunday Resurrection Hymn:** *Ex ipsous katilthes...[Tone 8] (O Lord by Your Sacred Cross You abolished death and granted unto the thief blessed paradise. The Myrrh-bearers ceased lamenting and turned to joy. The Apostles did preach the Good News at Your command that You had risen from the dead, O Christ our God, bestowing Your mercy upon the world for evermore.)*

**Hymn for the Holy Forefathers:** *En pisti tous propatores...(By faith You justified the Forefathers, having through them betrothed to yourself the Church that came out of the nations. The saints are boasting in glory; for the glorious fruit, the Virgin who without seed gave birth to You, is from their progeny. At their entreaties, O Christ our God, save our souls. )*

**Hymn for St. George:** *Os ton ehmaloton eleftherotis...(As the one who sets the captives free and the protector of the poor; as physician to the sick and the champion defender of kings, bearer of trophies are you, O Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.)*

**Kontakion Hymn:** *Ee Parthenos symeron...(On this day the Virgin Maid goes to the grotto to give birth to the pre-eternal Word in an ineffable manner. Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds Him who willed that He appear as a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God.)*

**READINGS:** Epistle - Colossians 3: 4-11/ Gospel— St. Luke 14;16-24

**Megalinarion:** Axion Estin (page 52 in the Divine Liturgy Books)

**Communion Hymn:** *Enite ton Kyrion...(Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Allelouia.)*

*"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the well-spring of life"*

*Proverbs 4:23*



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Coffee Hour: Matushka Gloria Lehman

**PHILPOPTOCHOS – Our Christmas Bake Sale starts today.** Pick up your bread and cookies at the Sale table. The Sale will continue next Sunday, December 18. **We need a Coffee Hour Hostess for December 25** and the Sunday's in January. Please see Linda Petalas. **Save the date! Taverna Night will be on Saturday, January 7, 2017.** See the flyer. Tickets are being sold at the Philoptochos table.

**STEWARDSHIP UPDATE –** December Stewardship Update-We want to thank our stewards for their many contributions this year. ( Please see Ladder insert.) Total stewardship received as of Dec. 8th is **\$103,144.** Total pledge for 2016 is \$108,194. Outstanding amount is \$5050 due from 35 parishioners. Please see **Rhonda Latkovic** if you wish to check your amount paid or due by year end. We will be sending 2016 statements out by the end of January. In addition, we will be distributing **the new 2017 stewardship forms on or around January 7th.** Thank you.

**CHRISTMAS BASKETS –** We are looking for volunteers to assist with the Philoptochos Christmas Basket project. We will meet on Tues., Dec. 13th, 11:00 am to assemble & then deliver the baskets to the shut-ins of our community. This will take about an hour of your time to either help with the assembly or delivery of the baskets. Please, we need volunteers! All are welcome to help us to spread joy & God's love this Holiday Season. Contact Rhonda Latkovic at [\(714\) 875-4661](tel:7148754661) (phone or text) or email:[r.s.fleminglatkovic@gmail.com](mailto:r.s.fleminglatkovic@gmail.com)

**COLORING BOOK GROUP –** The Coloring Book Group will meet on **Friday, December 16, 2016** at our parish hall, with a Christmas theme. See the enclosed flier.

**PARISH ELECTION – Today...** following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. The candidates for election to serve are (listed in alphabetical order):

- Becky Allen                      -Tony Dalkas
- Spiro Astmos                    -Lula Valissarakos

Those serving as members of the **Election Committee** are: **Michael Long, Matushka Gloria Lehman and Presvytera Petula Pantels.** Only Stewardship members who are up to date with their Stewardship Pledge for 2016 may receive a **ballot to vote.**

## WEEKDAY CALENDAR

- Monday, December 12th.....ST. SPYRIDON THE WONDERWORKER  
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, December 13th.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, December 14th...AHEPA Christmas Dinner at the Spaghetti Factory – 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, December 16th.....Coloring Book Group – 12:00 noon
- Saturday, December 17th.....ST. DIONYSIOS  
Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.  
Showing of the movie, *Christmas With the Karountzoses* – 1:00 p.m.  
Vespers -5:00 p.m.

*See the insert for more announcements*

*The December 2016 Ladder  
is sponsored by  
Linda Kallis*

We encourage all of our parents to sit in the church with their entire family as they participate in the beauty and mysteries of the Divine Liturgy. For those with young children, feel free to sit near an aisle so that you may easily take your children for a break, as needed. If necessary, we have a "crying room" in the narthex for your use. God Bless.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS, continued**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM** – Today, following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

**YIAYIA'S ATTIC** – It's not too early to consider donating items (in good condition) for Yiayia'a Attic at our Festival.

**AHEPA CHRISTMAS DINNER** – Wednesday, December 14th at the **Spaghetti Factory**. Everyone is invited – order off the menu. Time: **6:00 p.m.**

**CHRISTMAS WITH THE KAROUNTZOSES** On Saturday, December 17, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. there will be a showing of the comedy movie, *Christmas With the Karountzoses* in our parish hall following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. It will be a fine time of fellowship for all. All are asked to our Church by purchasing tickets for this event. Tax-Deductable donation of **\$15 per person**, which includes snacks and refreshments. Please **RSVP today!**

**ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

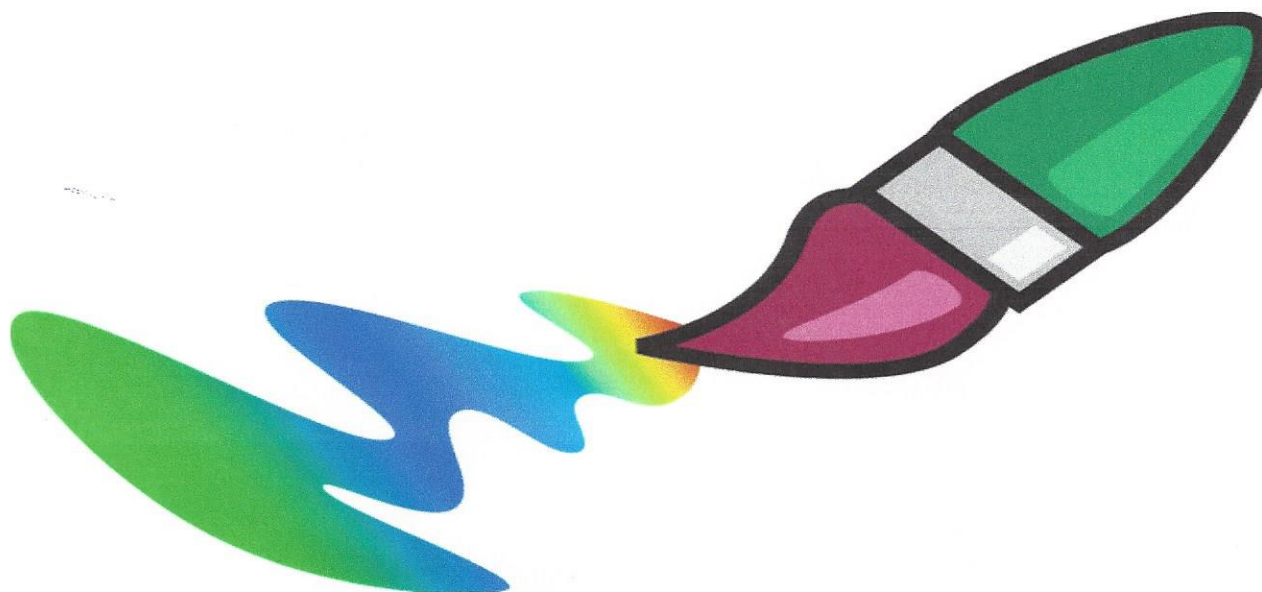
**2016 STEWARDSHIP LIST**

Alex, James	Allen, Becky	Amos, Kathy
Angeles, Alixe	Anton, John & Cleo	Argyros, George & Stacy
Astmos, Spiro	Ayanopolis, Teresa	Barden, Catherine
Bosken, Yuliana	Boukidis-Michas, Ann	Bournakis, Lou & Rhea
Bozigian, Linda	Braham, Anastasis	Breighner, Nancy
Carkonen, Paul & Paulette	Castrale, Craig	Castrale, Nicole & Eleni
Chiotis, Antony & Penny	Christopoulos, Dr. Jim & Gloria	Clark, Jack & Susan
Dalkas, Anthony & Pat	Demetropoulos, Nick	Desjoyners, Josie
Diamond, Michael	Dixson, Richard & Ann	Dobbs-Barringer, Louise
Dunkel, Mariya	Dymond, Donald	Elmo, Doris
Evans, Tom	Fakinos, Frank & Joan	Gallade, Adele & Ken Hoffman
Gannon, Robert	Geotas, Debbie	Halkidic, Anastasios
Harrigan, Athena	Hawkins, Stephen	Hector, Tim & Nadia
Heinrich, Bess	Kallis, Linda	Kaperonis, Nick
Karagianis, Lou & Penny	Karas, Demos & Evelyn	Karpontinis, Rebecca
Kassotakis, Mary Ellen	Kontaxis, Dr. Euthym & Krisann	Kotsiris, Jeff & Kim
Krespis, Nick & Fontini	Kundanis, Christine	Kyriacou, Nick & Anna
Laskaris, Annette & Chris	Latkovic, Nick & Rhonda	Lee, Bill & Mary
Lehman, Gloria	Lekas, Bill & Denise	Lewis, Annette
Ligeros, Mike & Kathy	Lockshire, Tillie	Long, Dr. Michael & Christine
Loukatos, Harry & Debbie	Lucas, Steve & Delphine	Lyons, Doug & Carol
Makrianis, Julie	Malavazos, Angie	Maletis, Chris & Kristi

Manesis, Dr. John & Bess	Manolakis, Steve	Mantes, E.G. & Mary
Maverick, Robert & Tomasine	Meek, Eve & Katherine	Mitsias, Mary
Monogenis, Emmanuel	Mouracade, Michael	Nicholas, George & Fanny
Nicholas, George & Kay	Palazzola, Maria	Pano, Leon & Veneta
Panopoulos, Chris & Joan	Pantels, Father Ted & Petula	Petalas, John & Linda
Piggott, Bill & Mary	Pilafidis-Fick, Olympia	Pishue, Sam
Poulos, Billie	Pousen, D.J.	Presset, Bessie
Prineas, Anna	Psaltis, Harry	Pulos, Alice
Regas, John	Rellos, Vasilios	Richards, J.J. & Tasia
Sahpazis, Georgia	Shust, Nicholas	Spanos, George
Speliopoulos, Nick	Steele, Dr. Steve & Lynanne	Stocker, Ginnie
Storton, Wynn & Ana	Tatomir, John & Mary	T charos, George & Emily
Tsiamagos, Gus	Tsiolis, John & Patricia	Valissarakos, Lula
Vawter, Mike & Debbie	Velculescu, Victoria	Veroulis, Angelo & Tina
Voournas, Georgia	Vrenos, Gust	Wysup, Angie
Xitco, John & Kalista	Young, Diane	Zachariadou, Mary
Zafiroopoulos, Michael	Zambrano, Nelly	Zaverdas, Pam

**MANY THANKS TO THE STEWARDS OF OUR CHURCH!**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**



# **ADULT COLORING SESSION & LUNCHEON**

**When: Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup> @ noon-2pm**

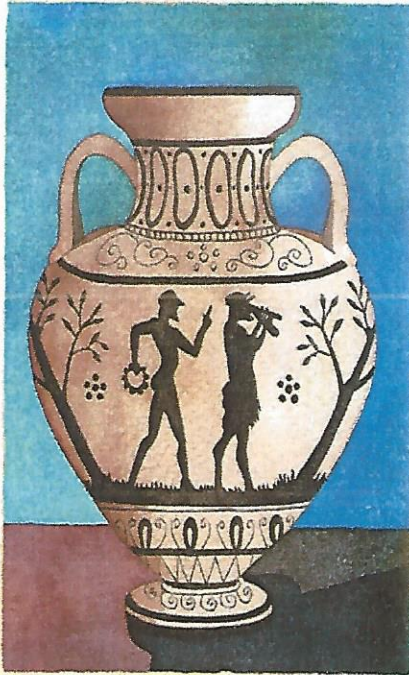
**Where: St. George church hall**

**RSVP: By December 11<sup>th</sup> to Rhonda Latkovic**

**Lunch will be served at noon with coloring to follow. A \$5.00 minimum donation is requested. Lunch will be a Christmas Cookie menu! There will also be a Christmas raffle. Coloring supplies provided. Please join us!**



# ST. GEORGE PHILOPTOCHOS



INVITES YOU TO ATTEND  
**TAVERNA NIGHT**  
**JANUARY 7, 2017**

AT 6 P.M.

**\$40.00 PER PERSON**

**GREEK DINNER**

**MUSIC & DANCING**

**PAID RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE**

**IN ADVANCE BY JANUARY 1, 2017**

**TAKEN AT THE PHILOPTOCHOS TABLE**

**NO UNPAID RESERVATIONS AT DOOR  
OR MAIL THE FORM BELOW TO: ST. GEORGE**

**PHILOPTOCHOS, P.O. BOX 4755, PALM DESERT, CA 92261**

**AND NOTE TAVERNA NIGHT**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF PERSONS ATTENDING: \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_