

DECEMBER 4, 2016

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

74-109 Larrea Street  
Palm Desert, California 92260

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

Email: [pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com)



# THE LADDER

ST. BARBARA THE GREAT MARTYR

**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.

**CHRIST IS THE WILL OF GOD**

With the reading of today’s Gospel passage we heard the words of Jesus which He spoke to the ruler of the synagogue: *“You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it out for water? Ought not this woman, whom Satan has bound for all of eighteen years, not be loosed from her bond on the day of the Sabbath?”* (St. Luke 13:15-16). He said this, because the Pharisees had become “worshippers of ritual”, rather than

“worshippers of God”. In other words, they would follow the letter of the law; however, they completely forgot the spirit of love, which is the essence of the law. In some respect, the “bent-over” woman of today’s Gospel passage represents all of humanity – she represents us who are “bent over” from a spiritual and ethical point of view.

Understanding the Sabbath is easier as we study today’s Gospel passage. The Sabbath Law is intended to turn  
*continued on page 2*

**ST. BARBARA THE GREAT MARTYR**

She was the daughter of a certain idolater named Dioscorus. When Barbara came of age, she was enlightened in her pure heart and secretly believed in the Holy Trinity. About this time Dioscorus began building a bath-house. At one point, in his absence, Barbara directed the workmen to build a third window in addition to the two her Father had commanded. She also inscribed the sign of the Cross with her finger upon the marble of the bath-house, leaving the saving sign cut as deeply into the marble as if it had been done with an iron tool.

When her father Dioscorus learned of these additions, he had St. Barbara brought before him. She begged forgiveness for not seeking the permission from her father before directing the workmen to add the third window to the bath-house. However, Dioscorus was more angry that she had embraced the life of the Holy Gospel of Christ, thereby renouncing her pagan heritage.

After repeatedly imploring her to renounce her faith in the True God, Jesus Christ, he failed to convert her back to paganism. All the more St. Barbara began to declare to him the mystery of the Trinity. Because she refused to renounce her faith, Dioscorus tortured St. Barbara inhumanely, and after subjecting her to many sufferings he beheaded her with his own hands, in the year 290.



Ακουσαμεν κατα την αναγνωσιν της σημερινης Ευαγγελικης περικοπης τα λογια του Ιησου τα οποια ειπε προς τον αρχισυναγωγον:

<Υποκριτα, εκαστος υμων τω Σαββατω ου λυει τον βουν αυτου η τον ονον απο της φατνης και απαγων ποτιζει; Ταυτην δε, θυγατερα Αβρααμ ουσαν, ην εδεσεν ο σατανας ιδου δεκα και οκτω ετη, ουκ εδει λυθηναι απο του δεσμου τουτου τη ημερα του Σαββατου;>

Αυτο ειπε, διοτι οι Φαρισαιοι εγιναν <τυπολατραι> και οχι <Θεολατραι>. Δηλαδη, ετηρουσαν τα γραμματα του νομου, αλλα εξεχασαν τελειως το πνευμα της αγαπης η οποια ειναι η ουσια του νομου. Κατα καποιον τροπον, λοιπον, η <συγκυπτουσα> γυναικα της σημερινης Ευαγγελικης περικοπης αντιπροσωπευει ολους μας, οι οποιοι ειμεθα <σκυπτοι> κατα την πνευματικην και ηθικην αποψιν.

Ο σκοπος του Σαββατου γνωριζεται καθως μελετουμεν την σημερινην Ευαγγελικην περικοπην. Ο νομος περι του Σαββατου εχει ως σκοπον να φερει τον ανθρωπον κοντα στον Θεον. Ο Κυριος το κατεστησε σαφες οταν ειπε, <Το Σαββατο εγεινε δια τον ανθρωπον, ουχι ο ανθρωπος δια τον Σαββατον.> (Μαρκ.2:27). Οτι <αναπαυθηκε> κατα την ημεραν του Σαββατου εννοειται οτι αναπαυθηκε στον ταφο μετα την Σταυρωσιν, δια της οποιας <εσκυλευσεν τον αδην> για να αναπαυεται αιωνιως ο ανθρωπος στην Βασιλειαν του Θεου. Μια τετοια αναπαυσις περιλαμβάνει την ψυχικην και την σωματικην υγειαν στον εδω κοσμον. Ο σκοπος του Σαββατου ειναι ο ιδιος οπως ειναι αυτος της Θ. Λειτουργιας: να αναπαυεται ο ανθρωπος αιωνιως με τον Θεον.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

people to God. Jesus made this clear when He once said, “*Man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath was made for Man.*” (St. Mark 2: 27). That God “rested” on the Sabbath means that He rested in the tomb after the Crucifixion, through which He “enslaved Hades” so that we can all rest in the Kingdom of God forever. Such a *rest* includes spiritual and physical well-being in this present life, as well. Hence, the Sabbath is for the healing of humanity and becomes a way of life—“resting” on our faith in God and partaking in His Resurrection.

The purpose of the Divine Liturgy, furthermore, is the same as that of the Sabbath—to rest in God now and always. This is a world of God’s love in which we relate with God and others in *spirit* and in *truth*. Keep in mind that our Lord judges “hypocrisy” more sharply than He does sin, because sin can be cured through repentance. Hypocrisy, however, is a form of deceit: self-justification without taking into account God’s Will. Hypocrisy makes repentance nearly impossible.

Spirit and truth give eternal value to interpersonal relationships, including our intercessory prayers for other another. We are *in communion* with God and with each other, which is why the Sacraments can only be celebrated and performed *as a community* of faithful—clergy *and* laity together. The prayers said during the Divine Liturgy are a constant reminder that our personal salvation cannot be gained without working for the salvation of “our brothers and sisters.”

The “bent-over” woman of today’s Gospel is a “daughter of Abraham,” making her our sister in faith. Patriarch Abraham is mentioned in both today’s Epistle and Gospel readings (See Genesis 18). In common (rather, *in Communion*) with Abraham’s hospitality toward God, there is God’s hospitality toward us. God’s hospitality toward us is made evident by virtue of the fact that our Lord has done (and still does) everything to bring us into His Kingdom, as is said in the “Thanksgiving Prayer” of the Divine Liturgy. Our faith in God makes one’s fellow human being a “brother” or “sister”. That God is One God in Three Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—is made clear with Abraham: the three visitors appearing to him are addressed as being One Lord. The conversation between Abraham and the three visitors reveals the Word of God speaking to Abraham, ultimately saying, “*All things are possible with God.*” St. Athanasios the Great explained that the Father does all things through the Son—Christ is the Will of the Father!

+FR. THEODORE

**PRAY FOR THE SICK:** Yvonne Flessas, George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Kathy Ligeros, Nicholas Kyriakou, Alice Pulos, 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:** *Katelisas to Stavro Sou...[Tone 7] (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 evermore.)*

**Hymn for St. Barbara:** *Varvaran tin aghian timisomen...(Let us honor the all-virtuous Saint Barbara; for she broke the snares of the enemy, and she escaped from them like a bird, with the Cross as her help and shield.)*

**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 – Galatians 3: 23-29; 4:1-5 / Gospel – St. Luke 13: 10-17

**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: Linda Petalas and Lula Valissarakos**

**PHILOPTOCHOS** – Today, December 4, is the last day to make your reservations for our Annual Christmas Lunch this coming Saturday, December 10. See Tina at the Philoptochos table. We hope to see you there. **Our Board Meeting will be tomorrow, December 5 at 11:00 a.m.** There will be no General Meeting due to the Christmas Lunch. **Pick up your ordered bread and cookies at the Christmas Bake Sale on Sunday, December 11 and Sunday, December 18** in the Church hall. **We need Coffee Hour Hostesses in December.** See Linda Petalas.

**ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS**-The Altar Flower Bouquets at our Altar Gates today were donated by: **Mr. Tom Evans, and Ms. Debra Pousen in honor of Dear son, and brother Robert Max; “May your memory be Eternal!”**

**Mr. & Mrs. John Petalas - “In memory of mother Eleni Petalas.”**

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** If there are those parishioners that have loved ones that you would like to make a special dedication to; please visit the Parish Hall Bulletin Board Altar Flower Sign-in Sheet, and select a month/date/sign your name, submit your check with the date of your request in the Memo Column to **Louise Dobbs Barringer**, or to **Tina Veroulis** in the Administration Office.

The **Christmas Poinsettias** are sponsored by two families, their dedications will be posted in *The Ladder* on **December 25th**. Your continued support is deeply appreciated, thank you!

**PHILOPTOCHOS BAKE SALE ORDER FORMS** are available at the coffee bar in the parish hall.

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

**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)

**PARISH ELECTION** – **Sunday, December 11, 2016** following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. The candidates for election to serve are (listed in alphabetical order):

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

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**. Please contact any member of the Election Committee for more information. Contact our parish office for any questions regarding Stewardship.

*ANNOUNCEMENTS continued on the next page*

*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**

**COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD**—Participation forms to participate in this year's St. George Christmas Card can be found in our parish hall.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM** – **Sunday, December 11th following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.**

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

**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.

**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 by Sun., December 11th.**

### **WEEKDAY CALENDAR**

Monday, December 5th..... Philoptochos Board Meeting -11:00 a.m. / Festival Meeting-7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 6th..... ST. NICHOLAS OF MYRA

Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m. / Bible Study – 11:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 8th.....Parish Council – 6:30 p.m.

Friday, December 9th.....ST. ANNA – CONCEPTION OF THE THEOTOKOS

Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy- 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, December 10th.....Vespers-5:00 p.m.

# PHILOPTOCHOS

## CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE

Christmas Bread-Vasilopita  
Koulourakia



*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year*

The Ladies of Philoptohos Society will be baking again this year the traditional Christmas bread, Vasilopita and koulourakia that are delicious any time of day.

Orders with your contribution should be made no later than **December 5, 2016**. Please place the completed order in an envelope marked "PHILOPTOHOS" in the basket on the Coffee Bar in the Church Hall or give to Lula Valissarakos or Tina Veroulis. If you have any questions, please call Lula at 760 200-8501 or Tina 406 431-9516.

**PICK UP DATES:**

Sunday, December 11, 2016 (following the conclusion of Church Services)

Sunday, December 18, 2016 (following the conclusion of Church Services)

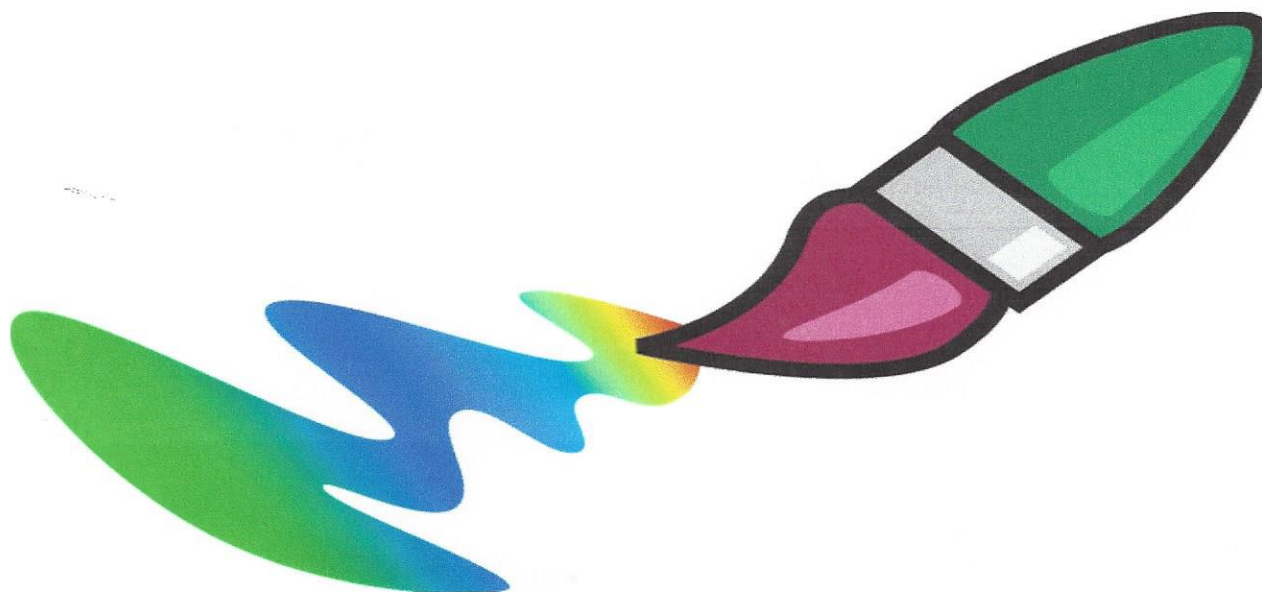
*We thank you in advance for your continued support of Philoptohos*



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>UNIT PRICE</u>	<u>AMOUNT (\$)</u>
Koulourakia _____		\$6.00	_____
Christmas Bread _____		\$10.00	_____
Vasilopita Bread with Coin _____		\$10.00	_____
<u>Make checks payable to Philoptochos</u>		Total Amount	\$ _____



# **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!**

# Christmas with the KAROUNTZOSES



The Grandmothers - Yia Yia Mafia



Michael - The Husband



Tiffany - The Wife



Telly - The Crazy Cousin



The Karountzoses



Father Tom



## SAVE THE DATE

Showing at St. George Greek Orthodox Church  
74-109 Larrea St.  
Palm Desert, California 92260

On:

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2016

At:

1:00 p.m.

Tickets are a tax-deductible donation

**\$15.00 per person**

(\$15.00 donation includes donation to the Church, snacks and refreshments)

For reservations and information, contact our parish office at: (760) 568-9901





# *Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon*

*Invite Your Family and Friends!*

*Saturday, December 10, 2016*

*At 11:30 A.M.*

*Desert Horizons Country Club*

*44900 Desert Horizons Country Club*

*Indian Wells, CA 92210 (760-340-4646)*

*Cost For A 3 Course Luncheon is \$35.00*

*R. S. V. P. by Dec. 4th to the Philoptochos table or  
See Rhonda Latkovic, Linda Bozigian, or mail ths form with check to:*

*St. George Philoptochos, P.O. Box 4755, Palm Desert, CA 92261*

*and note Christmas Luncheon*

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*Choice of Entree (Please check one of the selections below):*

- 1. Pepper Steak (Petite fillet w/pepper, brandy & chutney sauce) \_\_\_\_\_*
- 2. Salmon Caprise (grilled w/ tomato salsa, grilled vegetables) \_\_\_\_\_*

*Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_*

*Number of persons attending \_\_\_\_\_*

*Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_*