

FEBRUARY 7, 2016

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

**74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, California 92260**

Website: www.go-stgeorge.org

Email: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com

THE LADDER

JEALOUSY, PEACE & UNITY

To some extent today's passage from St. Matthew's Gospel speaks about the topic of jealousy. Christ our God knows every person in the world and grants to one 5 talents and to another 2 talents and to yet another 1 talent. Indeed, we can ask: "Why was the man with one talent so angry that he was moved to condemn his master?" It would seem that he felt that his master was unjust!

According to this mentality he justified his self-centeredness. Rather than multi-

plying the one talent, he hid it in the earth, symbolizing that he wanted worldly things. His mistaken mentality is an expression of pride.

In other words, people today have the same general perplexing thought: why do some have many blessings, while others have few blessings? Yet, we forget that we all have the Church which is the greatest blessing of all. The Church is that "bank" from which we gain

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GROWING IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST – In an article on our Archdiocese website (entitled "Growing in the Knowledge of Christ), His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios writes: "Not by mere coincidence, a recent special issue of *Time Magazine* seems to suggest a picture with the theme "American Best." The intensity and hard drive, the high motivation and determination for ultimate goals, appear to galvanize young adults in America today in highly diversified professions or activities like finance, show business, athletics, art, music, science, technology ... You [young adults] are young, anxious, verbal, intelligent, and sensitive. You are in pursuit of excellence and success. But at this moment I would like to visualize these qualities applied to something over and above one's professional life, i.e. your relationship to God, your life within the Church. If for other young adults 'business is God,' 'money is God,' 'power is God,' or 'pleasure is God,' for you and for us, 'God is God.'"

In this, as much as we may know pleasure, power, or business, we are called upon to know Christ Who is the True God, as we proclaim in the Divine Liturgy. Christ, as His Eminence notes, is to truly be our "significant other." "To know Christ as the significant other means that we consciously and deliberately select him as our significant other, over above anyone else. It means we have him as the superb and irreplaceable model and prototype of what is really, fully, and originally human. He thus becomes the concrete image of our highest aspirations, the perfect expression of what we dream and we want to be. His person and grace become a guide and drive to continuously transform us, making us more and more like him."

+FR. THEODORE



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.



Σε ενα σημειον ομιλει η σημερινη Ευαγγελικη περικοπη εκ του κατα Ματθαιον Ευαγγελιου περι του θεματος της ζηλιας. Ο Θεος μας ο Χριστος γνωριζει τον καθε ανθρωπον ο οποιος ερχεται στην ζωην και χαριζει στον εναν 5 ταλαντα και στον αλλον 2 ταλαντα και σε αλλον ακομη 1 ταλαντον. Μαλιστα μπορουμεν να ερωτησουμεν: <Γιατι ηταν ο ανθρωπος με το ενα ταλαντον τοσο θυμωμενος που καταδικασε τον αφεντικον του;> Φαινεται οτι ενομισε οτι ο αφεντικον του ηταν αδικος!

Συμφωνα με αυτην την νοοτροπιαν εδικαιολογησε τον εαυτον του. Αντι να πολλαπλασιαζει τον ενα ταλαντον, το εκρυψε στην γην, συμβολιζοντας οτι ηθελε τα επιγεια αγαθα του κοσμου. Απο κοσμικα ενδιαφεροντα ερχεται η ζηλια – και η ζηλια ειναι εκφρασις του εγωισμου. Για αυτο, ο σημερινος ανθρωπος εχει την ιδιαν γενικην αποριαν: γιατι εχουν μερικοι πολλες ευλογιες και οι αλλοι εχουν λιγες ευλογιες;

Ξεχνουμεν, ομως, οτι ολοι μας εχουμεν την Εκκλησιαν, η οποια ειναι η μεγαλυτερη ευλογια απο ολες. Η Εκκλησια ειναι αυτη η <τραπεζα> απο την οποιαν κερδιζουμεν <τοκον> και την αναπτυξη ακομη απο ενα απο τα ταλαντα τα οποια μας εδωσε ο Θεος.

Σε ολες τις υποθεσεις μας, ας μην ξεχασουμεν οτι ακομα οι αγιοι δεν ειχαν ισο αριθμον ταλαντων.

Ομως, ευλογησαν τον κοσμον με την χαριν του Θεου δια μεσου των προσευχων των και των καλων πραξεων προς δοξαν Θεου. Η προσευχη και οι καλες πραξεις φερνουν την ειρηνην <του συμπαντος κοσμου> και την ενωσιν <των παντων ημων>

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

“interest” from God’s gifts, through which we do His work. To illustrate this point, let us not forget that the Saints themselves did not have an equal number of talents, or gifts. Yet, they blessed many people by the grace of God.

The love of Christ our God is not measured in terms of the number of talents that one may have, but it is measured in terms of His gift of Eternal Life for each one of us regardless of material wealth or physical abilities. Our Lord measures our soul! The wicked servant, not thinking about the condition of his soul, obviously felt that his one talent was an expression of “partiality” on the part of his master. He considered his blessing as a possession belonging only to himself, and not to God. That is why he condemned the “master” for “reaping what he did not sow.” He also seemed jealous of the others who had the greater number of talents. This is the kind of jealousy that lies behind some of history’s “class struggle” rhetoric.

During the celebration of the Divine Liturgy we pray: “*For the peace of the whole world; for the good estate of the Holy Churches of God and for the union of all.*” The “peace of the world,” the “good estate of God’s Churches” and “the union of all” are all related to God’s Plan of salvation for all of us. This prayer was part of Christian worship even among the ancient Christian martyrs.

Peace in the world is achieved individual-by-individual, as each person acquires the Peace of God by living with faith in Christ our God and Savior and through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Each person’s effort to truly live according to God’s Word establishes a “good estate” for each parish and family. It is in this Christian lifestyle that *unity* is achieved by virtue of our Christian love for one another. Hence, peace and unity are not dependent on who has more of anything than anyone else. Peace and unity depend on what goes on inside the soul of each one of us.

Fr. Stephanos Anagnostopoulos writes, “*Let us not expect to have peace in our homes if we are not at peace with ourselves...[In this we should] correct ourselves with the help of Christ’s saving Orthodox teaching and the Holy Sacraments. We will find that the members of our house will also improve, based on the life we live and the example we set. Afterward, our fellow human being ...even our enemies will correct themselves, as well.*” (*Experiences During the Divine Liturgy*, pg. 67).

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PRAY FOR THE SICK: Yvonne and George Flessas, George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Kathy Ligeros, Aryroula Krespis (Nick Krespis’ mother), Bob Maverick, Skip Lewis, Gerasimos Mikelatos, Evangelia Melissaratos, Gerasimos Canakis, Kathy Canakis & Peter Canakis (Eva and Spiro Canakis family members), Chris Laskaris, Mary Fondas (*Many of the faithful on our Prayer List face chronic or serious illness*).

HYMNS FOR THIS SUNDAY'S CELEBRATION OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

ANTIPHON I:

Verse 1: "My heart overflowed with a good word; I tell my works to the King. My tongue is the pen of a swift-writing scribe."

Response: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."

Verse 2: "Grace was poured out on Your lips."

Response: "By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, O save us."

Verse 3: "Therefore God blessed You forever."

Response: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."

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

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

ANTIPHON II:

Verse 1: "Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, in Your splendor and Your beauty."

Response: "Soston imas Ie Theou, o Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si: Allilouia."

Verse 2: "And stretch Your bow, and grant prosperity, and reign because of truth, gentleness, and righteousness, and Your right hand shall guide You wondrously."

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

Verse 3: "Your arrows are sharp, O Mighty One (The peoples shall fall under You), in the heart of the King's enemies. Your royal scepter is a scepter of uprightness."

Response: "Soston imas Ie Theou, o Anastas ek nekron, psallontas si: Allilouia."

Chanter(s): "Doxa Patri ke Io, ke Ayio Pnevmati, ke nin ke ai ke is tous eonas ton eonon. Amin."

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

ANTIPHON III: Listen, O daughter, behold and incline your ear, and forget your people and your father's house. The rich among the people shall entreat your favor and I will remember your name from generation to generation.

Resurrection Hymn: Efrenestho ta ourania [Tone 3]... (Let all things above in heaven rejoice and let all things below on earth be glad. With all the might and strength of His arm an eternal deed the Lord did perform. Beneath His feet He has trampled down death by death and First Born of the dead has He become. From the womb of Hades has He delivered us and to all the world has granted His great redeeming mercy.)

Hymn for the Feast of the Presentation of Christ: Chereh ke charitomeni Theotoke... (Lady full of grace, rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, for Christ our God, the Sun of righteousness has risen from you and He illumined those in darkness. And you, righteous Elder, be glad in heart, receiving in your embraces the One who liberates our souls and bestows on us the Resurrection.)

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: O mitran parthenikin aghi-ah-sas... (Through Your birth, O Christ our God, You have sanctified the Virgin womb and fittingly You have blessed the hands of Symeon and now, on this day, You have come bringing salvation to us. Therefore, grant to Your commonwealth You peace in times of war and Your strength to the ones who rule those beloved by You, for You alone love mankind.)

READINGS:

Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos): Axion Estin... (Divine Liturgy Book, Pg. 51)

Communion Hymn: Enite ton Kyrion (Divine Liturgy Book, pg. 64)

"Above all else,
guard your heart, for
it is the well-spring
of life" Proverbs 4:23



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Usher: Jim Christopoulos, Nick Krespis, Josie Desnoyers
Greeter: Linda Petalas
Coffee Hour: Kiki Monogenis

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS – Both Altar Flower bouquets which are offered today for God’s glory are donated by:

Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Dalkas "In behave of the family"!

NOTE: We express gratitude to God for the service and donations of our St. George Greeters. **"The doors, the doors! We Welcome all who enter into God's House"!**

With love - Josie, George, Linda, Melissa, Mariya, Christine, and Louise! Next Greeters' Meeting is February 21, 2016 in Class Rm. 1 immediately after Divine Liturgy.

PHILOPTOCHOS – Today, February 7 **we are wearing red** for National Philoptochos' **GO RED CAMPAIGN** to raise awareness of heart disease. We need Coffee Hour Hostesses on March 20 and 27. See **Linda Petalas**. Our next **General Meeting will on Thursday, February 18, 2016** starting at **11:30 a.m.** A light lunch will be served-donation of \$5 is requested. **SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, March 12, 2016** will be our Membership Lunch. Details will be coming and all women of the Church are welcome.

FESTIVAL FLIERS – 2016 Greek Festival Fliers are in the parish hall, ready to be taken by everyone for distribution to businesses and visitor centers throughout the Coachella Valley!

YIAYIA’S ATTIC – It’s that time of year again! Yiayia’s Attic is gathering treasures for the Festival’s Attic Booth. Please start organizing your donations now! Call **Becky Allen** at (760) 699-5439 for details and/or questions. Items may be brought to our parish at any time.

DONATIONS FOR FESTIVAL NEEDS – Any donations of monies toward the purchase of needed festival supplies will be a great blessing and we will give special recognition to those who do contribute funds to help in making our festival purchases. Please contact our parish office for information on “Festival Needs.”

PREPARATION SCHEDULE – This week’s festival preparations include: *melomakarona & kourambiethes*. Everyone’s help is a precious gift from God. Please join us in the blessings of fellowship and support for our Holy Church. Enclosed, see the “Set-Up” and “Tear-Down” schedule.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, February 8th.....Festival Preparations continue – 9:00 a.m.
(Melomakarona/Kourambiethes)
Tuesday, February 9th.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, February 10th.....ST. HARALAMBOS
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
Thursday, February 11th.....Parish Council- 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, February 13th.....Vespers-5:00 p.m.

*The Ladder for February 2016 is sponsored by:
Emily & George Tcharos*

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.