

JANUARY 31, 2016

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

STS. CYRUS & JOHN

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– 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.

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL SCHOOL

"Account them worthy to see their children's children...give them of the dew from the heavens above and of the fatness of the earth...Fill their houses with bountiful food and with every good thing so that they may have to give to those in need, granting also to those who are here assembled their prayers unto salvation." These are words of prayer that are said during the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

They compare nicely with the "spirit" of today's Gospel passage. As Christ went

to the house of Zacchaeus, likewise the same Christ enters our own houses. Indeed, today's Gospel passage is read during the "House Blessing Service" when we bless the homes of the faithful.

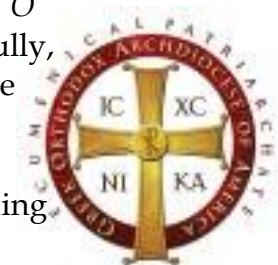
Many people in our present age forget that marriage is a Sacrament by which *three people* are brought together: the bride; the groom - *and Christ our God*. Every house is an image of God's Kingdom (that is, the Church). This is why the

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THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE

We commemorate this event in our Lord's life this Tuesday, February 2nd.

When the most pure Mother and Ever-Virgin Mary's forty days of purification had been fulfilled, she took her first-born Son to Jerusalem on this, the fortieth day after His birth, that she might present Him in the temple according to the Law of Moses, which teaches that every first-born male child be dedicated to God, and also that she might offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons, as required by the Law (Luke 2:22-24; Exod. 13:2; Lev. 12:6-8). On this same day, a just and devout man, the greatly aged Symeon, was also present in the temple, being guided by the Holy Spirit. For a long time, this man had been awaiting the salvation of God, and he had been informed by divine revelation that he would not die until he beheld the Lord's Christ. Thus, when he beheld Him at that time and took Him up into his aged arms, he gave glory to God, singing: *"Now let Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master. . ."* And he confessed that he would close his eyes joyfully, since he had seen the Light of revelation for the nations and the Glory of Israel (Luke 2:25-32). From ancient times, the Holy Church has retained this tradition of the churching of the mother and new-born child on the fortieth day and of the reading of prayers of purification.



<Αξιώσον αυτούς ιδειν τέκνα τέκνα τέκνων...δος αυτοίς από της δροσου του ουρανού ανώθεν, και από της πιοτητος της γης. Εμπλήσον τους οίκους αυτών σιτου, οίνου και ελαιου και πασης αγαθωσύνης, ινα μεταδιδωσι και τοις χρείαν έχουσι, δωρουμενος αμα και τοις συμπαρουσι παντα τα προς σωτηριαν αιτηματα.> Τα λογία αυτα μας ερχονται από την ευχην του Μυστηριου του Γαμου.

Ταιριαζουν με <το πνευμα> της σημερινης Ευαγγελικης περικοπης. Οπως ο Χριστος επηγε στο σπιτι του Ζακχαιου, ετσι ο Χριστος ο Ιδιος ερχεται μεσα στα σπιτια τα δικα μας. Μαλιστα, η σημερινη Ευαγγελικη περικοπη αναγιωσκειται κατα την τελετην του Αγιασμου οταν ευλογουμεν τα σπιτια των πιστων.

Πολλοι ξεχνουν οτι ο Γαμος ειναι Μυστηριον δια της οποιας συναρμολοζονται τρια προσωπα: η νυμφη, ο γαμβρος και ο Χριστος. Το καθε σπιτι ειναι μια εικονα της Βασιλειας του Θεου (δηλ. η Εκκλησια). Για αυτο λεγεται το σπιτι η <κατα οικον Εκκλησια.> Η δουλεια του σπιτιου ειναι η ιδια δουλεια της Εκκλησιας. Οπως ο Ζακχαιος υποσχεθηκε να δωσει στους πτωχους, ετσι το καθε Ορθοδοξο σπιτι εχει καθηκον να δωσει πνευματικη ενισχυση και πνευματικες διδασκαλιες στα παιδια – και, επισης, να προσφερει υλικά και πνευματικά αγαθα σε ολους. Με αυτην την κατανοησιν, ο Αγ. Παυλος γραφει στον καθεναν μας, αφου ολοι μας μενουμεν σε σπιτια με τα αγαπητα μας προσωπα (οπως εγραψε στον Τιμοθεον): <Τυπος γινου των πιστων εν λογω, εν αναστροφη, εν αγαπη, εν πνευματι, εν πιστει, εν αγνοια.> (1 Τιμ.4:12).

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

home of each one of our faithful is referred to in the liturgical sense as the “House-Church.” The job of the home is the same as that of the Church. As Zacchaeus promised to give to the poor, each Orthodox household has the responsibility of giving spiritual strength and Christian teachings to their beloved youth—and, in addition, to offer material and spiritual goods to all people, in general.

Within this understanding St. Paul writes to each of us, since we all are to live in houses with our loved ones (just as he wrote to Timothy): “Become an example in word; in behavior; in love; in spirit, in faith, and in purity.” (1 Timothy 4: 12). Indeed, examples speak much louder than words.

As Christ enters our homes, we become people who reflect God’s love to those around us. To help us in this effort (as a part of the Apostolic Tradition preserved among Orthodox faithful to this day) every home has a “home altar” where we keep our Bible and icons—and where we gather to pray on a daily basis. Let us never underestimate the power of personal prayer; the power of family prayer and the power of community prayer, as we are reminded during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy: “You, O Lord, have given us grace to offer these common prayers with one heart. You have promised to grant the requests of two or three gathered in Your Name.”

In prayer—and particularly in family prayer—we find God’s wisdom for young and old. In the first pages of his book entitled, *Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home*, Fr. Anthony Coniaris writes: “At least 1 million Americans run away from home every year. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for young Americans between the ages of 15 and 24. One out of 9 youths ends up in juvenile court by the age of 18. Drug abuse and alcoholism among teenagers are becoming serious public-health problems...Who is raising the children? The Church can do nothing without the home. The most influential school in the world is not Oxford, Harvard or the Sorbonne, or Yale, or Cambridge. It is the home.” (pages15-17).

Let us keep our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ in our homes, welcoming Him everyday as did Zacchaeus on that one day when he received our Lord joyfully.

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: Yvonne and George Flessas, George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Kathy Ligeros, Aryroula Krespis (Nick Krespis’ mother), Bob Maverick, Robert Fleming (Rhonda Latkovic’s father), Debbie Vawter, Skip Lewis, Anne Boukidis-Michas, Gerasimos Mikelatos, Evangelia Melissaratos, Gerasimos Canakis, Kathy Canakis & Peter Canakis (Eva and Spiro Canakis family members), Mary Fondas, Sherry Untiedt, (Debbie Vawter’s sister) Zoe Kouris (*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 : "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and everything within me, bless His holy name ."

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

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

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

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

Response: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soson 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: "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."

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

Verse 2: "Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob; his hope is in the Lord his God."

Response: 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."

Response: "Soson 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:

Resurrection Hymn: Ote katilthes pros ton thanaton [Tone 2]...*(When You descended to the realm of death, You, as Life Immortal, rendered to Hades a mortal blow by Your all-radiant divinity. And when You, from the inner depths and the darkness below did raise the dead, all the hosts of heavens did proclaim and cry out: O Life-giving Christ and our God we give glory)*

Hymn for Sts. Cyrus and John – (To be chanted in English)

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 brining 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: Epistle - 1 Timothy 4: 9-15 / Gospel – St. Luke 19:1-10

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

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, February 1st.....Vespers – 6:00 p.m. / FESTIVAL MEETING – 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 2nd.....THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

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

Thursday, February 4th.....Philoptochos Board Meeting – 11:00 a.m. / Choir Practice –4:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 6th.....ST. PHOTIOS

Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m. / Vespers-5:00 p.m.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Usher: Nick Kaperonis, Tim Hector, John Petalas

Greeter: Mariya Dunkel

Coffee Hour: Joan Panopoulos

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS – Today's Altar Flower Bouquets were donated for the glory of God by:

Ann Dixon - "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting Life". Jn: 3:16

Mr. & Mrs. Hugh Dyer - In loving memory of our son "May his memory be Eternal"!

*Please check the Bulletin Board in the Parish Hall for your **Altar Flower request date(s)**, payments can be submitted at any time to the Administration Office just identify in the memo column "Altar flowers/month!"*

MEMORIAL – Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Theodora Pappas (40 days)**, the beloved sister of **Chris Panopoulos**. We pray that our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ will grant Eternal Rest to **Theodora Pappas** and that He will grant peace and comfort to **Chris Panopoulos** and his entire family. **MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

PHILOPTOCHOS – **GO RED** on **Sunday, February 7, 2016**. National Philoptochos has designated next Sunday to wear red to raise awareness of heart disease. 80% of heart disease is preventable. They are asking all Philoptochos members to wear RED to Church. Our next Board Meeting will be this coming Thursday, February 4, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. Our next General Meeting will be on Thursday, February 18, 2016 at 11:30 a.m. A light lunch will be served. Be sure to come to this meeting as we will be going over the 2016 budget. We have changed the day of these meetings due to the Festival food preparation schedule.

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: *paximathia*. Everyone's help is a precious gift from God. Please join in the blessings of fellowship and support for our Holy Church.

THE 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.**

Correction: Last Sunday's Coffee Hour Hostess was **Linda Petalas**. Next Sunday's Coffee Hour Hostess will be **Kiki Monogenis**.

*The Ladder for January 2016 is sponsored by: Helena Christie
in loving memory of
Paula Kozlen*

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.