

DECEMBER 3, 2017

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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Palm Desert, California 92260

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THE LADDER

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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.

WATCHFULLNESS

There are two themes which become apparent from today's passages taken from St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians and the Gospel of St. Luke: 1) the light of Christ, and, 2) the fruit of repentance and our co-workmanship with God.

Through Holy Baptism we are enlightened spiritually in the Name of Christ by means of the Holy Spirit. Divine enlightenment directs us toward every good work for the purpose of salvation for our own souls, as well as the salva-

tion of the souls of others. Such work flows from enlightened souls which are not blinded by sins. For us to guard ourselves against sins, great watchfulness is required from us – i.e., we need to watch over our thoughts; our intentions; our ideas.

Without being watchful in this respect over everything that affects our way of thinking and our souls, we fall into errors...and, consequently, we commit dark deeds which tyrannize our conscience. Unfortunately,
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THE ANSWERS TO OUR PRAYERS - There are three questions to keep in mind pertaining to prayers offered to our Lord:

1. Are we praying for the right things? Are we ready to accept God's Will?
2. Are we praying with faith?
3. Are we persistent in our prayers, constantly looking for God's guidance?

In all of the miracles performed by Christ our God, the *miracle* itself becomes a secondary issue. The overriding issue is the glory given to God for His love, which is manifested in the Incarnation of His Only-Begotten Son. The sight given to the blind man of today's Gospel is a trivial matter compared to the fact that the man himself followed Jesus, glorifying God and that, "all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God." (St. Luke 18:43).

Prayer must be fervent, knowing that our only hope is Christ. Metropolitan Anthony Bloom in his book, *Living Prayer*, referring to the blind man, says, "The [blind man] knew that there was no hope for him if [Jesus] vanished. This depth of hopelessness was the well from which sprang faith, a prayer full of such conviction and such insistence that it broke through all barriers." (pg. 49).

In responding to the criticism that there is a lot of repetition in the Divine Liturgy, we call to mind that the repetition is made on purpose, as a message to be persistent in prayer. There is a difference between repetition and persistence. Repetition has an element of sin to it, since it is often devoid of faith. Persistence, however, does have the element of faith that the One addressed has the power to deliver.



Υπαρχουν δυο θεματα τα οποια εμφανιζονται απο τα σημερινα αναγνωσματα εκ της Επιστολης του Αγιου Παυλου προς τους Εφεσιους και του κατα Λουκαν Ευαγγελιου: 1) το φως του Χριστου, και, 2) ο καρπος της μετανοιας και συνεργασια με τον Θεον.

Δια του μυστηριου του Αγιου Βαπτισματος, φωτιζωμεθα ψυχικως εν ονοματι του Χριστου δια της χαριτος του Αγιου Πνευματος. Η Θεια φωτισις μας οδηγει προς καθε καλον εργον με σκοπο να σωσουμεν τις δικες μας ψυχες και τις ψυχες των συνανθρωπων μας. Τετοια εργα πηγαζονται απο καλες, διαφωτισμενες ψυχες, τις οποιες δεν τυφνωνονται απο αμαρτιες. Για να φυλασσωμεθα απο αμαρτιες, χρειαζεται προσοχη μεγαλη-προσοχη στις σκεψεις μας, στις επιθυμιες μας, στις ιδεες μας.

Χωρις προσοχη προς ολα που επηρεαζουν την λογικη και τις ψυχικες δυναμεις μας, πλανωμεθα δια μεσων των φαντασιων και των πειρασμων...και,συνεπως, τελουμεν σκοτεινες πραξεις οι οποιες τυραννιζουν την συνειδησην του ανθρωπου με στενοχωριες και ανησυχιες. Δυστυχως,ο σημερος κοσμος ζητα το πιοτο για να καλμαρουν τις εσωτερικες τρικυμιες των, αντι να μετανοησουν τις αμαρτιες των. Η μετανοια ειναι η οδος προς τον Θεον.

Η μετανοια ειναι συνεργασια με ταξυ του εαυτου μας και του Χριστου. Οπως ο τυφλος της σημερινης Ευαγγελικης περικοπης επροσευχηθηκε <Κυριε ελεησον με,> ετσι ας προσευχωμεθα και εμεις. Οπως ο Χριστος εφωτισε τον τυφλον ωστε να αναβλεψει, ετσι ο Ιδιος ο Χριστος ο Θεος θα φωτισει εμας προς σωτηριαν.
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

most people today seem to seek alcohol and marijuana to calm their inner turmoil, rather than to seek repentance of their sins. Repentance, by the way, is the road to sobriety. *"Call to the Lord Jesus and soon fantasies and their instigators will be driven away,"* says St. Gregory of Sinai, (*Philokalia*, "Treatise On Silent Prayer"). Alcohol and drugs lead to irresponsibility brought on by unclear perceptions and bad judgments – resulting in low self-esteem, one of many factors leading to addiction.

Repentance is a cooperation between us and Christ. As the blind man of today's Gospel passage prayed fervently, *"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"* so, too, must we pray, *"Lord, have mercy!"* And, as Christ enlightened the blind man so that he received his sight, the same Christ our God will enlighten us so that we can find the light leading to salvation. Through this combined spiritual discipline of prayer, repentance and watchfulness, we can *"see"* that God's light is in us and can shine from us in tangible ways. *"Think of Paul whose garments had a miraculous effect and Peter whose very shadow manifested miraculous power. Had they not borne within them the image of the King of Heaven...their garments and their shadows would not have had such power.."* (*Philokalia: The Prayer of the Heart*, "Directions to Hesychasts," by Sts. Calistus and Ignatius, pgs. 166-167).

This means that we are not commanded by God to do anything that we are incapable of doing, because within us is that capacity which is implanted within us when God created us. To be loving, for example, is possible because we have the capacity to love; to be empathetic is possible because we have the capacity to understand, and so on. What is of crucial importance for us is that we have the capacity to seek God – and the mystery is in this fact: while we seek God, God finds us. I like what the psychologist Dr. Henry Cloud writes: *"The bottom line is that if you seek God, He will show up... 'You, O Lord, have never forsaken those who seek You.' (Psalm 9:10)."* (*Secret Things of God*, pg. 24).

In our real, everyday lives, when we are faced with temptations, distractions, and challenges that arise often from nowhere and which bother us tremendously, we note that solutions are not found in isolated drunkenness. Instead, we are to be people of prayer, helping one another. This is one of the purposes of worship, calling upon our Lord *"in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs."* (Ephesians 5:19). St. Barsanuphius would say, *"[Hymns] and chanting are Church traditions and are wisely given for bringing together those who gather for prayer,"* (*Philokalia*, pg.86) - thus seeking Christ our God through the Sacrament of Holy Communion in living out our Baptism in the Lord.

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Constantine Papapetru, Erika Aguilar, Mary Mitsias, Nula Papapetru, Tom Evans, Jim Alex, Nicholas Kyriakou, Chris Laskaris, J.J. Richards (*Many faithful on the Prayer List face chronic or serious illness*).

HYMNS FOR THIS SUNDAY'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, soson 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, soson 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."*

ANTIPHON II: *"Soson 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: *"Soson imas Ie 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: *"Soson 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. Amin

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

ANTIPHON III– *This is the day the Lord made. Let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein.*

Sunday Resurrection Hymn – *Tou lithou sfraghisthendos [Tone 1]...(The stone that had been sealed before Your tomb by the Judeans and the soldiers guarding watch oe'r Your pure and sacred Body, O Savior, the third day You arose. And unto all the world did you give life whereby all the heavenly powers did proclaim that you are the Giver of Life. Glory unto our Resurrected Christ; glory unto Your Kingdom; glory to Your dispensation, O You alone Who loves all..)*

Hymn for St. George – *Os ton echmaloton eleftherotis... (Since you are a deliverer of captives and a defender of the poor; a physician for the sick and a noble attendant to kings, O Great among the Martyrs and Glorious George, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.)*

Kontakion Hymn for this Sunday– *Ee Parthenos simeron...(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 – Ephesians 6:10-17 / Gospel – St. Luke 13: 10-17*

Axion Estin

Communion Hymn – *Enite ton Kyrion...(Praise the Lord...) page 64 in the Divine Liturgy books.*

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



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee Hour Hostess: Susan Cox

MEMORIAL - Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Life and Salvation of the servant of God, **Saba, Sarah Rassi (40 days)**, the beloved sister of **Abraham Rassi**. We pray for the Eternal Life and Salvation for the servant of God, **Saba, Sarah Rassi**, and for the peace and comfort of **Abraham Rassi** and his family. **MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS-Donated today by **Nicholas Demetropoulos** in memory of his parents.

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY-Today! A special presentation will be offered following the Divine Liturgy.

PHILOPTOCHOS - Today is the deadline for paid reservations for our Annual Christmas Lunch. See flyer and speak to **Tina Veroulis** or **Rhonda Latkovic**. We need volunteers to make cookies and bread this week for the Christmas Bake Sale. See **Lula Valissarakos** to find out the schedule. See **Pat Dalkas** to be a sponsor for Coffee Hour in December. **Philoptochos Board Meeting: tomorrow at 11:00 a.m.**

FESTIVAL FINANCIAL SUCCESS – Any financial contribution to **underwrite the costs of the 2018 Festival** will be most appreciated! Please see the "2018 Festival Needs List," posted in our parish hall. **Our next Festival Meeting: Tomorrow...Monday, December 4 at 7:00 p.m.**

PARISH COUNCIL CANDIDACY FORMS – 2018 Parish Council Candidacy Forms are now available in our parish office (or from Fr. Ted). Deadline : Monday, December 11, 2017. Candidates must be baptized and chrismated as an Orthodox Christian and, if married, his or her marriage must have been performed according to the **Rites of our Holy Greek Orthodox Archdiocese**. In addition, one must be a responsible Stewardship member of St. George parish for at least one year prior to applying for candidacy. Candidates are also required to meet with **Fr. Ted** prior to the Parish Council Elections. Elections will be held on **Sunday, December 17th.**

FALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY- St. George Fall General Assembly is next **Sunday, December 10, 2017** following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Stewardship Commitments are to be up to date.

STREET LIFE PROJECT - Many thanks and blessings to all who helped feed the homeless for Thanksgiving on Tuesday, November 21st: **Louise Dobbs Barringer, Pam & Larry Zaverdas, Mary Zachariadou, Tina & Angelo Veroulis, Lula Valissarakos, Tasia Richards, Alice Pulos, Julie Makrianis, Nadia Hector, Jeffery (Demetrios) Curreri, Rhonda Latkovic, Fr. Ted & Pres. Petula.** We hope that others will join this dedicated team of faithful to help the homeless on **Tuesday, December 19, 2017** - again in Indio.

READERS NEEDED -We need readers for the Sunday Epistle passages. To sign up, please contact **Jim Christopoulos** to sign up and be included in the schedule of Sunday Readers.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, December 4th...ST. BARBARA THE MARTYR

Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m. /Philoptochos Board Meeting – 11:00 a.m.
Festival Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 5th...Bible Study – 10:00 a.m.

Vespers-7:00 p.m. at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Temecula, CA

Wednesday, December 6th....ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER

Orthros-8:30 a.m./ Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m./Men's Bible Study-2:00 p.m. (Luke 14:16-24)

Thursday, December 7th..Choir Practice – 1:00 p.m. / Parish Council Meeting – 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 9th...Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon - 11:30 a.m. -Desert Horizons in Indian Wells.

*The Ladder for December 2017
is sponsored by:
Rhonda & Nicholas Latkovic*

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.

*Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon
Saturday, December 9, 2017*

11:30 a.m.

At

*Desert Horizons Country Club
44900 Desert Horizons Country Club
Indian Wells, CA 92210
760-340-4646*

*R.S.V.P. by December 3, 2017 to
Rhonda Latkovic, Linda Kallis, Tina Veroulis
Make your check out to Philoptochos*

Family and Friends are invited

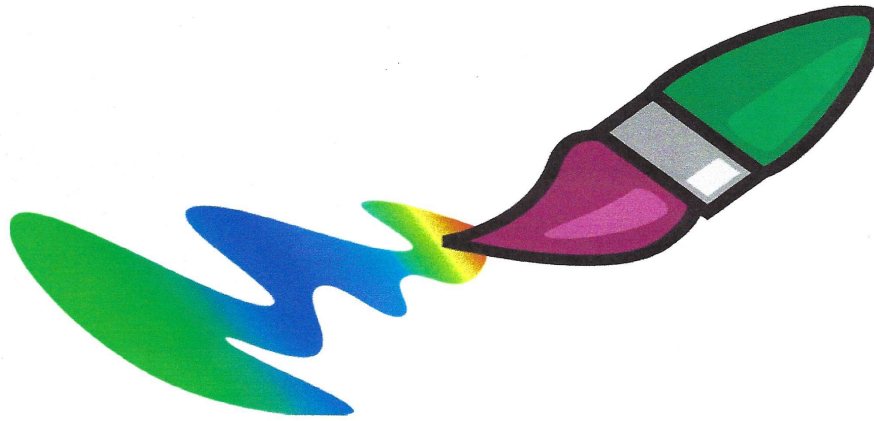
Pre-fixe Menu, no substitutions \$35.00 per person

Choice of:

- 1. Salmon with creamy polenta, sherried mushrooms and vegetables*
 - 2. Petite Filet with chutney sauce, garlic mashed potatoes and vegetables*
 - 3. Medallions of Chicken with kale risotto and vegetables*
- Salad, soft drinks and dessert are included*

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Number attending: _____ Amount Enclosed: _____



ADULT COLORING SESSION & LUNCHEON

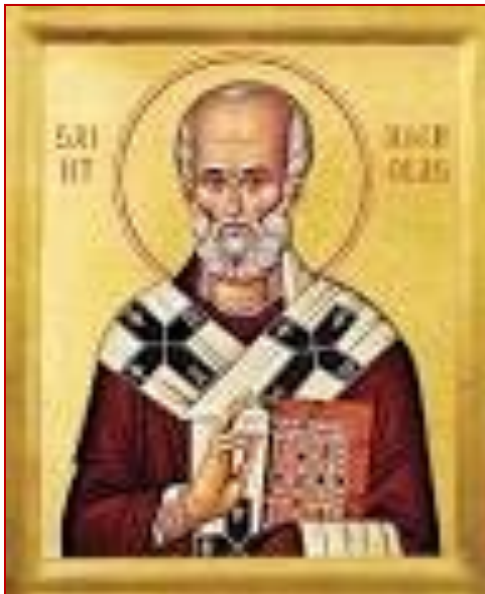
When: Friday, December 15th @ 12 PM-2 PM

Where: St. George Church Hall

RSVP: By Dec. 10th to Rhonda Latkovic

We will have a Christmas Theme for our luncheon & coloring session!
Lunch will be served at 12:00 PM with coloring to follow. We will be decorating sugar cookies for the Holidays for attendees to take home!
A \$5.00 minimum donation is requested. There will also be a raffle.
Coloring supplies provided. Please join us!

Please note-due to Greek Festival preparations there will be no Adult Coloring Sessions in January & February.



Please Join us to Celebrate

Saint Nicholas Name Day

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church
41132 Guava St., Murrieta, CA 92562

Tuesday, December 5

7 pm GREAT VESPERS

Wednesday, December 6

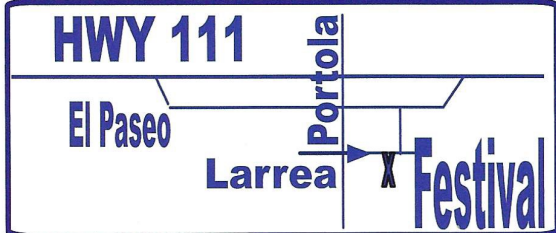
9 am ORTHROS - 10am DIVINE LITURGY

*Celebrant Bishop Apostolos of Medeia
St. Nicholas Annual Dinner to follow Vespers
Everyone is Welcomed!*

- GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - LOUKOUMADES -
 - GREEK CHICKEN - MOUSAKA - SPANAKOPITA - DOLMADE - PASTICHIO - SOULYAKI - BAKLAVA - DOLMADES - GYROS
 - GREEK CHICKEN - MOUSAKA - SPANAKOPITA - DOLMADE - PASTICHIO - GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - DOLMADES
 - GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - LOUKOUMADES -



AUTHENTIC GREEK FOOD
HEAVENLY PASTRIES
GREEK FOLK DANCERS
OUZO • RETSINA • METAXA
ART & SOUVENIRS
RELIGIOUS ITEMS
CHURCH TOURS
KIDZ ZONE
FUN FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY



EL PASEO COURTESY CARTS available for festival attendee pick up & drop off. Route along El Paseo from San Pablo to Portola & church festival entrance.
ADDITIONAL PARKING AVAILABLE at Washington Charter School, and Hope Lutheran Church.
SHUTTLE SERVICE PROVIDED.



We are pleased to provide assistance to anyone requesting it. If you need help, please ask.

Saint George
Greek Orthodox Church

Proudly presents the

22ND ANNUAL
GREEK
FESTIVAL

in Palm Desert, CA

Saturday & Sunday

February 17th & 18th 2018

11am to 8pm

on the Church Grounds

74-109 Larrea, Palm Desert, CA

(760) 568-9901

Experience Authentic Greek Food
Devour Heavenly Pastries
Dance to live Greek music, and
Be Greek for a Day!

ADMISSION \$3

(Children 12 & under free)
 Active Duty Military, Police,
 Fire & EMT Free w/ ID

www.PDGreekFest.org
 PDGreekFest



- GYROS - GREEK LAMB - BAKLAVA - LOUKOUMADES -
 - GREEK CHICKEN - MOUSAKA - SPANAKOPITA - DOLMADE - PASTICHIO - SOULYAKI - BAKLAVA - DOLMADES - GYROS