

MAY 7, 2017

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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Palm Desert, California 92260

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THE LADDER

SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC

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.

“GO AND SIN NO MORE”

“See? You became well. Go and sin no more, lest anything worse befalls you.” (St. John 5:14). These words of our Lord directed to the paralytic, which we heard during the reading of the passage from St. John’s Gospel bear witness to a relationship between sin and health.

The Sacraments of the Church teach us this lesson by way of the prayers that make up the rubrics of the services and by way of the general message related to the spiritual preparation needed for

our participation in the Church’s Sacraments.

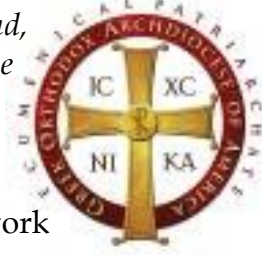
The main goal of the paralytic of today’s Gospel passage was to be cured in terms of his physical wellbeing. But the purpose of life is not only to skip along through life’s pleasures, but to draw near to our True God and Savior, Jesus Christ. To the extent that we live according to Christ’s love, we seek to avoid sin.

This point is emphasized in the First
Continued on page 2

FOR THE HEALING OF SOUL AND BODY

“Loving Master, Lord Jesus Christ my God, let not these Holy Gifts be to my condemnation because of my unworthiness, but for the cleansing and sanctification of both soul and body and the pledge of the future life and kingdom. It is good for me to cling to God and to place in Him the hope of my salvation.”

The above is one of the Communion Prayers read during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. While we may be unworthy according to our own frailties, it is Christ Who makes us worthy, provided that we seek to acquire a pure soul, which, in turn sanctifies the body. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in his *Mystagogical Catecheses, IV*, writes the following: *“Let us, then partake with full assurance of the Body and Blood of Christ: for in the figure of bread is given to you His Body and in the figure of wine, His Blood – so that, by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, you may be made of the same Body and Blood with Him. Thus, we come to bear Christ in us, because His Body and Blood are distributed through our members and, in this, according to the blessed Apostle Peter, we become partakers of the Divine Nature.”* True health of soul and body is a matter of our relationship with Christ. By “health of the body,” it is not meant that we never feel pain or discomfort; it means that, we treat our bodies with reverence, as the property of God, allowing God to work with us in every way.



<Ιδε υγιης γεγονας – μηκετι αμαρτανε, ινα μη χειρον σοι γενηται.> (Ιωαν. 5:14). Τα λογια του Κυριου προς τον παραλυτικον, τα οποια ακουσαμεν κατα το αναγνωσμα του κατα Ιωαννην Ευαγγελιου μαρτυρουν μια σχεση μεταξυ αμαρτιας και υγειας.

Τα Μυστηρια της Εκκλησιας μας διδασκουν αυτο το μαθημα δια μεσων των ευχων, οι οποιες συνθετουν τις γραμμες των τελετων και δια μεσου της γενικης διδασκαλιας της Εκκλησιας σχετικως με την πνευματικην προετοιμασιαν για να συμμετασχουμεν στα Μυστηρια της Εκκλησιας.

Ο κυριος σκοπος του παραλυτικου της σημερινης Ευαγγελικης περικοπης ηταν να θεραπευθη κατα την σωματικην του υγειαν. Αλλα ο σκοπος της ζωης δεν ειναι μονον να σκιρταμεν μεσα στις απολαυσεις της ζωης, αλλα να γνωρισουμεν τον Αληθινον Θεον μας, τον Ιησουν Χριστον. Οσο ζουμεν συμφωνα με την αγαπην του Χριστου, τοσο αποφευγουμεν την αμαρτιαν.

Αυτο τονιζεται στην Πρωτην Επιστολην του Απ. Παυλου προς τους Κορινθιους: <Ωστε οστις τρωγη τον αρτον τουτον η πινη το ποτηριον τουτον αναξιως, ενοχος θελει εισθαι του Σωματος και Αιματος του Κυριου. Ας δοκιμαζη δε εαυτον ο ανθρωπος, ... διοτι ο τρωγων και πινων αναξιως, τρωγει και πινει κατακρισιν εις εαυτον... δια τουτο υπαρχουσι μεταξυ σας πολλοι ασθενεις και αρρωστοι και αποθνησκουσιν ικανοι.> (I Κορ. 11:27-30). Μαλιστα, οι ευχες των Μυστηριων του Βαπτισματος (περι φωτισμου), του Ευχελαιου (περι συγχωρησεως), της Εξομολογησεως (συγχωρησεως και μετανοιας), της Θ. Κοινωνιας – ολες σχετιζονται με την <αυτοεξετασιν> του εαυτου μας, για να εχουμεν σωματικην και ψυχικην υγειαν. +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians: “So that whoever eats this bread and drinks from this cup unworthily is guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. Let each one of us examine their own self...because those who eat and drink unworthily bring upon them judgment...this is why many among you are ill and sick and some have fallen asleep.” (1 Corinthians 11:27-30). Indeed, the prayers of the Sacraments of Baptism (regarding illumination of the soul); of Holy Unction (regarding forgiveness); of Holy Confession (regarding forgiveness and repentance) and Holy Communion (all of them) deal with our own spiritual “self-examination,” so that we can have health of body and soul.

There are many things that we fear in this world of ours: we fear the violence that is constantly portrayed in the media; we fear natural disasters; we fear illness; we fear loss. While there is much reason to fear these things, because they do impact our lives negatively, the fear that we have over such matters should pale compared to the fear that we should have of our decisions to commit sin. All of our normal fears deal with events over which we have little control. Much of them are “acts of God.” As such, they summon sympathy and care for us from others. But, sin is a horrible thing. It causes great damage to others; it spoils our own image; it puts us at odds with God, and there is no one who wants to sympathize with us when we sin. We are alone. Ultimately, sin cuts us off from the source of life, Who is Christ our Risen God – and, in consequence, we find only death.

We should fear committing sin more than any other thing, because, through sin, “anything worse” (as our Lord said to the paralytic) will befall us. If our prayers do not restrain us from gossip, greed, deception, envy, hatred, then they are not real prayers – perhaps only self-serving epithets geared for our own self-contentment, like in the case of the Pharisee. But, if we would engage ourselves in the prayers of our Holy Sacraments and have them echoing in our minds and souls constantly, we would become more and more careful of our thoughts, motives, and feelings so as not to commit sins.

We are, in many ways, victims of the sins of humanity in general, as well as of our own personal sins. St. Gregory Palamas reminds us, “The death of the body did not come from God, but from sin and from the soul that committed the sin and from the serpent that led it with guile to sin. Therefore, many of the illnesses of the body have found their way through sin.” (Homily 31, verses 13-15, Migne Patrology). Recklessness, neglect, anxiety all have an effect on our wellbeing. To avoid sin, requires that we live carefully according to the wisdom and love of Christ our God, Who is Risen from the dead.

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Kathy Ligeros, Nicholas Kyriakou, Argyroula Krespis (Nick Krespis’ mother), Constantine Papapetru, Erika Aguilar, Nicholas Coussoulis, Mary Mitsias, Nula Papapetru, Jim Alex, Tillie Lockshire (*Many faithful on our 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—Shout to God all the earth. Sing now to His Name; give glory to His praise.

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

Verse 2—Say to God, "How fearful are Your works; in the greatness of Your power Your enemies will lie to You.

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

Verse 3—Let all the earth worship you and sing to You; let them sing to Your Name.

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

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

Refrain: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soson"

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

Verse 1—May God be gracious to us and bless us; may He cause His face to shine upon us.

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

Verse 2—That we may know His way on earth, Your salvation among all Gentiles.

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

Verse 3—Let the peoples give thanks to You O God; let all the peoples praise You. May God bless us, and let all the ends of the earth be in fear of Him.

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...)

HYMNS (during and after the Entrance with the Gospel):

Hymn with the Entrance with the Holy Gospel: **Christos Anesti...** (Christ is Risen from the dead; by death trampling down death and, to those in the tombs, He has bestowed life.) [Hymn for the Resurrection of Christ from the dead]

En Ekklesias evlogheete ton Theon ek pighon Israel...o Anastas ek nekron

Efrenestho ta ourania... (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.) [Tone 3]

Os ton ehmaloton 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 God that He may save our souls.) [St. George]

Kontakion Hymn: Ei ke en tafo katilthes... (Through You, the deathless One, descended into the grave, You destroyed the power of Hades and, as Victor, You arose again, O Christ our God. You greeted the Myrrh-bearing Women, saying, 'Rejoice!' You did bestow peace upon Your Disciples and Resurrection upon the fallen.)

READINGS: Epistle: Acts 9:32-42 / Gospel: St. John 5:1-15
The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is celebrated

Instead of "Axion Estin", "O Angelos evoh-a Keharitomeni...Symophonos, Parthene..."

Communion Hymn: "Soma Christou..." (Receive the Body of Christ and taste Him, Who is the Fountain of Immortality. Alleluia.)

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

Proverbs 4:23

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Coffee Hour: George Megalonakis

PHILOPTOCHOS – Our General Meeting will be tomorrow May 8 at 11:30 a.m. Lunch will be provided with a donation of \$6.00. This is our last meeting of the season; our next one will be in September. In this next week, The Knitting Group will be donating headbands, afghans and arm warmers to the City of Hope patients. The knitters have made close to 100 items. Our Adopt-a-Student **Spencer Ramos** will be graduating from the seminary with his Masters Degree and will be ordained by the Metropolitan within weeks of graduation. We congratulate you Spencer!

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS – Following are the Altar Flower sponsors and their personal dedications for the first Sunday of May 4, 2017:

Diane Young - "Dr. Ken Pascal, May his memory be Eternal!"

Josie Desnoyer - "In memory of Mr. Frank Barboza Jr. May his memory be Eternal!"

Mrs. Christina F. Long - "On your 101st birthday: May God bless and keep you always. Thank you for all the love and support you have given us all these years. I love you mom (Bella Farres)."

Mr. & Mrs. Chris Larkaris - "In loving memory of His Eminence Metropolitan Anthony, and our parents; The Rev. George, and Presbytera Helen Laskaris, and Angelo and Ester Di vito."

STREET LIFE PROJECT – Many thanks to God for the matching contribution by **Michael Carroll of \$750 for the Street Life Project.** As was previously announced in the *Voice of St. George*, \$725 was given to the Street Life Project ministry last month, representing the funds raised at our **Annunciation Luncheon for the poor** on March 25th. With Michael's contribution, we now have **\$1,500** contributed to help house the homeless of the Coachella Valley.

AHEPA – AHEPA Sunday celebration on Sunday, May 21, 2017. Adults, \$15/ Children, \$10. See the flier in the parish hall. AHEPA Meeting this Wednesday, May 10th at 6:30 p.m.

"CARD OF REMEMBRANCE" FOR PRESVYTERA CATHERINE'S FAMILY – Those who want to sign an "Icon Card" to be sent to the family of Presvytera Catherine Tavlarides' family, offering prayers for her soul and for her eternal memory, may do so this Sunday. The card is to be mailed to the family by Thursday, May 11, 2017.

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Monday, May 8, 2017.....Philoptochos General Members' Meeting – 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, May 9, 2017.....Bible Study -10:00 a.m. / Men's Bible Study – 6:30 p.m. (St. John 4:5-42)

Wednesday, May 10th.....MID-PENTECOST

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

Parish Council Meeting – 6:30 p.m. / AHEPA Meeting-6:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 11th..... Choir Practice – 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 13th.....Vespers – 5:00 p.m.

*The Ladder for the month of May 2017 is
donated by
Tillie Lockshire*

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.

AHEPA SUNDAY



SPECIAL RECOGNITION FR. THEODORE PANTELS

HONORING HIS STEADFAST DEVOTION TO THE CHURCH
AND SUPPORT OF AHEPA AND CHAPTER 528

WHEN

May 21st, 2017

WHAT

Annual Scholarships and recognitions award ceremony after services, in the church.
Luncheon following in fellowship hall.

WHERE

St George
Greek Orthodox Church
74-109 Larrea, Palm Desert CA 92260

Wynn Storton
Chapter 528 President
contact@AHEPA528.org
www.AHEPA528.org

LUNCHEON

TICKETS

\$15 General

\$10 Children

CATERED BY

George Argyros
Towne Center Cafe

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFITING Fr Theophilos Memorial Scholarship fund

If you would like to donate to
the 528 fund please make check
payable to

AHEPA 528
Fr. Theophilos Scholarship in
memo box please
Mail to:
AHEPA Chapter 528
Scholarship Fund
PO Box 1735
Palm Desert, CA 92261-1735

*all donations are tax deductible
to the letter of the law