

OCTOBER 22, 2017

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, California 92260

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THE LADDER

"AND DELIVER US FROM EVIL."

A demon appeared in the cell of a certain ascetic Saint as he was preparing for his trip to another cell where he thought that he would find more peace. "Who are you?" The demon answered, "I am the demon who is bothering you here in this cell where you are now." The Saint: "Well. I am preparing to leave here. What are you going to do?" The demon answered, "I am going with you!" St. Anthony the Great was praying ardently every day and night. One day an "angel" appeared before him

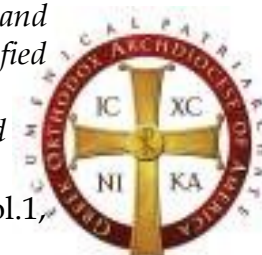
saying, "Anthony, God is very pleased with the sincere prayers that you offer. You are such a good servant of the Most High God!" But, St. Anthony felt within his soul a "movement" of pride and he made the Sign of the Cross at that very moment. Immediately, the form of the "angel" changed such that his real form was revealed – not an "angel," but a demon.

The general experience of the ascetic Saints verifies the reality that demons

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DEFENSE AGAINST DECEPTION BY DEMONS – The first defense against the demons is Baptism. Prior to the act of baptizing an individual, the rubrics call for the priest to read the Prayers of Exorcism: "O Lord of Sabaoth, the God of Israel,...Rebuke the unclean spirits and expel them, cleansing the work of Your hands; and, using Your trenchant energy, beat down Satan under his (her) feet, giving him (her) victory over him, and over his unclean spirits; so that, obtaining the mercy that comes from You, he (she) may be accounted worthy of Your Immortal and Heavenly Mysteries, and may send up all glory to You,..."

The second defense against the demons is sincere, whole-hearted prayer to discern the Wisdom of God from the "wisdom" of the world. "Of the demons opposing us in the practice of ascetic life (i.e., a life of sincere prayer), there are three groups who fight in the front line: those entrusted with the appetites of gluttony; those who suggest thoughts of avarice (i.e., greed); and those who incite us to seek the esteem of men (i.e., to seek glory)...In short, no one can fall into the power of any demon, unless he has been wounded by those of the front line. That is why the devil suggested these three thoughts to the Savior: first, he exhorted Him to turn stones into bread; then he promised Him the whole world, if Christ would fall down and worship him; and thirdly, he said that, if our Lord would listen to him, He would be glorified and suffer nothing in falling from the pinnacle of the temple. But, our Lord, having shown Himself superior to these temptations, commanded the devil to 'get behind Him.' In this way He teaches to...reject these three thoughts." (St. Nicodemos of The Holy Mount; *Philokalia*, Vol.1, pg.38).



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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.

Εφανερώθηκε ένας δαιμονας στο κελλι ενος αγιου καθως ετοιμαζοταν για το ταξιδι του προς ενα αλλο κελλι οπου ενομιζε ο αγιος οτι θα ευρισκε πιο πολυ ισυχιαν. <Εσυ, ποιος εισαι;> Απαντησε ο δαιμονας: <Εγω ειμαι ο δαιμονας ο οποιος σε πειραζει εδω στο κελλι οπου ευρισκεσαι τωρα.> Ο αγιος: <Καλα. Εγω ετοιμαζομαι να φυγω απο εδω. Τι θα κανεις εσυ;> Απαντησε ο δαιμονας, <Θα παω μαζι σου!> Ο Αγιος Αντωνιος ο Μεγας προσευχοταν εντονα καθε ημερα και καθε νυχτα. Μια ημερα επαρουσιασθηκε ενας <αγγελος> μποστα του: <Αντωνιε, ο Θεος ειναι πολυ ευχαριστημενος με τις θερμες προσευχες που κανεις. Εισαι τοσο καλος δουλος του Υψιστου!> Αλλα, ο Αγιος Αντωνιος αισθανθηκε μεσα στην ψυχην του την <κινηση> της υπερηφανειας και εκανε <το Σταυρο> του την ιδιαν στιγμην. Αμεσως, η μορφη <του αγγελου> αλλαξε ετσι ωστε εμφανισθηκε η πραγματικη μορφη του – οχι <αγγελος,> αλλα δαιμονας.

Η γενικη πειρα των αγιων ασκητων βεβαιωνει την αληθειαν οτι στην πραγματικοτητα υπαρχουν δαιμονια, ωσαν τα δαιμονια τα οποια εδεσαν τον δαιμονισμενον της χωρας των Γαδαρηνων, οπως ακουσαμεν κατα το αναγνωσμα της σημερινης Ευαγγελικης περικοπης.

Ας ακουσωμεν την συμβολην Αγιου Κοσμα του Αιτωλου: <Οσο πιο πολυ ο ανθρωπος κανει εξομολογηση για τις αμαρτιες του και κανει προσευχη μαζι με νηστεια, τοσο πιο πολυ ο δαιμονας γρηγορα καιεται και εξαφανιζεται.>

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

do exist, like those who tied up the demoniac of the Gadarenes about whom we heard from today's Gospel passage. Let us hear the advice of St. Kosmas Aitolos: *"The more we make a confession of our sins, while praying, along with fasting, the more the demon quickly is burned and vanishes."*

Genuine prayer has two purposes: 1) for us to find God, and, 2) in finding God, to acquire God's Wisdom so that we guard ourselves from deception. We just noted how, St. Anthony the Great chased away the demon who was trying to deceive him by appealing to St. Anthony's sense of pride. Pride is the factor that allows us to forget about God and to think of ourselves as invincible. According to St. Nikiphoros the Monk, *"The most important task for an ascetic is to enter into the heart of his being [through prayer], to wage war against Satan, and to battle with him by wrestling against the thoughts that he provokes."* (Philokalia: Eastern Christian Spiritual Texts, pg. 65).

In the book, *The Mountain of Silence*, Fr. Maximos explains that the demons seek to draw us away from God so that they can have glory for themselves. In fact, Lucifer fell from heaven precisely because he was prideful. (See Isaiah 14:14-16 and Revelation 12: 7-9.) By drawing us from God, we are destroyed, because we are not with God, the Giver of Life. The tactics of Satan and the demons are geared to *deceive* and *confuse* us, so as to take away our attention from God's Will. "[Fr. Maximos said], 'Keep in mind that Satan, although not a person, is a real entity who, for purposes of deception, does not maintain a stable image... Fr. Maximos went on to say that Satan's aim is to confuse us in any way possible. That is why we need spiritual guides to help us through such difficulties...Satan behaves...by shifting his image in order to confuse and disorient.'" (pg. 102).

This "changing of image" and distortion of truth is evident even from the Book of Genesis, where we read how Satan appeared in the serpent to deceive Adam and Eve into trying to become gods themselves. The best description that is given regarding Satan and the demons is offered by Christ our True God in His own words, as He delivered to us the Lord's Prayer. The last request in this prayer is, *"Deliver us from evil."* In Greek, it literally says, *"And deliver us from the Deceitful One ("rheesay imas apo tou ponirooh" – "poniroohs" is the Greek word for "deceitful one").* Within the body of the Lord's Prayer, therefore, we find the revelation that prayer (the Lord's Prayer itself) works to guard our souls against the deceptions of demons.

God's goodness and truth is always a *constant!* God *"exists forever and is always the same,"* to quote the Thanksgiving Prayer of the Liturgy. The truth is that God loves us so much that *"He gave His Only-Begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have life everlasting."*

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Constantine Papapetru, Erika Aguilar, Mary Mitsias, Nula Papapetru, Tom Evans, Jim Alex, Jean Chronis-Kuhn, 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, 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."*

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 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: *"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. 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 – *Efrenestho ta ourania [Tone 3]... (Let the Heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad, for the Lord has shown strength with His protective arm: by death He has trampled upon death and has become the Firstborn of the dead; He has delivered us from the depths of Hades, and has granted to the world His Great Mercy.)*

Hymn for St. Averkios – *Kanona pisteos ke ikona prah-oh-titos... (The facts surrounding your life showed to your flock that you are a rule of faith; an icon of gentleness – and a teacher of self-control. Therefore, through humility you acquired the things on high and riches through poverty. O Holy Father and Hierarch St. Averkios, intercede to Christ our God and entreat Him to save our souls.)*

Hymn for the Holy Martyred Youth of Ephesus – *Ee martyres Sou Kyrie ... (Your martyrs, O Lord, were worthily awarded by You the crowns of incorruption in that they contested for You our Immortal God. Since they possessed Your power, they defeated tyrants, dashing the demons' powerless displays of defiance. O Christ, at their fervent entreaties, save our souls.)*

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- Prostasia ton Christianon... (A Protection of Christians unshamable; mediation with the Creator immovable. We sinners beg You: do not despise the voices of our prayers, but anticipate, since You are good, and swiftly come unto our aid as we cry out to You with faith: Hurry to intercession; and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos, Who defends at all times those who honor You.)

READINGS: *Epistle – Galatians 1: 11-19 / Gospel – St. Luke 8: 26-39*

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



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee Hour Sponsor: Alice Pulos

PHILOPTOCHOS – We need sponsors for our Coffee Hour on Sunday, November 19 and 26. Sign up on the calendar on the bulletin board. Save the dates: Board Meeting on Monday, November 6 at 11:00 a.m. and the General Meeting Monday, November 13 at 11:30 a.m. Watch the Ladder for information on alternative meeting sites as the hall floor will soon be torn up for the new flooring.

BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN – The Baby Bottle Campaign will end this Sunday. Baby Bottles with instructions will be on the tables in the parish hall. Donations will be sent to **Birth Choice of the Desert** in La Quinta, CA. Their theme is "*Birth Choice of the Desert Wants to Save God's Babies!*" **WILL YOU HELP?** Checks are to be made payable to: "Birth Choice of the Desert." We thank God for the generosity of the following people. We look forward to the participation in our Baby Bottle Drive this year from others, as well.

Philoptochos Diane Young Kathy Amos Fr. Ted & Presvytera
Alice Pulos Mary Piggott Evelyn & Peter Grafas

PHILOPTOCHOS CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE ORDER FORMS & THE 2017 CHRISTMAS CARD FORMS – Now available in our parish hall.

HELP MAKE OUR FESTIVAL A SUCCESS – We always are in need of volunteers. Also, If everyone can give something toward underwriting the costs of the Festival, a lot can be accomplished. Please feel free to offer a donation according to one's ability toward our Festival. If everyone tries, we can reach a substantial sum (to the surprise of all!) to off-set Festival expenses.

AHEPA – The possibility exists that the AHEPA Thanksgiving Luncheon scheduled for November 19th will be held on the patio outside the parish hall, or at a place other than the parish hall, due to the re-flooring project. More details will be provided in next week's *Ladder*. In the meantime, those who want to participate in this luncheon event which is held to raise funds for the AHEPA 528 Fr. T.P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship Fund are asked to inform us so that adequate arrangements can be made from now. See the AHEPA Thanksgiving Flier that is available at the coffee bar in our parish hall.

LADDER AND VOICE OF ST. GEORGE SPONSORS – Those who would like to sponsor the printing of *The Ladder* and/or *The Voice of St. George* may now sign up at the bulletin board that is posted in our parish hall.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, October 23rd.....ST. JAMES THE APOSTLE
Orthros-8:30 a.m. /Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, October 24th.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m.
Parish Council - 2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 25th.....Men's Bible Study – 2:00 p.m. (St. Luke 8: 41-56)

Thursday, October 26th.....ST. DEMETRIOS THE GREAT MARTYR
Orthros-8:30 a.m. /Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m

Saturday, October 28th.....Vespers-5:00 p.m.

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.

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 **November 27, 2017**. 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, Pat Dalkas or Tina Veroulis in the office. If you have any questions, please call Lula at 760 200-8501 or Pat at 760-574-1531

PICK UP DATES:

Sunday, December 10, 2017 (following the conclusion of Church Services)

Sunday, December 17, 2017 (following the conclusion of Church Services)

We thank you in advance for your continued support of Philoptohos



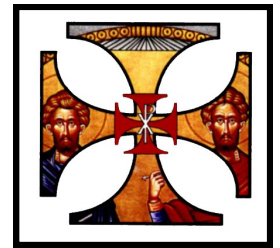
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PHONE _____

<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	\$ _____



**SUNDAY, 12:00 P.M.
NOVEMBER 19th**



**ST. GEORGE GREEK
Place to be Determined
74-109 LARREA PALM DESERT, CA**

ADULTS: \$15

Children under 12 are free

Tickets can be purchased from Philoptochos or AHEPA 528

**All proceeds go to
Fr. Theophilos Theophilos Memorial Scholarship Fund.
Donations accepted at www.ahepa528.org or mailed to:**

**AHEPA 528 Scholarship fund
PO Box 1735 Palm Desert, CA 92261-1735**

contact@ahpepa528.org

Please make any checks to AHEPA Chapter 528 or pay online. Scholarship awards benefit members of Saint George Church and the AHEPA 528 Family

Deadline for Reservations: Sunday, November 12, 2017

Thank You for your Continued Support!



Dear Parishioners,

Once again, our community of St. George Greek Orthodox Church of The Desert will be preparing a Parish Christmas Card. We are certain that all of you will want to participate in this very popular and meaningful Christmas Blessing.

Please join the many families of our parish in expressing Christmas Greetings to fellow members and friends by completing this form. A donation of \$20.00 should be enclosed along with this form and made payable to St. George Greek Orthodox Church of the Desert. You can mail it to P.O. Box 4755, Palm Desert, CA 92261.

Please print your name, as you would like it to appear on the card on the line below. (Please Print)

Name: _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ Deadline: December 1, 2017



St. George Greek Orthodox Church of the Desert
Contact our parish office – 760-568-9901
74109 Larrea Street-Post Office Box 4755
Palm Desert, CA 92261
St. George Greek Orthodox Church is a 501(c) 3 Exempt
Organization

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

