

SEPTEMBER 3, 2017

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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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.

LESSONS OF THE CROSS

As we draw near to the day commemorating the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14th, we hear the parable of the "householder" from today's Gospel passage. Through this parable, Christ describes the story of the Old Testament and His own life in history for the purpose of the salvation of humanity. He speaks about the Prophets who suffered from the persecution of unbelievers. In addition, He describes the future events related to Himself leading to His crucifi-

xion. The ministry of Christ our God in the world accomplished at least four things: 1) The manifestation of God's love—"For God so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have life everlasting." God's love is expressed through our love for one another, in accordance with the teachings and the miracles performed before the eyes of the whole world by our Lord Jesus Christ. 2) The death of death—
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THE ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR

The Ecclesiastical New Year (also known as The Indiction) begins on the **1st of September** and is observed with special ceremony in the Church. Since the completion of each year takes place, as it were, with the harvest and gathering of the crops into storehouses, and we begin anew from henceforth the sowing of seed in the earth for the production of future crops, September is considered the beginning of the New Year. The Church also keeps festival this day, beseeching God for fair weather, seasonable rains, and an abundance of the fruits of the earth. The Holy Scriptures (Lev. 23:24-5 and Num. 29:1-2) also testify that the people of Israel celebrated the feast of the Blowing of the Trumpets on this day, offering hymns of thanksgiving. In addition to all the aforesaid, on this feast we also commemorate our Savior's entry into the synagogue in Nazareth, where He was given the book of the Prophet Isaiah to read, and He opened it and found the place where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, for which cause He hath anointed Me..." (Luke 4:16-30).

*Taken from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese website:
www.goarch.org*



Καθως πλησιαζουμεν την εορτην της Υψωσης του Τιμιου Σταυρου, τις 14 Σεπτεμβριου, ακουμεν την παραβολην του οικοδεσποτου της σημερινης Ευαγγελικης περικοπης. Δια μεσου της παραβολης αυτης, ο Χριστος περιγραφει την ιστοριαν της Π. Διαθηκης και την προσωπικην Του επιγειον ζωνν προς σωτηριαν της ανθρωποτητος. Ομιλει περι των προφητων, οι οποιοι υπεφεραν απο τον διωγμον των απιστων. Επισης, περιγραφει τα μελλοντικα γεγονοτα σχετικα με τον Εαυτον Του που οδηγουσαν προς την Σταυρωσιν Του.

Η αποστολη του Θεανθρωπου Χριστου στην ανθρωπινη ιστοριαν εχει τουλαχιστον τεσσαρα αποτελεσματα: 1) η φανερωσις της αγαπης του Θεου – <Ο Θεος ηγαπησε τον κοσμον ωστε τον Υιον Του τον Μονογενη δουναι, ινα πας ο πιστευων εις Αυτον μη απολυται, αλλα εχη ζωην αιωνιον.> Η αγαπη του Θεου εκφραζεται δια της αγαπης για τον συνανθρωπον μας, συμφωνα με τις διδασκαλιες και τα θαυμασια εργα του Χριστου μπροστα στα ματια του κοσμου. 2) <Θανατω θανατον πατησας> – οπως τονιζουμεν με τον Πασχαλινον υμνον, <Χριστος Ανεστη.> Και, δια της καταστροφης του θανατου, εχαρισε ο Χριστος στον καθεναν την ζωην την αιωνιον. 3) Δια της ενσαρκωσης του Λογου του Θεου, ο θανατος Του επανω στον Σταυρον καθαριζει το ρυπον της αμαρτιας και ανοιγει την οδον προς την μετανοιαν και την συχωρησιν. 4) Δια μεσων του Σωματος και του Αιματος του Χριστιου γινεται η ενωσις της ανθρωπινης φυσεως με την Θεικην ενεργειαν προς αγιασμον του ανθρωπου.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

which is emphasized in the Paschal hymn, “Christ is Risen,” (“trampling down death by death”). And through the destruction of death, Christ has given to each of us Eternal Life. 3) Through the Incarnation of the Word of God, His death washes away the ultimate consequence of sin and opens the door to repentance and forgiveness. 4) By virtue of the Cross, the Body and Blood of Christ is given to unite human nature with the Divine energy, allowing for the sanctification of the human being.

By “sanctification of the human being,” it is meant that, through Christ our God, men and women express the qualities of God’s Love in genuine personality traits and real-life actions. Such traits and actions include: self-control, self-sacrifice, charity, patience, forgiveness, sympathy, empathy, mercy, faith, hope, prayer, inner peace and peace with others, sharing of the Gospel teachings, confession of sins, repentance, humility, faithful worship and participation in the life of the Holy Sacraments.

The sanctification of the human being is most evident in one’s attitude towards others; one’s attitude towards life in general; one’s frame of mind and one’s world-view. The Christian judges self rather than others—and it is a judgment of self in relation to God’s Love and the Holy Commandments, for the purpose of self-correction, not in the spirit of self-hatred. Priorities in life are aimed at giving glory to God and are evaluated in terms of moral goodness as defined by the Word of God. In this regard, the whole of creation is viewed as the property of God over which we are stewards.

Society in general does not idealize Christian traits and values, partly because the value of these Christian traits stands in contrast to the values which the world defines as “success.” Humility is considered an “abnormality,” or weakness; self-judgment is considered as a sign of self-deprecation; morality is not based on Biblical principles, but on relative circumstances, much like taking a “poll” of common opinions about right and wrong.

The Holy Spirit spoke through the Prophets, preparing the world for Christ our God. But, the so-called normal people of the world rejected the Prophets and “killed one; stoned another.” They rejected Christ and “cast Him out and killed Him.” Indeed, the Bible portrays the human circumstance in every age: those who seek Christian values and traits will not be popular. Yet, let us remember the words of our Lord: “*Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*” (St. John 16:33).

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Kathy Ligeros, Constantine Papapetru, Erika Aguilar, Mary Mitsias, Nula Papapetru, Tom Evans, Jim Alex, Jean Chronis-Kuhn, Chris Laskaris (*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—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 Yio ke Aghio Pnevmati ke nin ke aei ke eis tous aonas ton aonon. Amin. *"O Monogenis Yios ke Logos tou Theou..."*

ANTIPHON III—This is the day the Lord made; let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein.

Sunday Hymn : *To fedron tis anastaseos kirygma...[Tone 4]... (When the tidings of the Resurrection from the glorious angel was proclaimed unto the women disciples and our ancestral sentence also had been abolished, to the Apostles with boasting did they proclaim that death is vanquished ever more and Christ our God has Risen from the dead and granted to the world the Great Mercy.)*

Hymn for St. Anthimos of Nicomedia: *Ke tropon metohos ke thronon diadhochos... (Becoming a partner with the Apostles in way of life and successor to their thrones, O God-inspired Saint, in the active life you found an entrance to contemplation. Hence you rightly expounded the word of truth, and you shed your blood in struggling for the faith, O Hieromartyr Anthimos. Intercede with Christ our God, beseeching Him to 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: *Ioakim ke Anna oneethismou... (Both Joachim and Anna from their sterility's stigma, and Adam and Eve from their mortality's ruin have been set free, O immaculate Maid, by your holy nativity. For this do your people hold celebration, redeemed from the guilt of transgression as they cry to you, "The barren one bears the Theotokos, the nourisher of our Life.")*

READINGS: Epistle - 1 Corinthians 16: 13-24 / Gospel- St. Matthew 21:33-42

The Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

Axion Estin.

Communion Hymn— *Enite ton Kyrion ..."(Praise the Lord from the heaven. Praise Him in the highest. Alleluia)*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee Hour Hosts: Presvytera Petula Pantels

MEETING FOR THE MEN'S BIBLE STUDY GROUP – Today during the Coffee Hour. Agenda item: Determine weekly meeting time for the 2017-2018 season.

PHILOPTOCHOS – Thanks to the parishioners who sponsored and hosted the Coffee Hours during the summer. We need sponsors for Sunday, September 24 and for the month of October. Please see the calendar on the bulletin board and speak to **Athena Snarskis**. Don't forget the Board Meeting on Monday, September 11 at 11:00 a.m. and the General Meeting on Monday, September 18 at 11:30 a.m. We welcome our new members. This is the perfect opportunity to meet our other members and get to know us.

SUNDAY SCHOOL REGISTRATION AND STAFF MEETING – Next Sunday, September 10th, all parents of our parish are asked to register their children as Sunday School students for 2017-2018. Enclosed is the "Sunday School Registration Form" to be completed and submitted next Sunday. Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, our parish Sunday School staff will meet at Towne Center Café for a luncheon meeting.

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS – This is to inform you that the October, 2017 through May, 2018 Altar Flower Season is "SOLD OUT" due to a very gracious and, generous contributor! We will provide you with more information in October. To God Be the Glory, and thank you all for your past and continuous support! May God bless you. **Louise Dobbs Barringer**, Altar Flower Coordinator.

PLANNING AHEAD – Looking ahead to next month, there are a few dates that are noteworthy:

Sunday, September 10th – First Sunday of Choir following the summer break

Registration for Sunday School

Monday, September 11th – Philoptochos Board Meeting – 11:00 a.m.

Festival Meeting – planning for the 2018 Greek Festival – 7:00 p.m.

Friday, September 15th – "Back After Summer Break" Coloring Session & Luncheon (See flier posted in the parish hall)

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, September 4th.....Labor Day

Tuesday, September 5th.....Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, September 7th.....Choir Practice – 1:00 p.m.

Friday, September 8th.....NATIVITY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

Orthros- 8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy- 9:30 a.m.

Parish Council – 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 9th.....Vespers- 5:00 p.m.

Note: Fr. Ted will be away on Wednesday, September 6th and will return late afternoon on Thursday, September 7th. He can still be contacted by cell phone at: (760) 880-5869.

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.



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO

FEAST OF THE INDICTION 2017

Beloved in the Lord,

The Feast of the Indiction is upon us, the beginning of the New Ecclesiastical Year. Along with this Feast we also celebrate the American Labor Day holiday. Families and friends will gather one more time in order to mark the end of summer and inaugurate the activities of autumn. Created in the late nineteenth century, the intent of Labor Day was to honor the American worker. We should remember that dimension of this holiday.

The Ecclesiastical year provides us with a new opportunity to renew our labors as individuals, families, and communities of faith. When the Lord began His ministry, He read from the Prophet Isaiah, *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release of the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."* (Luke 4:18-19, cf Isaiah 61:1). The Lord has given us a "to do list" to guide our labor. His words should inspire us as we begin this New Year.

Labor is honorable and part of God's plan for humanity. In the Book of Genesis (2:15) we read, *"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it."* The Lord made us responsible for the planet on which we live. Through our labor, Earth sustains us. Through our labor, we have used many natural resources to build and to create amazing cities and cultures, to cure and heal many illnesses and diseases, and to lift up humanity overall. In the Divine Liturgy we offer the natural gifts of God, transformed by human labor, back to God. That is the meaning of the exclamation in the Liturgy, *"Thine own of Thine own, we offer to Thee..."* In our quest to improve life, we may have forgotten the honorable and potentially divine intent of our labors. We have been overtaken by greed and desires that have led us to misuse our planet's resources and gifts, forgetting that they are gifts from God. A consequence of the fall of Adam, sin, has infected our good and natural desires. As His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has taught us for nearly three decades, committing a crime against the natural world is a sin. Our Patriarch states, *"If human beings were to treat one another's personal property the way they treat the natural environment, we would view that behavior as antisocial and illegal. We would expect legal sanctions and even compensation. When will we learn that to commit a crime against the natural world is also a sin?"* This connection means that we must labor to protect the natural world and to restore any damage that human activity and our footprint has caused. But we must also reflect on our labor, how our misdirected desires, have led to these sins against the natural world, resulting in pollution, extinction of God-created flora and fauna and more, and as a result the degradation of human life.

We must also extent our reflections into the other environments in which we live, but especially our life in this society. We must consider the pollution of our contemporary civil discourse. It is not very "civil" at all. It too has been polluted and thus has degraded our lives. As the Assembly of Bishops recently stated, *"The Orthodox Church emphatically declares that it does not promote, protect or sanction participation in . . . acts of hatred, racism, and discrimination, and proclaims*

that such beliefs and behaviors have no place in any community based in respect for the law and faith in a loving God.” These, too, are sins that separate us from God and divide us from one another; sins for which we must ask God's forgiveness and mercy. We, as faithful members of His Church, must also labor to protect civil discourse and to restore it to the purpose for which it was created, the edification of humanity, to build up the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12).

The time is now, my brothers and sisters in the Lord, to embrace the start of the New Ecclesiastical Year and re-purpose our labors: to become instruments of healing, reconciliation, and justice, to become better stewards of the Earth, and better citizens. This New Ecclesiastical Year offers us a new opportunity to recommit ourselves to this task in all our labors.

May the Lord guide your steps throughout this New Year, and may His abiding love grace and mercy be granted to you always.

With Love in Christ,

++GERASIMOS

Metropolitan of San Francisco