

SEPTEMBER 10, 2017

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

SUNDAY BEFORE THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Mailing Address:

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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 HOLY CROSS IS SALVATION

"Let it not be for me to boast except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Galatians 6: 14). It seems that the ancient Christians were using the sign of the Holy Cross perhaps even right after Pentecost Sunday. Surely, not only from St. Paul's words that "he boasts in the Cross of the Lord," but also from the Book of Revelation we learn about the "sign upon the foreheads of believers." (Revelation 14:1).

The early Christian writer, St. Cyril of

Jerusalem, wrote in his Catechetical Lectures: "Let us then not be ashamed to preach the One Crucified. The Cross is the seal over everything we do – and for the bread that we eat and the cup that we drink; our entrances and exits, before going to sleep and after waking up in the morning...in our travels and at time when we rest." (Catechesis, xiii, 36). St. John Chrysostom reminds us that wherever the sign of the Cross is made, Jesus Christ our God is present with us.

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THE JOY OF THE HOLY CROSS

During the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Sundays, the priest reads a prayer calling for our joy in the Cross of our Lord and, subsequently, in His Resurrection from the dead. It is a prayer said in association with the Great Entrance when the Holy Gifts are brought out of the Altar in procession and placed on the Altar Table. In this prayer, these words are said, "For through the Cross, joy has come into the world."

It is evident that in the Orthodox way of thinking, the Cross and the empty tomb are inseparably united in the one event of God's great love. This is nothing less than "Good News." Like Mary Magdalene, we find ourselves first standing by the Cross in sober vigilance before beholding the empty tomb and then encountering the Risen Lord (John 20:11-18).

It may be difficult to us to "see" the joy that comes through the Cross until we find ourselves "on the other side." This is the meaning behind St. Paul's words: for "now we see in a glass darkly, but then face to face" (1 Corinthians 13:12). It is our hope and the "certainty" of our faith that Christ has indeed triumphed over death, "even death on a Cross," as we read in St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (2:8).



<Εμοι μη γενοιτο καυχασθαι ει μη εν τω Σταυρω του Κυριου ημων Ιησου Χριστου.> (Γαλ. 6: 14). Ως φαίνεται οι αρχαιοι Χριστιανοι εχρησιμοποιουσαν το σημειον του Τιμιου Σταυρου ισως ακομη μετα την Κυριακην της Πεντηκοστης. Αφου οχι μονον απο τα λογια του Απ. Παυλου οτι <καυχεται εν τω Σταυρω του Κυριου,> αλλα και απο την Αποκαλυψιν γνωριζομεν κατι για το <σημαδι στα μετωπα των πιστων:> ... <Εχουσαι το Ονομα του Πατρος Αυτου εγεγραμμενον επι των μετωπων αυτων.> (Αποκ. 14:1). Οπως μαθαινουμεν απο τον Αγ. Κυριλλον της Ιερουσαλημ (ενας απο τους αρχαιους Χριστιανους): <Ας μην ντρεπομαστε να κηρυξομεν τον Εσταυρωμενον. Ο Σταυρος ειναι η σφραγισ σε ολα, ακομη και για τον αρτον τον οποιον τρωμεν και για το ποτον το οποιο πινουμεν και στις εισοδους και εξοδους ημων, πριν απο τον υπνον και μετα απο το ξυπνημα το πρωι... στην πορειαν ημων και κατα τας ωρες αναπαυσεως.> (Κατηχητικη Ομιλια, 13, 36). Ο Αγ. Ιωαννης ο Χρυσοστομος μας υπενθυμιζει οτι οπου υπαραχει το σημειον του Σταυρου, εκει ειναι και ο Χριστος.

Ο Σταυρος εχει θειες δυναμεις: διωχνει τα δαιμονια, σβηνει τους πειρασμους, ενδυναμωνει την ψυχην, φωτιζει τον νουν, κηρυττει το Ευαγγελιον. Ειναι η συχωρησεως, τον θανατον του θανατου και η οδος προς την αιωνιον ζωην με τον Ανασταντα εκ νεκρων Χριστον. Επισης, ειναι <η εικονα> για την προσευχην και η προσευχη περιλαμβανει την Σταυροπροσκυνησην μας.
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

This is why the Cross has such great power: the Cross chases away demons; eradicates temptations; strengthens the soul and illumines the mind. It is forgiveness of sins; the death of death and the road to Eternal Life with the Risen Christ our God. In addition, the Cross is the “icon” before which we pray – and prayer includes our personal veneration of the Holy Cross. At the beginning of the Divine Liturgy, the form of the Holy Cross is made by the priest raising up the Gospel Book.

Thus, the Holy Cross defines and describes salvation. Salvation is our life on the Cross together with Christ, where death is blown away and Paradise is opened by the Resurrection from the dead of our Lord. The Cross and the Resurrection are the same event. The Divine Liturgy is our mystical participation in this event and living our lives in constant preparation for the Divine Liturgy and in the spirit of the Divine Liturgy is a daily life of the Cross and Resurrection. Orthodox spiritual life is the Cross with Christ. In our love for God and for others we either voluntarily “ascend” the Cross through prayer, fasting, almsgiving, etc., or we accept our “placement” on the Cross by God’s grace, much like St. Paul accepted his “thorn in the flesh,” knowing that Christ’s power was at work through St. Paul’s weakness in a ministry has guided humanity to the gates of salvation. Like St. Paul, we are often called to live in like manner.

The Holy Cross carries the grace and power of Christ our God, because His Body was nailed to it and His Blood was shed upon it – and, as many of our Saints remind us, God assumed our flesh so that we may assume His grace. This is why our Lord said, “I no longer call you servants, but friends. I call you friends, because all things that I heard from My Father, I make known to you.” (St. John 15:15). This “making known to us” is revealed in the lives of Saints throughout the Church’s history not simply as “head knowledge,” but as real *experience* through the grace of the Holy Spirit – an experience that is, in essence, divine. In other words, it is a genuine participation in God’s powers.

The Cross, therefore, is not simply a symbol. It is the power of God in our lives with Christ on His Cross, which is at the same time our cross. Let us allow Christ our God to participate in our individual “crosses” as much as He allows us to participate in His Cross, which is the gateway to the Resurrection and our Eternal Salvation.

+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—Remember David, O Lord, and all his meekness. Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the plains of the wood.

Refrain: *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."*

Verse 2—Glorious things were said concerning you, O city of God.

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

Verse 3— God is in her midst; she shall not be shaken; God shall help her early in the morning.

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—The Lord swore to David this truth, and He shall not reject it. I shall set upon your throne one from the fruit of your loins.

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

Verse 2 —There I shall cause to spring up a horn for David; there I prepared a lamp for my anointed.

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

Verse 3 —For the Lord has chosen Zion; He chose her for His dwelling.

Refrain: *"Soston imas Ie Theou, O anastas ek nekron, psallontas si alleluia."*

ANTIPHON III—This is My place of rest unto ages of ages. Here I shall dwell, for I have chosen her. Holy is Your temple, wondrous in righteousness. And call upon the name of the Lord.

Sunday Hymn : *To synanarchon Logon...[Tone 5]... (Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, coeternal with the Father and the Spirit, Who for our salvation was born of a Virgin for He willed to be lifted up bodily upon the Cross, to endure death and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.)*

Hymn for the Nativity of the Theotokos: *H ghennisis Sou Theotoke...(Your Nativity, O Theotokos, imparted joy to the entire earth, for out of you has risen the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God. He nullified the curse and instead gave His blessing; and causing death to be neutralized, He granted us eternal life.)*

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 - Galatians 6: 11-18 / Gospel- St. John 3: 13-17*

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: Tasia and J.J. Richards

MEMORIAL – Today’s Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **George Tcharos (6 months)**, the beloved husband of **Emily Tcharos** and the father of **Nicholas Tcharos** and **Stephanie Kourakis**, as well as the grandfather of **Theoharis** and **Alexander Tcharos** and **Jacob** and **Anisia Kourakis**. Today’s Memorial Service is also for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servants of God, **Steve (Efstathios) Michaels (1 year)**, **Gregory (Grigorios) Michaels**, the beloved sons of **Eleni Michaels** and the brothers of **Stacey Argyros** and **Michael Michaels**. Included also is **Loizos Michaels**, the beloved father of **Stacey Argyros** and **Michael Michaels** and husband of **Eleni Michaels**. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Life to **Steve (Efstathios) Michaels, Gregory (Grigorios) Michaels, Loizos Michaels** and **George Tcharos** and may He grant peace and comfort to **Eleni Michaels, Stacey Argyros** and their entire family, as well as to **Emily Tcharos** and her family. **MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE ETERNAL!**

SUNDAY SCHOOL REGISTRATION AND STAFF MEETING – Today 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 today. Our parish Sunday School staff will meet at Towne Center Café for a luncheon meeting.

PHILOPTOCHOS – Our Board Meeting will be tomorrow Monday, September 11 at 11:00 a.m. Our General Meeting will be next Monday, September 18 at 11:30 a.m. We will have a light lunch, a speaker and we will have the new phone directories available. If you are new member this year, come to the meeting to get to know us. We need a Coffee Hour sponsor for Sunday, September 24. See Athena Snarkis or Linda Petalas.

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.

FESTIVAL MEETING – **Monday, September 11, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.** Let us all come together for this important meeting and begin working for a successful festival 2018.

COLORING BOOK SESSION – **Friday, September 15th** – “Back After Summer Break” Coloring Session & Luncheon. (See the enclosed flier.)

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

- Monday, September 11th.....Philoptochos Board Meeting-11:00 a.m.
Festival Meeting-7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, September 12th.....Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, September 13th.....Men’s Bible Study – 2:30 p.m. (St. Mark 8:34-38)
AHEPA Meeting – 6:30 p.m.
Great Vespers – 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, September 14th.....EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS (fasting day)
Orthros – 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy – 9:30 a.m.
- Friday, September 15th.....Coloring Book Session and luncheon – 12 noon
- Saturday, September 16th.....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.

St. George Greek Orthodox Church

74-109 Larrea, Palm Desert CA, 92260

Sunday School Registration Form: 2017-2018



Child's Name	Birth Date	Grade	Name Day/Saint	Check Areas for Your Child to Participate	
				Epistle	Tray

Home Address	Home Phone

Parents' Names	E-Mail Address	Cell Phone Number

For High School Children (optional)

Name	E-Mail Address

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." – **Matthew 19:14**



Adult Coloring

**Back after summer
break! Coloring
Session & Luncheon**

September 15, 2017
12-2 pm

St. George Church hall

RSVP by 9/9/17

Please join us for our next adult coloring session on Friday, Sept. 15th at noon in our church hall.

Lunch begins at noon with coloring to follow.

\$5.00 minimum donation requested for lunch. Proceeds will be donated to the church.

Coloring pencils and coloring book sheets will be provided.

RAFFLE PRIZES!

RSVP to Rhonda Latkovic by 9/9/17