

AUGUST 5, 2018

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER

EVE OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD



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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.*

FAITH, PRAYER & FASTING

The underlying virtues of both today's passage from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, as well as today's passage from St. Matthew's Gospel are: *faith, prayer* and *fasting*. Prayer offered with faith, combined with sacrificial love for God and neighbor unites us with God's powers. Not only are our souls and even our bodies healed, but we are able to impart God's blessings upon others, regardless of our own personal trials. One of the greatest miracles that we experience is to be able to maintain "mood of

love," through which we control feelings of anger and/or neglect, which can harm both us and others.

The Saints of the Church advise us to fight against temptations with opposing Christian virtues. For example, to fight against greed we focus on the means to impart generosity to those in need; to fight against gluttony we fast, and so on. This spiritual tradition is proclaimed by St. Paul as we read today's passage from today's Epistle passage: *"When we*
Continued on page 2

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD – Tomorrow we celebrate the event of our Lord's Transfiguration, recorded in the Gospels of Sts. Matthew 17:1-8; Luke 9:28-36; Mark 9:2-8; John 1:14. The Transfiguration of our Lord was in fulfillment of that which Jesus had promised shortly before, that *"there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His Kingdom"* (Matt. 16:28), He took His Disciples Peter, James and John and ascended Mount Tabor, where He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became white as the light. Suddenly, together with this dread and marvelous brilliance of light, there appeared the most great Prophets, Moses and Elias, who spoke with the Lord Jesus concerning His saving Passion which was about to take place. Standing before Him as reverent servants, they showed that He is the Lord of both the living and the dead, for Moses came forth from Hades, having died many centuries before, and Elias, as it were from heaven, where he had been taken up while yet alive.

According to tradition, the Lord's Transfiguration came to pass forty days before His Crucifixion; this is why the Transfiguration is celebrated forty days before the Exaltation of the Cross (which the Church observes every year on September 14th).

Taken from www.goarch.org



Οι υποκειμενες αρετες τοσο της σημερινης περικοπης απο την Πρωτην Επιστολην προς τους Κορινθιους του Απ. Παυλου οσο και της σημερινης περικοπης εκ του κατα Ματθαιον Ευαγγελιου ειναι: η πιστις, η προσευχη και η νηστεια. Η προσευχη με πιστη σε συνδυασμο με θυσιαστικη αγαπη για τον Θεον και τον πλησιον μας μας ενωνει με τις δυναμεις του Θεου. Οχι μονον θεραπευονται οι ψυχικες και οι σωματικες ασθενειες ακομη, αλλα ειμαστε σε θεση να μεταδωσουμεν τις ευλογιες του Θεου σε αλλους, ανεξαρτητα απο τις δικες μας προσωπικες δοκιμασιες. Ενα απο τα μεγαλυτερα θαυματα που μπορουμεν να βιωσουμεν ειναι να διατηρησουμεν μια <διαθεση αγαπης,> δια της οποιας ελεγχουμεν τα συναισθηματα του θυμου και της αδιαφοριας που μπορουν να βλαψουν τον εαυτον μας και αλλους.

Οι Αγιοι της Εκκλησιας μας συμβουλευουν να καταπολεμησουμεν τους πειρασμους με τις Χριστιανικες αρετες: π.χ. να καταπολεμησουμεν την απληστιαν με την φιλανθρωπιαν, την πλεονεξιαν με την νηστειαν, κτλ. Αυτη η πνευματικη παραδοσις ανακηρυσσεται ακομη απο τον Απ. Παυλον καθως διαβαζουμεν την σημερινην περικοπην της Επιτολης του προς τους Κορινθιους: <Λοιδορουμενοι ευλογουμεν, διωκομενοι ανεχομεθα, δυσφημουμενοι παρακαλουμεν...> (1 Κορ. 4:12). Για να ζουμεν κατα αυτον τον τροπον, χρειαζεται εντονη προσευχη και συμμετοχη στα Αχραντα Μυστηρια – και κατα αυτον τον τροπον θεραπευουμεν και σωζουμεν τον εαυτον μας και αλλους.
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

are reviled, we bless; when we are disgraced, we pray." (1 Corinthians 4:12). For us to live in this manner, we need to pray fervently and partake of the Holy Sacraments -- and try to maintain the tradition of the Orthodox Christian prayer and fasting disciplines, which together actually teach us self-control. In this way, we can maintain sanity and gain salvation. St. Maximos the Confessor offers this analysis: *"But, I say to you," says the Lord, 'love your enemies...do good to those who hate you and pray for those who mistreat you.'* (St. Matth. 5:44). *Why did He command this? To free you from hatred, irritation, anger and rancor, and to make you worthy of the supreme gift of perfect love.*" (St. Maximos the Confessor, "First Century on Love," *Philokalia Vol. 2*, page 59).

St. John Chrysostom implies that, as the young man of today's Gospel was being destroyed by epileptic attacks, humanity in general is pushed to destruction through the "epilepsy" of sin.

The "pursuit of happiness," for example, which is held to be so dear by all needs to be defined in terms of the pursuit of the "peace from above," as we hear in the opening words of the Divine Liturgy. St. John suggests that pursuing happiness in goods of luxury is the root of many sins. He explains: *"By faith here, [Jesus] means that which is related to miracles and He mentions a mustard seed to declare its unspeakable power...[He says], 'Howbeit, this kind does not go out but by prayer and fasting,' meaning the whole kind of evil spirits, not that of lunatics only... Fasting together with prayer brings no small power; for it both implants strictness, making one as an angel and fights against incorporeal powers... [In contrast], what evil is worked by luxury? Luxury makes one in no respect different from a demoniac, who brings upon himself a self-chosen madness..."* (Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, Vol 10, On the Gospel of St. Matthew, Homily 57, pgs. 355-356).

Indeed, luxury is not only defined by material wealth. It can also be defined by the "good feelings" associated with drugs, alcohol, gambling, violent and unseemly entertainment, along with other such things. If anything, addiction to such things compares well to a form of demonic possession. The Divine gift of Free Will is compromised, making people unable to freely chose good over evil; the will is sapped and *other things* take control. More than one of today's contemporary personal and/or marriage counselors have cautioned their clients according to the maxim, *"If you cannot control yourself, indeed, others will control you."*

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Erika Aguilar, Jim Alex, Chris Laskaris, Nicholas Kontaxis, Jean Chronis, LaTonya Washington, Ernestine Armstrong, Sylvia Baricina (friends of Louise Dobbs Barringer) Markos Mihalatos (relative of Mr. & Mrs. Canakis) (*Many faithful on our Prayer List face chronic/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: *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soston imas."*

Verse 3— The Lord prepared His throne in heaven and His Kingdom rules over all.

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, soston"*

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 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 the Eve of the Transfiguration: *Christou metamorphosin pro-ipantisomen...(O Faithful, prepare for the Transfiguration of Christ, and joyously celebrate as we observe on this day the Forefeast, and cry aloud: Coming is the day of the divine exultation. The Master is ascending the holy mountain of Tabor, in order to shine with the beauty of His divinity.)*

Hymn for St. George : *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.)*

Sunday Kontakion Hymn: *...En ti thia simeron metamorphosi...(On this day of Christ's divine Transfiguration human nature in advance splendidly shines with light divine, and with great joy we all cry aloud, "Christ is transfigured in glory and saves us all.")*

READINGS: Epistle:- 1 Corinthnians 4: 9-16 / Gospel: St. Matthew 17: 14-23

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is celebrated

Communion Hymn: *Enite ton Kyrion.... (page 64 in our Divine Liturgy books)*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee Hour: Sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Chris Panopoulos

PHILOPTOCHOS -- Some of you have asked when our meetings start again so they can mark the dates on their calendars. They will start in September and the **first General Meeting** will be on **Monday, September 10 at 11:30 a.m.** The **October General Meeting** will be on **Monday, October 8 at 11:30 a.m.** We need Coffee Hour sponsors for end of August and September. See **Pat Dalkas**.

DOME-CLEANING PROJECT - We would like to clean our church dome when the weather cools off. Indeed, this work will be costly. An estimate will soon be provided, giving us a "target amount" in the effort to raise ample funds. Needless to say, any of our contributions from parishioners who would contribute toward this project will be a great blessing. Details on the nature of this project will be provided over a reasonable stretch of time.

SAVE-THE-DATES: OCTOBER 27th: IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT: You are cordially invited (please bring a friend). **When: Saturday, October 27, 2018; 10:00 a.m.** and again at 1:00 p.m. Please **RSVP by October 22, 2018** by calling (760) 238-7185. **Hosted by: Ann Dixon.** A donation will be made to the St. George Church/Philoptochos.

NOVEMBER 3rd: A SPECIAL FUNDRAISER DINNER for the victims of the Wildfires in Greece and locally, as well our fel-low Coachella Valley residents in need of food and clothing **WHEN? SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2018**

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Tonight, August 5th.....Great Vespers - 5:00 p.m.

Monday, August 6th.....TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR
Orthros-8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, August 7th.....Bible Study-10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, August 8th.....Paraklisis Service – 6:00 p.m.

Friday, August 10th.....Paraklisis Service – 6:00 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.



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΦΡΑΓΚΙΣΚΟΥ

Encyclical for the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos 2018

“The Virgin is holding the Creator in her arms as an infant.”
Saint Photios the Great, Homily XVII

Dearly Beloved,

We are accustomed to seeing and venerating icons of the Virgin Mary holding Jesus Christ. As we contemplate and prepare for the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos over the next two weeks, we are challenged by the converse of the above statement from the great Saint, theologian, and Patriarch Photios. In the icon of the Feast of the Dormition, the Creator holds the Virgin in His arms.

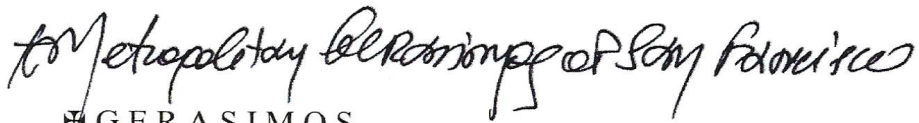
As Orthodox Christians, we proclaim that the translation of Mary into the heavens at the time of her falling asleep is a great mystery and miracle. Tradition holds that at her falling asleep, the Lord entered the room and received her soul from the Archangel Michael, while an angelic choir sang nearby. We believe that Mary passed through death unharmed and already dwells with her Son in the kingdom that is to come. The icon for the Feast presents our hope to pass through death and into eternal life with Christ. We can only sing praises to God when we encounter this miracle.

In our life’s experiences, the time will come when we will face the death of a loved one. As Orthodox Christians, however, we look upon death in a different way. The Dormition of the Theotokos is a reminder that we too, will depart from this life *“to the source of life.”* We must also call to mind the words Saint Paul uses when instructing the Philippians about death: *“For me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”*

These first two weeks in August always provide us the opportunity to grow in faith and be strengthened by the intercessions of the Holy Mother of God. Let us contemplate the mystery and the miracle of the Dormition of the Theotokos. Observe the fast. Attend the Paraklesis services and sing praises to the Almighty God and to the Virgin Mary. Take time to submit your name and the names of your loved ones so that we might pray for your ***“health, salvation, visitation, pardon and remission of sins”***

For you, the faithful stewards of our Holy Metropolis, I ceaselessly pray: ***“commemorating our most Holy, Pure, Blessed and Glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all the saints let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.”***

With Love in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

✠ GERASIMOS
Metropolitan of San Francisco