

AUGUST 12, 2018

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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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.*

FORGIVENESS: AVOIDING EVIL

Today's Gospel passage deals with the topic of "forgiveness." We are reminded of this topic every time we pray the Lord's Prayer: "...and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." In fact, we pray the Lord's Prayer (the "Our Father") at the performance of Church Services, particularly, during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy in our preparation to partake of Holy Communion.

I like the words of Protopresbyter, Fr. Stephanos Anagnostopoulos: "Debts are

the things that we owe. Things to be paid off. They are, in other words, our sins. Therefore, we owe for our sins as if they were 'bounced checks,' as debt-notes which have not been paid off. God takes those debt-notes and tacks them up upon the Cross, and, with His All-Holy and Precious Blood, He pays them off down to the last penny. And what does He want from us? He wants us to tear up the debt-notes that we have from what other people owe us as a result of their misbehavior and their hatred; to forget the debt; to forgive...Do we do this? If not, then why do we pray the
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ST. JOHN OF KROSTADT: REGARDING FORGIVENESS

"If you fall, rise and you shall be saved. You are a sinner, you continually fall and learn also how to rise; be careful to acquire this wisdom. This is what the wisdom consists in: learning by heart the psalm, 'Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great goodness,' inspired by the Holy Spirit to the king and prophet David, and say it with sincere faith and trust, with a contrite and humble heart. The most important thing in life is to be zealous for mutual love, and not to judge anyone. Everybody shall answer for himself to God, and you must look to yourself. Beware of malice..."

As the Searcher of hearts, the Lord, knows that we humans are liable to very frequent trespasses, and that, having fallen, we are able to often rise up again. He has given us the commandment to frequently forgive trespasses of others, and He Himself is the first to fulfill His holy word. As soon as you say from your whole heart, 'I repent,' (and confess your sins) you will be immediately forgiven."

Taken from his book, *My Life in Christ*



Η σημερινή Ευαγγελική περικοπή ομιλεί, βασικώς, για το θέμα το οποίο λέγεται: <η συγχωρησις>. Το θέμα αυτό επαναλαμβάνεται κάθε φορά κατά την οποιαδήποτε ακουμένη Κυριακήν Προσευχήν: <...αφες ημιν τα οφειλήματα ημών ως και εμείς αφιεμεν τις οφειλεις ημών>. Μαλιστα, λεμε το <Πατερ Ημων> (την Κυριακήν Προσευχήν) κατά την τελετήν των ιερών ακολουθιών της Εκκλησίας, ιδιαιτερώς, κατά την τελετήν της Θείας Λειτουργίας ως προετοιμασίαν για να μεταλαμβάνουμεν τα Αχραντα Μυστήρια.

Μου αρεσουν τα λογια του Πατρος Σεφανου Αναγνωστοπουλου: <Οφειληματα ειναι οι οφειλες. Ειναι τα χρεη. Ειναι, δηλαδη, οι αμαρτιες μας. Επομενωσ, τις χρωσταμε τις αμαρτιες σαν ακαλυπτες επιταγες, σαν χρεη, που δεν εξωφλησαμεν. Παιρνει ο Θεος τα χρεογραφα των αμαρτιων μας και τα καρφώνει επανω στον Σταυρον και με το Αιμα Του, το Παναγιο και Τιμιο, τα ξεχρεωνει μεχρι δεκαρας. Και τι ζητα απο εμας; Τις χρεωστικες αποδειξεις, οσα μας χρωσταν οι αλλοι με την κακη τους συμπεριφεραν και τα μιση, εμεις να τις σχισουμε. Να ξεχασουμε το χρεος, να το συγχωρησουμε... το κανουμε; Αν οχι, τοτε γιατι λεμε το Πατερ ημων; > (Εμπειριες Κατα την Θειαν Λειτουργιαν, σελ 422).

Δια μεσου της συγχωρησεως καθαρουμεν τις ψυχες μας απο την επιρροη του κακου, διοτι δια του κακου, οι σκεψεις μας γενουν κακα λογια και κακες πραξεις. Για αυτον τον λογον, ζητουμεν συγχωρησιν απο τον Θεον για τα αμαρτηματα μας – τα <εν διανοια, τα εν λογω, τα εν εργω>. +Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

‘Our Father?’” (Experiences From the Divine Liturgy, pg. 422).

We must forgive others if we want to cleanse our minds and souls from evil, because evil thoughts give birth to evil words and evil deeds. It is with this in mind that we ask God to forgive us of our sins committed “in thought; in word and in deed.”

St. John Chrysostom, by way of his excellent rhetorical skills, notes that the “ten thousand talents” mentioned in today’s Scripture represent such a large sum of money that no one could pay off such a debt in a life-time. By contrast, a “hundred denarii” is a much more manageable sum of money worth (maybe) a month’s pay. Consistent with our Lord’s words, “With what measure you mete, it will be meted to you (St. Luke 6: 38),” our Lord points out in His parable that the words addressed by the servant to his lord were the very words used by his fellow-servant, “Be patient with me and I will repay you what I owe.” However, while those words were sufficient to win the forgiveness of the servant for his vastly huge debt, they were not sufficient for his fellow-servant to win forgiveness from him. Hence, he was given the same punishment that he meted out to his fellow-servant.

St. John also points out the deception that is common to all of us by which we feel that we have no sins that need to be forgiven. Among many examples, he takes that of the sin of covetousness. Covetousness (“jealousy”) lies at the basis of many other sins, such as gossip, bearing false witness, cursing others, etc. Such sins give rise to even more sins: bitterness, resentment, revenge – which, in turn, give rise to various forms of thievery, harm and destruction, which affect others, causing them to fall into sins, as well. When all is multiplied, we can easily see the “ten thousand” kinds of sins that have been generated through the one sin of covetousness. St. John goes on to imply the effects of other “root” sins such as the lack of faith in God. (See: Nicene & Post Nicene Fathers, Series 1, Vol.10, pg. 376-378).

In that we are forgiven of so many sins simply by asking God to “forgive us our trespasses...,” can we not forgive even one or two sins committed against us by our fellow human beings? After all, these are the words that we pray: “...as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Forgiveness is a deep form of love, based on our faith in God. Our faith in God is to be translated into love for our neighbor.

+FR. THEODORE

HYMNS FOR THIS SUNDAY'S CELEBRATION OF THE DIVINE LITURGY:

ANTIPHON I: *"Tes presvies tis Theotokou..." (By the prayers of the Theotokos...)*

Verse 1—Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy mountain.

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

Verse 2—He who prepares mountains in His strength, who is girded with power.

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

Verse 3— You clothe Yourself with thanksgiving and majesty. You cover Yourself with light as with a garment.

The mountains shall greatly rejoice at the presence of the Lord.

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 imas."*

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

Verse 1—His foundations are in the holy mountains. The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Refrain: *"Soston imas Ie Theou, O en to ohree Thahvor metemorphotheis, psallontas si alleluia."*

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

Refrain: *"Save us, O Son of God, Who was transfigured on Mt. Tabor, we sing to You, Alleluia."*

Verse 3 —A man will say, "Mother Zion," and a man was born in her.

Refrain: *"Soston imas Ie Theou, O en to orhree Thavor metemorphotheis, 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—O Lord, I will sing of Your mercies forever. The heavens shall confess Your wonders, O Lord. O Lord, they shall walk in the light of Your face, and shall greatly rejoice in Your name the whole day long. (*Metemorphotheis en to ohree...*)

Sunday Resurrection Hymn—*Ote katilthes pros ton thanaton [Tone 2]... (When You descended unto death, O Lord who yourself are immortal Life, then did You mortify Hades by the lightning flash of Your Divinity. Also when You raised the dead from the netherworld, all the Powers of the heavens were crying out: O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory be to You.)*

Hymn for the Transfiguration of our Lord: *Metemorphotheis en to ohree Christe o Theos... (You were transfigured upon the mountain, O Christ our God, showing to Your disciples Your glory as much as they could bear. Do also in us, sinners though we may be, shine Your everlasting light, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Giver of light. Glory to You.)*

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.)*

Kontakion Hymn: *Epi tou ohrous metemorphotheis... (Upon the mountain were You transfigured, and Your disciples beheld Your glory as far as they were able, O Christ our God; so that when they would see You crucified they might understand that Your Passion was deliberate, and declare to the world that in truth You are the Father's radiance.)*

Sunday Kontakion Hymn: ...**READINGS:** Epistle:- 1 Corithnians 9: 2-12 / Gospel: St. Matthew 18: 23-35

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



ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEMORIAL – Today’s Memorial Service is for the Eternal Life and Salvation for the servants of God, **J.J. (Demetrios) Richards (40 days)** and **Sam (Sotirios) Booras (10 years)**. **J.J. Richards** is the beloved husband of **Tasia Richards**; father of **Joseph and Tania**; grandfather of **Jackson, Levi and Christopher James** and brother of his sister, **Bunny**. **Sam Booras** is the beloved uncle of Fr. Ted. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ grant Eternal Life and Salvation to **J.J. Richards** and to **Sam Booras** and may He grant peace and comfort to their entire families. **MAY THEIR MEMORIES BE ETERNAL!**

PHILOPTOCHOS -- We need Coffee Hour sponsors for August 19 and 26. We also need sponsors for September 16, 23 and 30. See **Pat Dalkas**.

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.

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS --The availability to still purchase Altar Flower Bouquets in honor and/or in memory of loved ones is as follows: December 2nd - 1 bouquet available; December 30th- 2 bouquets available; January 6th -1 bouquet available; January 20th -1 bouquet available; February 3rd -1 bouquet available; March 3rd - 1 bouquet available; March 31st- 1 bouquet available; April 7th-2 bouquets available; April 21st - 2 bouquets available. Please visit the Bulletin Board in the Parish Hall if you are interested in contributing Altar Flowers in honor, or in memory of a family member etc. Just sign your name on the posted list, or see **Louise Dobbs Barringer**, Altar Flower Coordinator. Contributions are being submitted now, hereby make your checks out to St. George Greek Orthodox Church, in memo column: Altar Flowers and date of display; Cash and/or Credit cards are accepted see Administration Office. Thank you for your continued support!

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, August 13th..... Paraklisis – 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 14th..... Bible Study-10:00 a.m.
Great Vespers – 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 15th.....DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD
Orthros-8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

The Ladder for the month of August 2018 is donated by:

Louise Dobbs Barringer

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 ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

Date: August 9, 2018
Protocol No. 122/18

August 15, 2018
Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

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Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we celebrate this blessed Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, “in radiant joy with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs together with the angels and the apostles,” we give thanks to God for the revelation of His abundant grace and glorious power through the life and witness of the Virgin Mary. In our commemoration of her and the holiness of her life and service, we are reminded of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, *All things are possible to the one who believes.* (Mark 9:2³).

This assurance of Christ, that through faith the impossible becomes possible, that as people of God we can move beyond limitations to accomplish great and marvelous things in His name, was the focus of the theme of our recent Clergy-Laity Congress. In faith and love we gathered together in Boston and affirmed that **all things are possible to the one who believes in Christ.**

Today we can once again offer a witness of this truth. In our reflection on the life of the Theotokos, we know that she found favor with God, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and she conceived and carried in her womb the Son of God. She asked the angel following the annunciation of the Incarnation of Christ, *How shall this be, since I have no husband?* (Luke 5:78) How could this be accomplished by this holy and humble handmaiden of God? All things are possible to the one who believes.

On this Feast of the Dormition, we marvel at her repose and the witness that she offered in passing through death unto eternal life. We sing, “She who is higher than the heavens and more glorious than the cherubim, she who is held in greater honor than all creation...today commends her most pure soul into the hands of her Son.” How did this happen? How does she continue to offer intercessions on behalf of us all? How did she receive such an exalted place? All things are possible to the one who believes.

The potential of this promise through the power of faith and through the holy witness of the Theotokos offers us assurance and strength. The disciples of our Lord were encouraged and guided by her and her holiness of life. Her repose became a celebration of the abundant and eternal life that comes through faith in Christ. This Feast is one of hope and assurance, affirming that even through our burdens and challenges, even in the face of obstacles that seem insurmountable, even through physical hardships and spiritual struggles, all things are possible to the one who believes in Christ.

The power of faith and the unlimited possibilities before us for ministry and service should also be our focus. At our recent Clergy-Laity Congress, we affirmed our commitment to supporting the work of our parishes and helping faithful throughout our Holy Archdiocese explore the potential of the witness of our Orthodox faith. Together we are committed to ensuring the strength and vitality of our witness. I ask that you continue to focus on this theme as you plan for a new ecclesiastical year and consider the impact and potential of our sacred work.

May the blessings of you the Lord be with you on this Feast of the Dormition, and may we seek the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos as we explore the boundless and unlimited potential of our faith in Christ.

With paternal love in Him,

† DEMETRIOS
Archbishop of America