

FEBRAURY 18, 2018

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, California 92260

Website: www.go-stgeorge.org

Email: pdsaintgeorge@gmail.com



THE LADDER

CHEESEFARE SUNDAY (FORGIVENESS SUNDAY)

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 4755

Palm Desert, CA.92261

Tel: (760) 568-9901

or: (760) 880-5869

– 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.

SORROW, TEARS & HUMILITY

During the celebration of the Divine Liturgy we hear the exclamations: *“Take, eat, this is My Body which is broken for you for the forgiveness of sins...Drink of it all of you, this is My Blood of the New Testament which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.”* It is assumed, then, that we partake of Holy Communion so that we *can be forgiven of our sins*, knowing that sin separates us from God and from our fellow human being. As God Himself seeks our salvation, in the same way, we are to seek the salvation of our fellow human being. In this manner, we

live in the *likeness* of God.

But, forgiveness is difficult for people today, first, because our pride gets in the way, deceiving us that we are somehow perfect in every way and therefore sinless. Secondly, it is fashionable today to try to *justify* many of our words and deeds that are devoid of love for God and for others.

What seems to be missing from our culture is a sense of profound *sorrow* over the *tragedy* that is caused by our sins. Certainly, we lament the tra-

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PERCEPTIBLE SIGNS OF REPENTANCE

Seeking forgiveness and being forgiven benefit us only if we desire to honor the gift of forgiveness by changing our attitudes and behaviors. This “changing for the good” is the process of repentance. How do we know if we are truly repenting of our sins? St. Nectarios of Aigina, in his book, *Pastoral Theology*, outlines examples of the perceptible signs of repentance versus false repentance (or unrepentance):

An example of true repentance is King David, who wrote the Psalms. In Psalm 50(51), he asks for “a clean heart and a humble spirit,” so that he can “teach transgressors (God’s) Law.” An example of false repentance is Pharaoh, who repented ten times and turned back to his practice of persecuting the Chosen People ten times, finally being drowned in the Red Sea as he pursued Moses. His “repentance” was motivated by immanent fear over events that God brought upon him. As soon as he “got over” the events, he no longer feared God, and resumed his arrogant attitude and unholy practices. David’s repentance was motivated by love for God, knowing that he was unworthy of God’s many blessings. His promise to teach transgressors the ways of God indicates a change in both attitude and behavior.

+FR. THEODORE



Ακουμεν κατα την εκτελεσην της Θ. Λειτουργιας εκφωνησεις προς την μεταβολη των Τιμιων Δωρων εις το Παναγιο Σωμα και Αιμα του Χριστου: <Λαβετε, φαγετε, τουτου Μου εστι το Σωμα, το υπερ υμων κλωμενον, εις αφεσιν αμαρτιων...>

Πιετε εξ αυτου παντες, τουτο εστι το Αιμα Μου, το της Καινης Διαθηκης, το υπερ υμων, και πολλων εκχυννομενον, εις αφεσιν αμαρτιων.> Υποτιθεται, λοιπον, οτι μεταλαμβανουμεν τα Αχραντα Μυστηρια για να συγχωρηθουμεν απο τις αμαρτιες μας, διοτι πιστευουμεν οτι η αμαρτια μας χωριζει απο τον Θεον και, εν τουτοις, χωριζει τον ανθρωπον απο τους συνανθρωπους του. Υποτιθεται παλι οτι ο καθενας καταλαβαινει οτι ο Θεος ειναι Θεος για ολον τον κοσμον, και οχι <δικος του> Θεος. Μαλιστα, η σωτηρια του καθενος στεκεται επανω στην σωτηριαν του συνανθρωπου του. Οπως ο Θεος ο Ιδιος ζητει την δικην μας σωτηριαν, κατα τον ιδιον τροπον, υποχρεωμεθα να επιδιωκουμεν την σωτηριαν του συναδελφου μας. Κατα αυτον τον τροπον ακριβως, θα ομοιασουμεν με τον Θεον.

Η συγχωρησις ειναι δυσκολια για τον ανθρωπον της εποχης μας: 1) ο εγωισμος μπαινει στην μεση, ετσι ωστε να θεωρησουμεν τον εαυτον μας ως τελειοι ανθρωποι (αναμαρτητοι), και, 2) η σημερινη <μοδα> ειναι να δικαιολογησουμεν τις πραξεις και τα λογια μας τα οποια στερουνται απο αγαπην για τον Θεον και τον συνθνηρωπον μας. Στην ουσιαν, ομως, η αμαρτια προκαλει απο εμας θλιψην. Οσο δεν αισθανομεθα την θλιψην περι της αμαρτιας, δεν εχουμεν το ζηλον να την διορθωσουμεν δια μεσων της συγχωρησεως και της μετανοιας.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

gedies that *others* cause, but, our life with Christ requires us to also acknowledge the tragedies that *we* personally cause by such things as simple *impoliteness*. To cleanse our souls, we are to shed *tears* for the sins we commit. Tears of sorrow over our words and deeds indicate the *desire* to undo our sins because we realize the loss of our relationship with God and others as a result of our unwise choices.

There are three parts to the act of forgiveness: 1) admitting that sin was committed and being *sorry* for it, which results in 2) seeking forgiveness from God, which involves the Sacrament of Holy Confession, and, 3) coincidental with the Sacrament itself, the forgiveness on a personal level for the one(s) who offended us and/or our seeking forgiveness from one(s) whom we offended.

The tears of sorrow regarding our sins are the “waters” of baptism—the “Second Baptism,” known as Holy Confession. Arch-Priest D. Sokolof, in his book, *Manual of the Orthodox Church’s Divine Services*, writes: “Holy Confession consists of three acts: 1) prayers for the forgiveness of sins; 2) the confession of sins before Christ (the priest serves to aid in this process); 3) the absolution from sins in the Name of Jesus Christ, through the prayers of the priest. [The priest assumes responsibility for the penitent’s salvation]” (pg. 130). There is no place in the Sacrament of Confession for the priest to *condemn* the sinner. Instead, according to Sokolof, the priest offers *penances*. The purpose of penance is to: 1) help the penitent break himself of a sinful habit; 2) cure carelessness; 3) calm the conscience. Holy Confession is a “check-up” for the soul analogous to the medical “check-up” offered to confirm the health of the body.

Finally, forgiveness on a “person-to-person” basis means that we lovingly *sacrifice* of ourselves for the salvation of the other. This requires *humility*, something totally foreign to our society. In studying the work of St. Nectarios of Aigina -- specifically, his book entitled, *Pastoral Theology* -- we learn that humility comes from one’s genuine love for God. It is the *voluntary* lessening of one’s opinion of importance in deference to the acknowledgment that God is *more* important; that *His Will* be done rather than one’s own personal will. In humility, we acknowledge that God’s Will is for us to forgive one another. While “justice” is “*just*” payment for sins committed; forgiveness is *loving reconciliation* with God and our neighbor, while humbly dealing with the consequences of sin.

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Erika Aguilar, Tom Evans, Jim Alex, Nicholas Kyriakou, Chris Laskaris, J.J. Richards, Spiro Canakis, Chris Panopoulos, Atlas Palos, Matthew Gray, Tasso Zambaras (*Many of the faithful on our Prayer List face chronic or serious illness*).

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."

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

People: "O Monogenis Ios ke Logos tou Theou..." (O Only-Begotten Son and Word of God...)

HYMNS FOR THE ENTRANCE WITH THE HOLY GOSPEL: ANTIPHON III – This is the day the Lord made; let us greatly rejoice and be glad therein.

Sunday Resurrection 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. George: Os ton ehmaloton eleftherotis...(As the one who sets the captives free and the protector of the poor; as physician to the sick and champion defender of kings, bearer of trophies are you. O great martyr George, intercede with Christ our

Kontakion Hymn for this Sunday: Tis sofias odhigheh froniseos chorrighheh...(O guide to wisdom, provider of prudence, disciplinarian of fools, and defender of the poor, fortify and discipline my heart, O Master; You, give me a word, O Word of the Father. For behold, I will not hinder my lips from crying to You: O merciful Lord, have mercy on me who have fallen.)

READINGS: – EPISTLE: Romans 13: 11-14; 14: 1-4 / GOSPEL: St. Matthew 6: 14-21

Axion Estin."It is truly right to bless you...(page 52 in the Divine Liturgy book)

Communion Hymn – Enite ton Kyrion...(Praise the Lord in the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Alleluia.)

MAN IS WHAT HE EATS...Thoughts from Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

"'Man is what he eats.' With this statement the German materialistic philosopher Feuerbach...was expressing the most religious idea of man. The 'forbidden fruit' is the image of the world loved for itself and eating it is the image of life understood as an end in itself.... Fasting is an offering of ourselves to God...to bless God for the food and the life [we] receive from Him...To bless God is not a 'religious' or 'cultic' act, but our very way of life."

– Taken from "Sacraments and Orthodoxy"



ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOIN US TODAY AFTER CHURCH FOR ST. GEORGE’S 2018 GREEK FESTIVAL

PHILOPTOCHOS – Coffee Hour Hostesses and Sponsors and needed for Sundays in April and May. Please check the bulletin board for what dates are available. See Athena Snarskis or Pat Dalkas.

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS – Donated by **Nicholas Demetropoulos** in loving memory of his beloved parents and relatives.

2018 FESTIVAL – The **Festival Appreciation Lenten Dinner** will be served **tomorrow evening at 6:00 p.m.** It will be an opportunity celebrate the success of this year’s St. George Greek Festival.

NICHOLAS KONTAXIS ART EXHIBIT - **Mark March 17, 2018** on your calendars from now and plan to bring your relatives, friends and neighbors to a fabulous art show, exhibiting the paintings of **Nicholas Kontaxis**, at the Heather James Fine Art Studio at 45188 Portola Ave., Palm Desert. Details are posted on the bulletin board in the parish hall.

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY & PROCESSION WITH THE HOLY ICONS - Those who would like to participate in the procession along with our Sunday School students **next Sunday** are encouraged to bring their favorite icon (or their children’s favorite icon) with them to church and to join in the procession. The procession will begin at **9:15 a.m.**

SAVE THE DATE: The 2018 St. George Golf Tournament – Saturday, April 14, 2018.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

- Monday, February 19th.....GREAT LENT BEGINS
Compline Service - 5:00 p.m. [Note time change]
Festival Appreciation Lenten Dinner – 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, February 20th..... Bible Study - 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, February 21st.....Presanctified Divine Liturgy - 6:30 p.m.
AHEPA Meeting- 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, February 22nd.....Choir Practice - 1:00 p.m.
- Friday, February 23rd..... Presanctified Divine Liturgy – 9:00 a.m.
1st Salutations - 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, February 24th.....SATURDAY OF SOULS
Orthros-8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Do You Want to Fast This Lent?...Thoughts from Pope Francis

Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
 Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude
 Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
 Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
 Fast from worries and have trust in God.

Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity
 Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
 Fast from selfishness and be compassionate.
 Fast from grudges and be reconciled
 Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

*The Ladder for February 2018
 is sponsored by:
 Annette Lewis in loving memory of her beloved
 husband, Skip Lewis*

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.

VESPERS FOR FORGIVENESS SUNDAY

There is no reading from the Psalter.

Chanter/Choir: Lord, I have cried unto You, hear me. Hear me, O Lord. O Lord I cry out to You, hear me when I call out unto You. To You is due praise./ Receive my prayer as incense before You; I stretch out my hands to You as an evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord. *(The Deacon censers the icons and the faithful).*

From the depths I cry out to You, O Lord; Lord, hear the sound of my voice.

Let us make haste to humble the flesh by abstinence, as we set out upon the God-given course of the holy Fast; and with prayers and tears, let us seek our Lord and Savior. Laying aside all memories of evil, let us cry out and say: we have sinned against You, O Christ our King. Save us as the people of Nineveh in the days of old and in Your compassion make us partakers of Your Heavenly Kingdom.

If You should mark iniquities, O Lord, Lord, who would be able to be justified? Only from You is found mercy.

When I think of my works, deserving every punishment, I despair of myself, O Lord. Behold, I have despised Your precious Commandments and wasted my life as did the Prodigal. Therefore, I entreat You: cleanse me through the waters of repentance and, through prayer and fasting, make me shine with light. For, You alone are merciful. Do not reject me, O Benefactor of all, Who is supreme in love.

Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Let us set out with joy upon the season of the Fast, and prepare ourselves for spiritual warfare. Let us purify our souls and cleanse our flesh. As we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion. Rejoicing in virtues of the Holy Spirit, may we persevere with love, and so be counted as worthy to behold the solemn Passion of Christ our God. And with great spiritual gladness, may we behold His Holy Passover.

(The Priest, Deacon and Altar Boys gather at the solea in front of the Royal Gates with the censer and candles)

Deacon: Wisdom. Arise!

Clergy and Chanters: O gladsome light of the Holy Glory of the Immortal Father, the heavenly, Holy, blessed Jesus Christ! Having come to the setting of the sun and having seen the evening light, we praise God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is proper that at all times we sing a song of praise in measured melody, O Son of God, Giver of Life. Behold, the universe sings to Your glory.

Deacon: The evening Prokeimenon.

Chanters: Turn not away Your face from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul and deliver me.

-Let Your salvation, O God, be a source of help for me.

Turn not away Your face from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul and deliver me.

-Let the poor see it and be glad.

Turn not away Your face from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily: hearken unto my soul and deliver me.

All the Faithful Together: Lord grant that we may be kept this evening without sin. Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers. Praised and glorified is Your Name forever. Amen. Let Your mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we set our hope on You. Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your Commandments. Blessed are You, O Master, let me understand Your Commandments. Blessed are You, O Holy One, enlighten me according to Your Commandments. Lord, Your mercy endures forever; do not reject the work of Your hands. Praise is due unto You; worship befits You; glory is owed to You: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Deacon:

- Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord...

- Help us; save us; have mercy upon us and protect us by Your grace....

- *(The remaining completion Litanies are exclaimed by the Deacon.)*

FORGIVENESS VESPERS, page 2

Priest: For You are a good and loving God and to You we give glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Priest: *Lord our God, You inclined the heavens and descended for the salvation of all people. Look upon Your servants and Your inheritance. They have bowed down before You the awesome, yet compassionate Judge, not looking for human help, but awaiting Your mercy and in anticipation of Your redemption. Preserve them at all times; during this whole day and evening, as well as throughout the impending night and protect them from every enemy; from all adverse powers; from vain imaginations and from evil thoughts.*

May the might of Your Kingdom be blessed and glorified of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Chanters: Your grace has shone forth, O Lord, it has shone forth and given light to our souls. Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the season for repentance. Let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, that having sailed across the great sea of the Fast, we may reach the Third-Day Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

The ranks of angels glorify You, O Mother of God, for You have given birth to Him Who is God and Who dwells with the Father and the Holy Spirit, Who created the angelic hosts out of nothing by an act of His Will. Pray to Him, All-Pure Lady, to save and illumine the souls of those who with true worship sing Your praises.

Priest: Now, O Lord, let Your servant depart in peace according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all people: a light to enlighten the Gentiles and glory for Your people, Israel.

All the Faithful: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.(3) Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of the ages.

All-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, be gracious to us in our sins. Master, forgive our transgressions. Holy One, consider our weaknesses and heal them, for Your Name's sake. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Priest: For Yours is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Chanters:-Hail, Theotokos, Virgin, Mary full of grace, the Lord is with You. Blessed are You among women and blessed is the fruit of Your womb: for You have given birth to the Savior of our souls.

*Glory...*O Baptist of Christ, be mindful of us all, that we may be delivered from our iniquities: for unto you is given grace to pray for us.

*Now and forever...*Pray for us, O Holy Apostles and all Saints, that we may be delivered from peril and afflictions: for you are fervent advocates before the Savior.

-Beneath Your tender mercy we take refuge, O Theotokos: despise not our prayers in times of distress, but deliver us from peril, for You alone are Pure and alone You are blessed.

Priest: THE DISMISAL PRAYERS -*The priest then asks the faithful to venerate the icons and to exchange one-by-one to each other the "kiss of peace", saying, "Forgive me."*



*You are cordially invited
to attend the*

St. George Philoptochos
Membership Luncheon
March 10, 2018

11:30 A.M. in the afternoon

At The Home of Susan Clark
38398 Red Cedar Drive,
Palm Desert, CA 92211

Please R.S.V.P. to

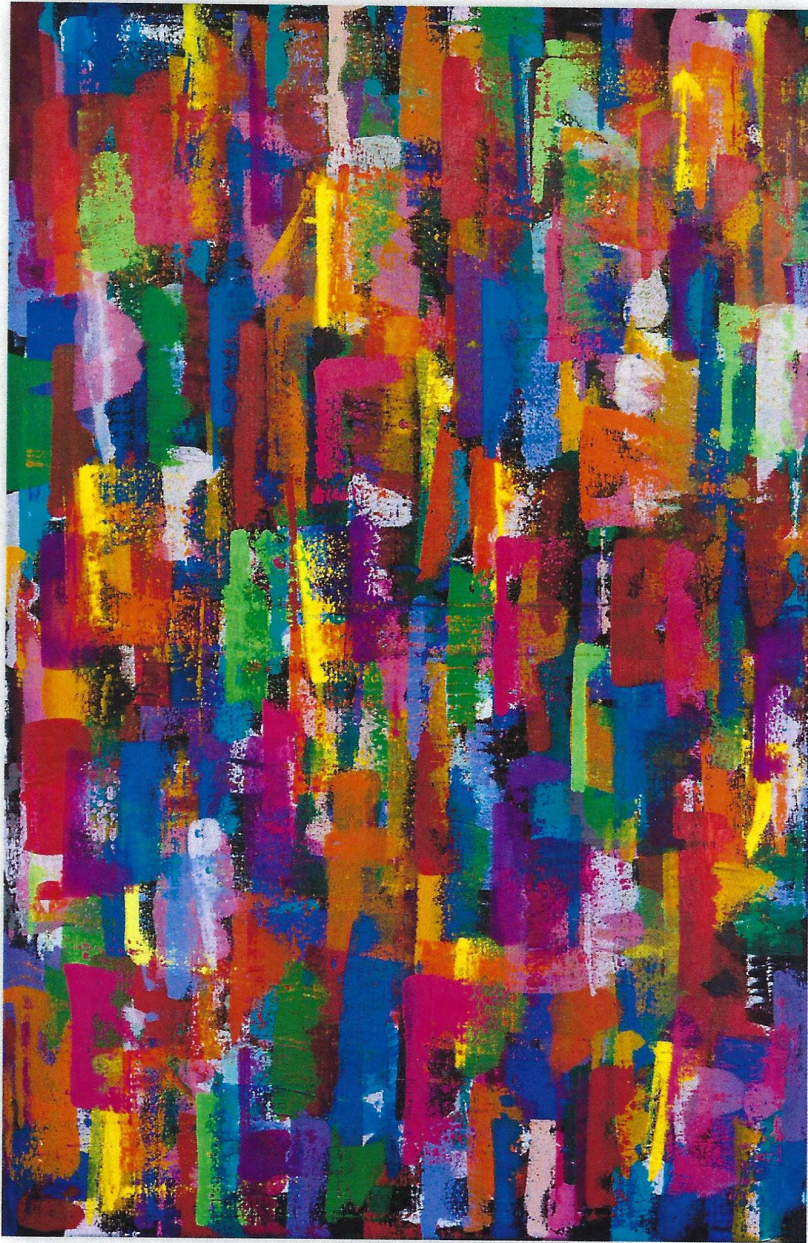
Pam Laverdas 847-814-0299 pamzav@yahoo.com

Linda Petalas 219-765-6979 jlpet@att.net

Directions to Susan's Home: Go to
Sun City off of Washington St. to gate.

Take the first street on the left.

Susan's phone: 760-668-1329



NICHOLAS KONTAXIS

HEATHER JAMES
FINE ART

MARCH 17, 2018

4:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.