

JANUARY 14, 2018

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

**74-109 Larrea Street
Palm Desert, California 92260**

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THE LADDER

SUNDAY OF ZACCHAEUS; ST. MAXIMOS THE CONFESSOR

Mailing Address:

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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.*

THE OPPORTUNITY TO REPENT

Our salvation, as does our destruction, depends in part on our will. With the incident surrounding Zacchaeus, as noted in today's Gospel passage, our thoughts go to the reversal of Adam's fall. As we read in the Book of Genesis, according to Adam and Eve, the serpent did harm because it brought temptation to them.

But, the truth is that when temptation presented itself to Adam and Eve, their desire inclined toward the temptation. Rather than wanting what God wants,

they wanted that which temptation presented.

From our point of view, the reversal of our destruction -- i.e., *repentance* -- begins with our will. Zacchaeus *wanted* to know Christ. He *wanted* to enter into the joy which the people who were following Christ at that time were experiencing. While he had wealth, the divine joy, which is in reality *life itself*, was missing.

When Zacchaeus did come to know Christ, he found Life. He came to

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ZACCHAEUS THE PUBLICAN

Today is the Sunday of Zacchaeus. The conversion of the publican Zacchaeus, and our Savior's compassion for him, is narrated in the Holy Gospel (Luke 19:1-10). Afterwards he labored as a companion of the Holy Apostles, and became first Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine.

ST. MAXIMOS THE CONFESSOR

Today is also the Feast Day of one of the great Saints of our Church, St. Maximos the Confessor. St. Maximos, who was from Constantinople, sprang from an illustrious family. He was a lover of wisdom and an eminent theologian. At first, he was the chief private secretary of the Emperor Heraclius and his grandson Constans. When the Monothelite heresy became predominant in the royal court, out of hatred for this error, the Saint departed for the Monastery at Chrysopolis (Scutari), of which he later became the abbot. When Constans tried to constrain him either to accept the Monothelite teaching, or to stop speaking and writing against it--neither of which the Saint accepted to do - his tongue was uprooted and his right hand was cut off, and he was sent into exile where he reposed in 662. At the time only he and his few disciples were Orthodox in the East.

– Taken from Greek Orthodox Archdiocese website: www.goarch.org/



Η σωτηρία του ανθρώπου – όπως και η καταστροφή του – στηρίζεται επάνω στην θελήσιν του. Με το επεισόδιο του Ζακχαιού, ο νους μας πηγαινει στην αντιστροφή της πτώσεως του Αδάμ. Καθώς αναγιγνωσκουμεν το Βιβλίο της Γενεσεως, σύμφωνα με τον Αδάμ και την Εύαν, ο οφίς έγινε η αιτία της πτώσεως – της καταστροφής. Και ο οφίς έκανε το κακό επιδή τους έφερε τον πειρασμόν.

Η αλήθεια, όμως, είναι ότι ο Αδάμ και η Εύα, όταν επαρουσιασθήκε ο πειρασμός, η θελήσις των εκλίνε προς τον πειρασμόν. Αντι το θέλημα του Θεού, ήθελαν αυτό που έπροσεφερε σε αυτούς ο πειρασμός. Από την ανθρωπινή μας αποψίν, η αντιστροφή της καταστροφής του καθενός ξεκινάει από την θελήσιν του. Η μετανοία, λοιπόν, είναι θέμα θελήσεως!

Ο Ζακχαιός ήθελε να γνωρίση τον Χριστόν. ήθελε να εισέλθη στην πραγματικήν χαράν την οποίαν είχαν τότε όσοι ακουλούθουσάν τον Χριστόν. Ενώ είχε πολλά χρήματα ακόμη έλλειπε από την ψυχήν του την θείκήν χαράν η οποία λέγεται στην πραγματικότητα η Ζωή!

Όταν εγνωρίσε ο Ζακχαιός τον Χριστόν εγνωρίσε την ζωήν. Εγνωρίσε ο Ζακχαιός ότι η ζωή έχει μέχρι ένα αιώνιον σημείον μεγαλύτερη αξία παρά από τα κοσμικά πλούτη. Ο Ζακχαιός ήθελε την ζωήν – δηλ., τον Χριστόν – αυτό (και Αυτόν) που έχασαν ο Αδάμ και η Εύα.

Ας προσεχουμεν συνεχώς την θελήσιν μας. Ο Ζακχαιός ήθελε να γνωρίση τον Χριστόν. Ας έχουμεν όλοι τον ίδιον πόθον.
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

know that life, to an infinite degree is of more value than material wealth. Zacchaeus *wanted* life - Who is Christ. Thus, his will was in contrast to that of Adam and Eve, who, by falling into temptation, lost life; for God said that, should they eat from the forbidden fruit, they would surely die.

Zacchaeus' ascent up into the sycamore tree is representative of our own efforts to find God. It is an image of a spiritual ladder that we are to climb. St. John's book, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* comes to mind, where each branch of the spiritual "sycamore tree" represents one of the important Christian virtues in life, all of which add up to love for God and love for neighbor.

This Gospel passage is read as part of our Church Services during the performance of the blessing of a new home and during the Sacrament of Holy Unction. The home is the place where we work out our salvation and we guide others to salvation. Our physical and spiritual health are vital in doing this work, which is why the Sacrament of Holy Unction is performed. In both cases, we seek Christ our God, while, in reality, Christ is already there to be found. Or, to put it another way, as Dr. Henry Cloud paraphrases St. Matthew 7:7, "If you seek God, He will show up!" Finding Christ our God and being found by Him is a life-changing event. It is not a theory or a philosophy. The event itself is profound. The soul experiences a "reflex-action" based on an instantaneous awareness of a reality that was previously denied or hidden - the reality of the weakness of our love in comparison with power of His love. It is a humbling experience, that floods us with keen awareness, as it did for Zacchaeus. Immediately, he became aware of his misdeeds and he became aware of what he had to do to make them right. And he did it! His confession of sins and his repentance was immediate and life-changing.

Our common lack of such awareness is evident in our common hesitancy to repent of errors. We seem to miss the point that the judgment of Christ our True God while we live in this life is one of revealing our need to repent of wrongs and turn to Him. In other words, now, God's Judgment leads to repentance. After this life, the Judgment could reveal our unworthiness to enter the Eternal Kingdom. It is in this life that we have the opportunity to avoid the destruction of our own lives, after the fashion of Adam and Eve's fall. At the same time, it makes every minute of our lives in this world so very precious.

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Constantine Papapetru, Erika Aguilar, Tom Evans, Jim Alex, Nicholas Kyriakou, Chris Laskaris, J.J. Richards, Spiro Canakis, Chris Panopoulos (*Many faithful on the 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 Io ke Aghio Pnevmati ke nin ke aei ke eis tous eonas ton eonon. Amin

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

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

Sunday Resurrection Hymn— *Ex ipsous katilthes [Tone 8]... (From on high You descended O Merciful Savior, You endured the grave for three days, that You might free us from sufferings. Glory to you Lord, our Life and our Resurrection.)*

Hymn for St. Maximos: *Orthodoxias odhighe ... (Guide of Orthodoxy and a sacred teacher of piety and dignity, luminary of the world, and God-inspired jewel of monastics, O wise Maximus, the Spirit's instrument: by your teachings you enlightened all. Intercede with Christ our God for the salvation of 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 for this Sunday— *O mitran parthenikin aghiasas... (You sanctified the virginal womb by Your birth, O Lord, and blessed the hands of Symeon fittingly, O Christ God; and even now You came and saved us. Now, give peace to our Nation in time of war, and empower our Leaders, so loved by You, the only one who loves humanity.)*

READINGS: *Epistle—1 Timothy 4: 9-15 / Gospel— St. Luke 19: 1-10*

Communion Hymn— *Enite ton Kyrion.*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coffee Hour: Sponsored by Louise Dobbs Barringer

PHILOPTOCHOS - We want to thank our parishioners sponsoring or hosting our Coffee Hour thus far into the new year. Please volunteer for February and March. Check the bulletin board for the dates available. Please see **Athena Snarskis or Pat Dalkas**. We will not have a General Meeting in February due to food preparation for the Festival. Note: Special February 4th "Bake Sale/ Coffee Hour" fundraiser for charities on Sunday, February 4, 2018. More details to follow.

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS - We thank God for the gracious donation by **Nicholas Demetropoulos**, who donated for our Altar Flower Bouquets today, his gift to the memory of his family - "Eternal Rest" to all!

FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS – Enclosed, please find the 2018 Volunteer for the Festival Forms. See Jim Christopoulos in the parish hall today to sign up as a volunteer for this year’s St. George Greek Festival.

AHEPA - AHEPA Chapter 528 members are invited to a "membership gathering" on **Super Bowl Sunday, February 4, 2018 at 3:00 p.m.** We look forward to fellowship in enjoying the Super Bowl. During "half-time," a review of AHEPA upcoming plans and projects will be provided to those in attendance. A donation of \$20 would be most generous in order to cover the costs of pizza and refreshments and to offer some support for the AHEPA Fr. T. P. Theophilos Memorial Scholarship Fund. See the enclosed flier.

STEWARDSHIP – We are grateful to all of our parishioners who offered their 2018 St. George Stewardship Pledge Cards last Sunday. Many have shown their love for our parish by pledging to support our parish in very meaningful ways. More updates to follow.

YIAYIA’S ATTIC – It’s that time of year again! Yiayia’s Attic is gathering treasures for the Festival’s "Yiayia’s Attic" Booth. Please start organizing your donations now! Call **Becky Allen** at (760) 699-5439 for details and/or questions. Items may be brought to our parish at any time.

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. See the enclosed flier.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, January 22nd.....Festival Preparations continue (koulourakia) - 9:00 a.m.

Tuesday, January 23rd.....Bible Study - 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, January 25th.....ST. GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN
Orthros-8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Saturday, January 27th.....AHEPA District 20 Mid-Winter Conference
San Bernardino, California
Vespers- 5:00 p.m.

*The Ladder for January 2018
is sponsored by:
Matushka Gloria Lehman*

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.

Volunteer for the Festival

February 17th & 18th 2018

What Kind of Person Are You?

In this world there are four kinds of people: Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did.

Somebody got angry about it because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Somebody would do it, but Nobody realized it wouldn't get done by Anybody. It ended up that not only was the job not done, but Everybody accused Somebody, and Nobody accepted the responsibility.

Moral: Everybody's job is Anybody's. Nobody can be Somebody unless they are willing to do Anybody's work.



Please sign up to volunteer in the church hall after liturgy on any Sunday. You may also complete the information on the back and leave it with Jim Christopoulos, John Petalas, Rhonda Latkovic or Father Ted. Finally, you may call Jim at 760-902-8460. God bless!

For those of you who are unable to volunteer, but want to help support the festival, you may want to consider "sponsoring" a shift. For a donation of \$60, you can sponsor a paid worker. If interested, please see any of the people listed above.

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Festival Volunteer Form

February 17th & 18th 2018

»Name: _____

»Phone Number: _____ »Email Address: _____

»Availability (Please check all that apply):

Set Up Prior to Festival ____

Saturday 2/17: ____ 10:30-3:30 ____ 3:15-8:15

Sunday 2/18: ____ 10:30-3:30 ____ 3:15-8:15

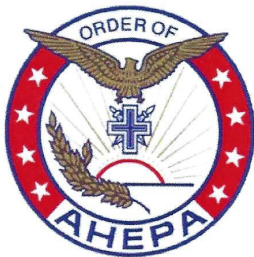
Tear Down Following Festival ____

»Please check off all areas that you would like to volunteer (we will try to place you in one of these areas, if possible).

Area	Chairperson(s)	Check if Interested
Set-up/Tear down	Doug Lyons	
Entrance	Lou & Penny Karagianis	
Greek Store	Rhonda Latkovic	
Greek Coffee	Tbd	
Kids Area	Melissa Hawkins	
Loukoumathes	Krisann Kontaxis	
Bars	Nick Krespis	
Dinner Line	Tasia Richards	
Gyros	George Argyros & John Petalas	
Lamb Chops	George Argyros & John Petalas	
Cooking	George Argyros & John Petalas	
Appetizers	Tbd	
Yiayia's Attic	Becky Allen	
Accounting/\$ Run	Nick Kaperonis	
Kitchen/Food Run	George & Stacy Argyros	
Pastries	Lula Valissarakos	



AHEPA 528 1st ANNUAL SUPER BOWL PARTY



FUN FOR EVERYONE

Game starts at 3:30 pm

Saint George Greek Orthodox Church
74109 Larrea St Palm Desert, CA 92261


\$20 Donation requested

We will have doors open at 3pm.

BYOB - refreshments and fun provided!

ALL PROCEEDS FROM THE EVENT WILL GO TO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Please make any checks to AHEPA Chapter 528 or donate online
Scholarship awards benefit members
of Saint George Church and the AHEPA 528 Family
AHEPA528.ORG


SUPER BOWL
FEB 4TH 2018

\$20 DONATION

and you get

- 1 Square in the Football Pool
- Refreshments
- Appetizers
- Live Game
- Cash Prizes

\$10 pool square*

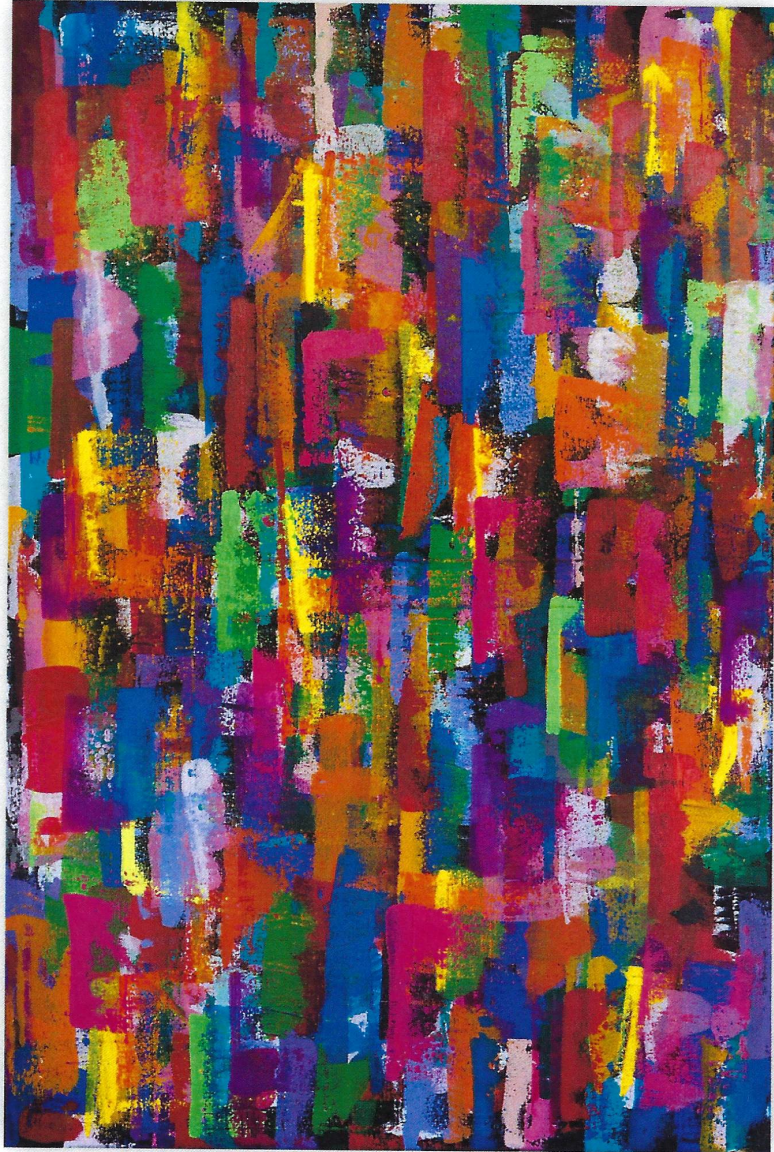
**After first donation*

**BYOB
REFRESHMENTS
AND FUN
PROVIDED!**



**PLEASE SEE BROTHERS
WYNN STORTON,
HARRY LOUKATOS OR
NICK KRESPIS
FOR FURTHER DETAILS**

**CONTACT@AHEPA528.ORG
760.832.2825**



NICHOLAS KONTAXIS

HEATHER JAMES
FINE ART

MARCH 17, 2018

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