

JULY 8, 2018

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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THE LADDER



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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.

AUTHORITY TO LOVE & HEAL

As we heard from the readings of today's passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans and from St. Matthew's Gospel, as members of the Church, we are called to always show love to others around us. The life of each Christian is an entire life of Christ-like love—which consists of Christ's love for us; our love for Christ and the love of each of us for others around us.

St. Paul advises us that love obligates

those who have great faith and who are strong in virtues to always show sympathy to those who struggle in spiritual matters. Just as God grants His help and comfort to all of us, let each of us grant the same to others.

As an example of God's love, we have the miracles of Christ, through which He healed those who suffered from illness and various weaknesses., as, for example, in the case when He healed the paralytic of today's Gospel passage.

Continued on Page 2

THE MINISTRY OF HEALING THOSE WHO SUFFER ILLNESS

To this day, the Orthodox practice of prayer for those suffering illness follows the instruction given by the Apostle James in the Epistle bearing his name. *"Is any among you sick? Call for the elders of the Church and let them pray, anointing the sick with oil in the Name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save those suffering illness and the Lord will raise them up."* (St. James 5:14).

Along these lines, the liturgical prayer that is read for those suffering illness is as follows:

"O Lord Almighty, Healer of our souls and bodies, Who puts down, yet also raises up; Who chastises, but Who also heals, visit at this present hour in Your mercy our [brother/sister], (Name), who lies in illness. Stretch forth Your arm, which is filled with healing power and health and raise [him/her] up from this bed and cure this illness. Put away the spirit of disease and every malady, pain and fever. And if, [he/she] has committed sins and transgressions, grant remission and forgiveness, because of Your great love for Your people."

As noted in the Orthodox Study Bible, *"As Orthodox Christians, we pray neither commanding God to heal, nor doubting His ability to heal, but pleading for His promised mercy on all who are ill."* (pg. 1678).



Οπως ακουσαμεν απο τα σημερινα αναγνωσματα εκ της Επιστολης του Αγιου Παυλου προς τους Ρωμαιοις και του κατα Ματθαιον Ευαγγελιου, καλουμεθα ως μελη της Εκκλησιας παντοτε να εκφραζουμεν την αγαπην του Χριστου στον πλησιον μας. Η ζωη του καθε Χριστιανου ειναι μια ολοκληρη ζωη της εν Χριστω αγαπης – η οποια αποτελείται απο την αγαπη του Χριστου για εμας, την αγαπη μας για τον Κυριον και την αγαπη του καθενος μας για τον πλησιον του.

Ο Αγιος Παυλος μας συμβουλευει οτι η αγαπη υποχρεωνει οσους εχουν πολυ πιστιν και ειναι δυνατοι στην αρετην να δειχνουν παντοτε συμπαθειαν σε οσους δυσκολευονται στις πνευματικες υποθεσεις, οπως ο Θεος χαριζει βοηθειαν και παρηγοριαν σε εμας, τα ιδια ας χαριζει ο καθενας στον αλλον. <Η αγαπη ανυποκριτος. αποστυγουνες το πονηρον...Ευλογειτε τους διωκοντας. Ευλογειτε και μη καταρασθε> (Ρωμ. 12:14).

Ως παραδειγμα της αγαπης του Θεου, εχουμεν τα θαυματα του Χριστου δια των οποιων εθεραπευσε οσους υπεφεραν απο αρωστειες και διαφορες αδυναμιες, οπως, π.χ., εθεραπευσε τον παραλυτικον περι του οποιου ακουσαμεν κατα την σημερινην Ευαγγελικην περικοπην.

Η εξουσια του Θεου και Σωτηρος μας Χριστου δεν ειναι <κυριαρχια>! Ειναι θεραπευτικη δυναμις εναντιον των ακαθαρτων πνευματων της ασθενειας και της κακιας. Ειναι <η εξουσια της αγαπης> η οποια ειναι για εμας καρπος της θερμης προσευχης.

+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

Today, let us underline the reality that the authority of Christ is not “lordship”. It is the healing power against unclean powers of illness and evil. It is the “authority of love”, which is for us the fruit of fervent prayer.

Both priests and laypeople fall prey to a tragic misunderstanding of “authority” in the Church. While some authority is needed to maintain order and dignity in the affairs of our homes and in our church family, we must give more value to the authority that Christ gives us through the power of love and prayer. It is the authority of Christ Himself, that comes by virtue of giving from ourselves for the benefit and salvation of others.

Let me share these thoughts from the book, *Functional and Dysfunctional Christianity*, by Fr. Philotheos Faros: “Jesus Christ was very clear about it when He said, ‘You know that in the world, rulers lord it over their subjects and their great men make them feel the weight of their authority. Among you, whoever wants to be great, must be your servant.’ (Mt. 20:25)...When the New Testament (Mt. 4:8-9) uses the word ‘authority’ (“exousia”) in relation to Christ and to the Church (“Ekklesia” in Greek), it means the ability to cure, to forgive sins, and to reveal the truth. This is the way Christ shows that He has authority and this is how His enemies perceive His authority. When they ask Him, ‘By what authority are You doing this?’ they show that they call authority the ability to heal and they recognize that Christ has this authority... Christ reigns over human beings because He becomes their servant, because He ‘Received us’ (Romans 15:7). He attached us to Himself. By becoming Himself a man and by making us gods, the gap between humanity and God, between the ruled and the ruler, was bridged...” (pgs. 78 and 80).

To make this point even more clear, we turn to the 14th Century Orthodox theologian, Nicholas Cabasilas, who explained in his book, *The Life in Christ*: “In order to be a real master, He accepts the nature of a servant and He serves the servants even unto the Cross and death and in that way He captures the souls of the servants [i.e., He saves them]...”

We have the authority of Christ to save one another. In truth, honors, wealth, titles, lofty positions are not required in order for us to love God and others. Positions and recognitions mean nothing if we are not actually doing what we are supposed to do in order to serve others and bring healing and salvation to their souls.

+FR. THEODORE

PRAY FOR THE SICK: George Aeder, Adele Gallade, Erika Aguilar, Jim Alex, Chris Laskaris, J.J. Richards, Chris Panopoulos, Nicholas Kontaxis, Louise Scott, Gaylord Washington, Patsy Bruckens, Herline Williams, Jean Chronis, Markos Mihalatos, Debbie Vawter (*Many faithful on our Prayer List face chronic/serious illness*).

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, soson imas."

Verse 2—Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His rewards.

Refrain: "Tes presvies tis Theotokou, Soter, soson 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, soson"

ANTIPHON II: "Soson 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: "Soson 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 is Risen from the dead, we sing to You, Alleluia."

Verse 3—The Lord shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, to all generations.

Refrain: "Soson 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 Hymn : Ton 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 St. Prokopios the Martyr: O Martis Sou, Kyrie... (Your Martyr, O Lord, was worthily awarded by You the crown of incorruption, in that he contested for You our immortal God. Since he possessed Your power, he defeated the tyrants, dashing the demons' powerless displays of defiance. O Christ God, at his fervent entreaties, save our souls.)

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: Prostasia ton Christianon... (A Protection of Christians unshamable, Intercessor to our Holy Maker unwavering; reject not the prayerful cries of those who are in sin. Instead, come to us, for You are good; Your loving help bring to us who are crying in faith to You: Hasten to intercede and speed now to supplicate, as a Protection for all time, Theotokos, for those who honor you.)

READINGS: Epistle:- Romans 12: 6-14/ Gospel: St. Matthew 9:1-8

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is celebrated

Communion Hymn: Enite ton Kyrion ek ton ouranon.... " (pg. 64 in the Divine Liturgy books)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Coffee Hour – We welcome to our St. George parish Fr. Dionisie Marian of the Holy Ressurrection Romanian Orthodox Monastery in Temecula, California. We are grateful to God for sending us Fr. Dionisie to celebrate the Divine Liturgy today in Fr. Ted's absence. Today's Coffee Hour is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Carkonen.

PHILOPTOCHOS – The deadline has now arrived to renew membership or to become a member of Philoptochos in time for the publication of the up-dated St. George Philoptochos Directory. Coffee Hour sponsors are needed for the end of July, through August and into September. Please contact **Pat Dalkas** in order to sign up. Check the "Coffee Hour" list posted on our parish bulletin board in the hall.

PARISH MASTER CALENDAR - We are in the process now of setting up our **St. George parish Master Calendar for 2018-2019**. This is a good time to contact Fr. Ted or our parish office to schedule a Sacrament or an event.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

No meetings or Church Services scheduled. Fr. Ted will be returning on Saturday, July 14th.

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 in order that you may easily take your children for a break, as needed. If necessary, we have a "crying room" in the vestibule for your use. God Bless.