

DECEMBER 8, 2019

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.

SPIRITUAL BONDS

In his 9th Homily on the Epistle to the Ephesians (*Nicene & Post Nicene Fathers*, 1st Series, Vol. 13, pgs. 94-100), St. John Chrysostom deals extensively with the image of St. Paul being bound in chains as a “prisoner of the Lord.” (Ephesians 4:1). He also concerns himself with the matter of unity in the life of the Church (Ephesians 4:4).

At the outset, one thing is clear: the Birth of Christ our God into the world (the Incarnation) undoes the fall of humanity that was caused by Adams’ sin.

Adam and Eve’s pride is undone by the humility of Christ and the Ever-Virgin Mary; Adam and Eve’s disobedience is undone by the obedience of Christ and the Ever-Virgin Mary; death is undone by the Resurrection from the dead of Christ our God and Savior.

All of this is the truth which is proclaimed by the Gospel. In particular, the imprisonment of the Apostle Paul occurred because the leaders of the Roman Empire did not want the
Continued on page 2

THE FORGOTTEN TREASURE--In his booklet entitled, *The Forgotten Treasure*, Fr. James Tavlarides of blessed memory shares a “question-and-answer” discussion offered by St. Nectarios regarding the Sacrament of Holy Communion, which is, in fact, the spiritual treasure that people today are tempted to neglect. “St. Nectarios writes the following questions and answers*:

1. Q: What is the Eucharist?

A: *The Eucharist is the spiritual food of the Christian which gives life to the soul and brings the human being in an immediate communion with the Savior Christ, because the participant, as he receives the bread and wine, receives the very Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and mystically becomes One. The Holy Eucharist becomes to us joy, health of soul and body, forgiveness of sins, and Life Eternal.*

2. Q: Why is it called Eucharist?

A: *Because at the Last Supper, the Lord gave it to His disciples in a Eucharistic (Thanksgiving) manner.*

3. Q: How must the faithful come forth to partake?

A: *Worthily, with the fear of God, faith, and love.”*

--Taken from the booklet, *The Forgotten Treasure* (pgs. 9-11)

* These are only a few of the “Question-and-Answer” explanations of St. Nectarios from his book, *The Holy Sacraments*.



Στην 9ην Ομιλίαν του περί της Επιστολής προς τους Εφεσίους, ο Αγ. Ιωάννης ο Χρυσόστομος ασχολείται εκτενώς με το ότι ο Απόστολος Παύλος παρέμεινε δεσμευμένος στις αλυσίδες ως <αιμάλωτος του Κυρίου> (Εφ. 4:3).

Από την αρχήν ένα πράγμα είναι ξεκάθαρο: Διά της Γεννήσεως του Χριστού του Θεού μας στον κόσμον ανατρέπεται η πτώσις της ανθρωπότητας που προκλήθηκε από την αμαρτίαν του Αδάμ. Η υπερφάνεια του Αδάμ και της Εύας ανατρέπεται από την ταπεινότητα του Χριστού και της Παναγίας. Η ανυπακοή του Αδάμ και της Εύας ανατρέπεται από την υπακοή του Χριστού και της Παναγίας. Ο θάνατος ανατρέπεται από την Ανάστασιν εκ των νεκρών του Σωτήρος μας Χριστού.

Ολα αυτά είναι η αλήθεια που διακηρύττεται διά μέσου του Ευαγγελίου – και η φυλάκισις του Απ. Παύλου έγινε επειδή οι Ρωμαίοι ηγέτες δεν ήθελαν το Ευαγγέλιο να εξαπλωθεί σε όλον τον κόσμον. Οτι ευρισκόταν σε αλυσίδες, ο Άγιος Παύλος το εθεώρησε ως ευλογία. Ο Αγ. Ιωάννης ο Χρυσόστομος προσέφερε μία ωραία ανάλυσιν: οι δεσμοί του Παύλου αντιπροσωπεύουν πνευματικούς δεσμούς. Είναι δεσμοί της αγάπης, δεσμοί της υπακοής, δεσμοί της ειρήνης. Ομως, η ταπεινοφροσύνη είναι η πηγή της αγάπης, της υπακοής και της ειρήνης – αρετές που καθορίζονται στο Πρόσωπο του Χριστού.

Μάλιστα, όντας δεσμευμένοι στην εν Χριστώ αγάπην επιφέρει σε εμάς την ενότητα της οικογένειάς μας και της γενικής μας κοινωνίας.
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

Gospel to spread throughout the world. Yet, that he found himself in chains “being held a captive of the Lord,” St. Paul considered it as a blessing. St. John Chrysostom offers this analysis: the bonds of St. Paul represent spiritual bonds. They are bonds of love; bonds of obedience; bonds of peace -- all of which are products of *humility* and which are virtues that are defined in the Person of Christ.

Through Christ-like humility, we become bonded to one another. St. John suggests: “*Those who are bonded with Christ-like love can bear all things lightly.*” Being bound together in love brings about unity and peace, through which we avoid the worldly “spirit of competition,” which often spawns quarrelling and strife.

Today’s Gospel passage describes the healing by Jesus of the “bent-over” woman and the objections by the ruler of the synagogue that the Lord healed her on the Sabbath. The quarrelling on the part of the ruler compares to the quarrelling among the faithful, noted by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians. However, if we are “chained” to one another in a bond with Christ, we *straighten* each other out: “*You are straightened in your own affections and made greater* (notes St. John, referring to 2 Corinthians 12:27) and we are a healthy Body as a Church in the ministry of our Savior.

The bond of unity is also unity in the Faith of the Gospel message. This faith is lived as individuals as “one Body” and in “one Spirit” (Ephesians 4:4). Humility, faith and love are characteristics of Christ by which we “chain” ourselves to one another in our spiritual lives, forming spiritual unity, bringing one another to salvation in the Eternal Kingdom. They are characteristics acquired through prayer according to the Faith expressed in the Nicene Creed during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

Humility, faith and love are qualities of individuals united in faith. They are required of us as we approach the Sacrament of Holy Communion and go on to live out our lives with family, friends, neighbors and members of our community in general.
+FR. THEODORE

“The Lord reigns; He is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed, girding Himself with strength. Surely the world is established so that it cannot be moved. Your throne is established from of old. You are everlasting.” --Psalm 93: 1-2

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: *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. 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 the champion defender of kings, bearer of trophies are you, O Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.)*

Kontakion Hymn for this Sunday : *Ee Parthenos Simeron... (On this day the Virgin Maid goes to the grotto to give birth to the pre-eternal Word in an ineffable manner. Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds Him who willed that He appear as a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God.)*

Axion Estin - page 52 in our Divine Liturgy books.

Communion Hymn- *Enite ton Kyrion ... (Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Allelouia.)*

**The Ladder for the month of December 2019 is sponsored by:
Bess and John Manesis**

ANNOUNCEMENTS**Coffee Hour: Presvytera Petula Pantels**

PHILOPTOCHOS – We have sweet bread and koulourakia available for sale for the next two weeks. Bread is \$12.00 each and one dozen cookies are \$7.00. A table is set up in the hall for purchases. We are grateful for all the volunteers that gave of their time to help with the baking. Efharisto! This coming Friday, December 13th, beginning at 10:00 a.m., we will be preparing the Christmas baskets for our home-bound members. Volunteers are needed to help prepare and deliver baskets.

PARISH ELECTIONS--In that there are three candidates for three available positions on the Parish Council, our **parish elections next Sunday, December 8, 2019** will be a "confirmation election," taking place immediately following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT -- "The Christmas Story," will be held on **Sunday, December 15, 2019** in church directly following the Divine Liturgy. Guaranteed to be a joy for us all!

2020 GREEK FESTIVAL FLIERS--"2020 Greek Festival Sponsorship/Ad Forms" are available in our parish hall. Buying and/or selling **sponsorships and/or ads** for our **2020 St. George Greek Festival Program Book** will insure the success of our Festival.

PARISH BOOK STORE -- We have received new stock in our bookstore including several Christmas gift-giving items, like cashmere scarves, ornaments, bookmarks, icons, night lights, stockings, and much more! Your support helps us to expand our selection.

ALTAR FLOWER BOUQUETS -- 2020 Altar Flower availabilities now are: **March 1st - two bouquets, May 31st - one bouquet!** Your support is appreciated, thank you. May God bless you.

WEEKDAY CALENDAR

Monday, December 9th.....ST. ANNA THE MOTHER OF THE HOLY THEOTOKOS
Orthros-8:30 a.m. / Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, December 10th.....Bible Study – 10:00 a.m./ Adult Greek class-6:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 12th....ST. SPYRIDON THE WONDERWORKER
Orthros-8:30 a.m./Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.
Choir Practice- 1:00 p.m.

Friday, December 13th.....Philoptochos Christmas Baskets to the home-bound- 10:00 a.m.

EPISTLE: Eph. 4:1-7

Brethren, I, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

GOSPEL: Lk. 13:10-17 -- At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.



**SAINT GEORGE
SUNDAY SCHOOL
CHRISTMAS
PAGEANT**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2019

Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy

PHILOPTOCHOS
CHRISTMAS BAKE
SALE

*Christmas Bread - Vasilopita
Koulourakia*



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

The Ladies of Philoptohos Society will be baking again this year the traditional Christmas bread, Vasilopita and Koulourakia that are delicious any time of day.

You may pick up bread and koulourakia Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday between the hours 9-2 or during the sale dates listed below.

PICK UP DATES:

Sunday, December 8, 2019 (following the conclusion of Church Services)
Sunday, December 15, 2019 (following the conclusion of Church Services)

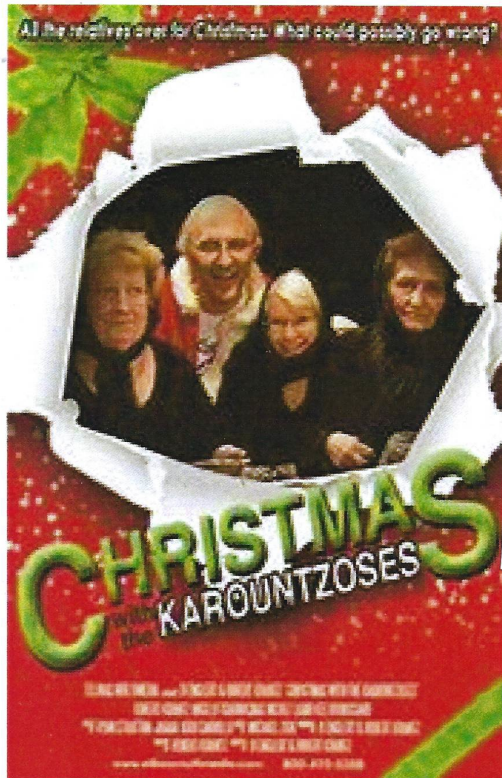
We thank you in advance for your continued support of Philoptohos



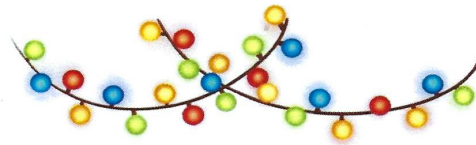
KOULOURAKIA	\$7.00 PER DOZEN
BREAD	\$12 PER LOAF

SAINT GEORGE LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS

ST. GEORGE CHURCH, 74109 LARREA ST, PALM DESERT, CA



MOVIE MATINEE



**THURSDAY,
DECEMBER 19, 2019**

2:30 – 4:30 P.M

ROBERT KRANTZ (Karountzos) is a Greek-American writer, actor, director and USC graduate.



All the Greek relatives over for Christmas!

What could possibly go wrong?

Please RSVP to Rhonda (714) 875-4661 or Athena (219) 313-9640