

June 9, 2019

ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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# THE LADDER

THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE FIRST ECUMENICAL CONCIL

## Mailing Address:

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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.

## A STATEMENT OF GRATITUDE

Today we honor the Saints who convened at the First Ecumenical Council. As we do so, we commemorate those who formulated the Nicene Creed, which we proclaim as we celebrate the Divine Liturgy. The Nicene Creed is preached as an expression of gratitude to God for our salvation. In this regard, by way of our faith, we express our conviction that there is One God, the Creator, Who so loved the world that He gave His Only-Begotten Son for our salvation. We express our conviction that God is One God in Three Persons:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit -- and that the Holy Spirit is the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father and Who is worshiped together with the Father and the Son. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are the Holy Trinity. The Creed is our declaration of gratitude, based on the correct belief regarding Christ our God, noting our awareness that, without God, we do not exist.

In reality, one understanding of the Old Testament is that such events as the Flood during the time of

*Continued on page 2*

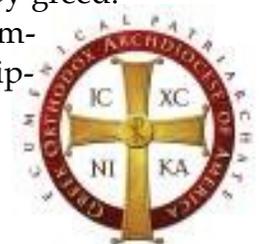
## A PICTURE OF ST. PAUL'S MINISTRY & THE CHURCH

From today's reading of the Book of Acts, we can glean a picture of St. Paul's relationship with the Christian communities that make of Christ's Holy Church. St. Paul meets with elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:17) and gives his stirring farewell discourse to them. He defends his ministry and offers pastoral instruction. We learn from this meeting that: 1) the Church is living and growing; 2) it has already developed a pattern of permanent leadership in terms of elders (or, presbyters, verse 17) and overseers (that is, bishops, verse 28); and 3) false teachers and heresies will arise from inside the Church, and She must be protected through godly clergy and laity.

[In addition, St. Paul seeks to assure those to whom he speaks that he has no personal agenda.] His only care is to preach the Gospel of Christ for their salvation. Itinerant philosophers and teachers were often motivated by greed.

Paul, on the contrary, worked with his own hands to support himself, but also accepted material help for his basic needs (see Philipians 4:15-19). In Acts 20: 35, Paul quotes a saying of Jesus not recorded in the Gospels, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

-- Orthodox Study Bible [New Testament & Psalms], pgs. 318 & 319



Καθώς τιμούμεν σήμερα τους Αγίους της Α΄ Οικουμενικής Συνόδου, μνημονεύουμε αυτούς που εδίατύπωσαν <το Πιστεύω,> το οποίο αναγγέλλουμε κατά την εκτέλεση της Θ. Λειτουργίας. Το Σύμβολο της Πίστεως (<το Πιστεύω>) ανακηρύσσεται ως δήλωση της ευχαριστίας μας προς τον Θεόν για την σωτηρίαν μας. Ως εκ τούτου, διά μέσου της πίστεώς μας εκφράζουμε την πεποίθησήν μας ότι υπάρχει ένας Θεός, ο Δημιουργός, ο Οποίος τόσο αγάπησε τον κόσμον ότι έδωσε τον Μονογενή Του Υιόν για την σωτηρίαν μας. Εκφράζουμε την πεποίθησή μας ότι ο Θεός είναι ένας Θεός σε Τρία Πρόσωπα: ο Πατήρ, ο Υιός, και το Άγιο Πνεύμα – και ότι το Άγιο Πνεύμα είναι το <Ζωοποιόν,> το Οποίο εκπορεύεται εκ του Πατρός και είναι συνδοξασμένος με τον Πατέρα και τον Υιόν. Ο Πατήρ, ο Υιός και το Άγιο Πνεύμα είναι η Αγία Τριάδα. Το Σύμβολον Πίστεως είναι έκφρασις ευχαριστίας, βασισμένη στην σωστή πίστην στον Χριστόν τον Θεόν μας, και προέρχεται από την συνειδητοποίησιν ότι χωρίς τον Θεόν απλώς δεν υπάρχουμεν.

Στην πραγματικότητα, μία κατανόησις της Π. Διαθήκης είναι ότι ο Κατακλυσμός στον καιρόν του Νώε και η καταστροφή του Σόδομα και της Γομμόρρας (ως παραδείγματα) μας θυμίζουν ότι ο Θεός δεν έχει ανάγκη από εμάς – ο,τι καλό στην ζωήν μας είναι αποτέλεσμα της ακατανόητης αγάπης του Θεού, η οποία δεν οφείλεται σε εμάς. Η αγάπη του Θεού είναι αγνή και θεϊκή/θυσιαστική αγάπη.

Κατά την εκτέλεση της Θ. Λειτουργίας, <το Πιστεύω> ακολουθείται από την Ευχαριστήριον Ευχήν του ιερέως, μετά την εκφώνησιν: <Ευχαριστήσουμεν τῷ Κυρίῳ.>  
+Ο ΠΑΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΣ

Noah and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (as examples) teach us that God has no need of us. We are *owed nothing* by God. Whatever good we have is the result of God's infinite and incomprehensible love for us. God's love is divine, pure and selfless.

Liturgically, we see a "flow" toward the ultimate expression of thanksgiving for our salvation. We begin with the recitation of the Creed, followed by the appeal to "*lift up our hearts to the Lord,*" which, in turn, is followed by the Eucharistic Prayer in which we thank God for creating us, after creating all things from nothing, and doing everything to bring us to His Kingdom in Heaven, *even though* God is surrounded by myriads of Archangels and Angels, who praise Him continuously. Emphasizing the service of Angels in glorifying God, singing "*Holy, Holy, Holy, O Lord of Sabaoth...*," confessing that all of Heaven and earth are filled with the glory of God, we join in praising our Lord, saying, "*Hosanna in the highest.*" Gratitude for our salvation is finally expressed by God Himself, our Savior Jesus Christ, for the honor of saving us, as He "*took bread and gave thanks, saying 'This is My Body...'*" and the Chalice, saying, "*Drink of it all of you; this is My Blood...*"

This sense of gratitude on the part of our Savior is made clear from today's Gospel passage. In His address to His Heavenly Father, Jesus says, "*I have manifested Your Name to the men whom You gave me out of the world; Yours they were, and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.*" (St. John 17:6). Prayer offered for the good of others and for their salvation is a prime expression of gratitude toward God for the other people in our lives. It is abundantly clear that our Savior is personally grateful for all of those who have been given to Him, and, subsequently, for all of us who follow them today.

As followers of our Lord, we are to also be grateful to God for our own lives and for the lives of all who surround us. For those who do not believe in sin, the question then looms as to where today's culture of cynicism, deceit, ruthless competition, general disrespect and disregard for self and others comes from – and which, for us today is often regarded as "normal," in stark contrast to the culture of Apostolic Christianity.

+FR. THEODORE

*"Father, the hour has come...I have manifested Your Name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world...I pray for them. I do not pray for the world, but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your Name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are."*

– St. John 17: 1,9-11

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

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

**Verse 1**—Oh, clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with the voice of rejoicing.

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

**Verse 2**—For the Lord Most High is fearsome, a great King over all the earth.

**Refrain:** *"By the prayers of the Theotokos, Savior, save us."*

**Verse 3**—He subdued the peoples under us and the nations under our feet.

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

**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."*

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

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

**Refrain:** *"Soson imas Yie Theou, O en dhoxee analiftheis auf imon eis tous ouranous, psallontas Si, alleluia."*

**Verse 2**—God is known in her palaces when He helps her.

**Refrain:** *"Save us, O Son of God, Who was taken up from us in glory into the heavens, we sing to You, Alleluia."*

**Verse 3**—For behold, the kings assembled; they came together.

**Refrain:** *"Soson imas Yie Theou, O en dhoxee analiftheis auf imon eis tous ouranous, 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...)*

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**ANTIPHON III:** *Hear this, all you nations; give ear, all you inhabitants of the world. My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart, understanding. I will incline my ear to a parable; I will open my riddle on the harp.*

**Sunday Resurrection Hymn:** *Angelike dynameis [Tone 6]...(When the angelic powers appeared at Your tomb and those who guarded You became as though dead and standing by Your sepulcher was Mary seeking Your pure and sacred body. For, You did vanquish Hades and, uncorrupted by its touch, You came unto the Virgin Woman bestowing the gift of life, O You Who arose from the dead. Lord we give glory to You.)*

**Hymn for the Ascension of our Lord:** *Analiftheis en dhoxee Christe o Theos...(You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, after You filled the Disciples with joy, by promising to send them the Holy Spirit, and You blessed them and established their faith, that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.)*

**Hymn for the Saints of the 1st Eccumenical Council:** *Yper-the-dhoxasmenos ee Christe o Theos imon...(Supremely blessed are You, O Christ our God. You established the holy Fathers upon the earth as beacons, and through them You have guided us all to the true Faith, O greatly merciful One, glory be to You.)*

**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:** *Tin iper imon plirhosas ekonomian...(When You had fulfilled the dispensation for our sake, and united things on earth with the things in heaven, You were taken up thither in glory, O Christ our God, going not away from any place, but continuing inseparable, and to them that love You crying out: "I am with you, and there is, therefore, none against you.")*

**READINGS**— EPISTLE- Acts 20: 16-18; 28-36 / GOSPEL- St. John 17:1-13

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



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Coffee Hour: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kripner**

**MEMORIAL** - Today's Memorial Service is for the Eternal Rest and Salvation for the servant of God, **Stephen Robert Kripner (40 days)**, the beloved son of **Robert and Eva Kripner**. May our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who arose from the dead, grant **Stephen Robert Kripner** Salvation in Eternal Life and may He grant peace and comfort to his parents **Robert and Eva Kripner**. MAY HER MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

**PHILOPTOCHOS** - Coffee Hour hostesses are still needed for Sunday's in July & August. Volunteers needed to help with our homeless outreach on Thursday, June 27th. Please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

**MEMORIAL WALL & GARDEN** - Our Memorial Wall & Garden is nearing completion. We have only **eight nameplate spaces** left as of today. The donation cost is \$175.00 per nameplate (up to 25 letters). Please place your order today. See Rhonda Latkovic (tel.714-875-4661), Project Coordinator. We have tentatively planned a special service to bless the Memorial Wall for Sunday, June 23rd, pending timely delivery of the bronze wall plaque.

**ST.SOPHIA SUMMER CAMP** -- The annual summer camp program held at St. Sophia Camp for Orthodox Christian children and youth will include two sessions this year: **Session 1** - from **Saturday, July 21, 2019 - Saturday, July 27, 2019** and **Session 2**- from **Saturday, July 27 - August 3, 2019**. For information to register your children, contact **Perry Skaggs** at [SaintSophiaCamp@gmail.com](mailto:SaintSophiaCamp@gmail.com), or call: (323) 397-5436.

## WEE;KDAY SCHEDULE

Tuesday, June 11th.....Bible Study - 10: 00 a.m.

Thursday, June 13th.....Choir Practice - 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 15th.....SATURDAY OF SOULS  
Orthros-8:30 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy-9:30 a.m.

*"Be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ...In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

**-Acts 20: 32 & 35 (St. Paul's address to the Church in Ephesus)**

*The Ladder for June 2019 is lovingly sponsored by:  
Annette 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.